



**International Commission
against the Death Penalty**

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Geneva, 14 April 2014

Statement by the International Commission against the Death Penalty: Gabon and El Salvador's official accession to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP) welcomes the official accession by the governments of Gabon and El Salvador to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.

"I warmly welcome the governments of Gabon and El Salvador for acceding and becoming States Parties to the Second Optional Protocol. By doing so, they have not only reaffirmed their commitment to abolition of the death penalty, but also reinforced the world trend towards abolition of this cruel, degrading and irrevocable punishment. It is also very timely as this year marks the 25th anniversary to the Second Optional Protocol," said Mr Federico Mayor, President of the ICDP.

Gabon acceded to the Second Optional Protocol on 2 April 2014. The country had abolished the death penalty for all crimes in February 2010.

El Salvador acceded to Second Optional Protocol on 8 April 2014. The country abolished the death penalty in 1983 for all crimes except "for cases stipulated in military legislation during a state of international war."

As of 14 April 2014, there are 80 States Parties to the Second Optional Protocol.

According to the United Nations, 160 countries from all regions in the world have abolished the death penalty or do not execute having recognized that modern justice systems can protect the public without the death penalty's cruelty and constant risk of executing an innocent person.

ICDP believes that the death penalty violates the right to life proclaimed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and should not be applied in any circumstances, regardless of the gravity of the crime.

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Background

ICDP was founded in Madrid in October 2010. ICDP is composed of 15 persons of high international standing from all regions of the world who act with total independence and neutrality and work under its President Mr. Federico Mayor.

ICDP opposes the death penalty under any circumstances believing that it violates the right to life enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. ICDP promotes the abolition of capital punishment in law in those states that observe a de facto moratorium on the use of the death penalty and promotes moratoriums on executions in states that rarely use the death penalty. In states that continue to carry out executions ICDP urges strict adherence to international standards.

ICDP works with the United Nations and other international and regional organizations, governments and nongovernmental organizations to further the abolition of capital punishment worldwide.

The work of the ICDP is supported by a diverse group of 18 states from all regions of the world that are committed to abolition of the death penalty. Its secretariat is based in Geneva.