



**International Commission
against the Death Penalty**

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Statement by the International Commission against the Death Penalty: 683 death sentences in Egypt

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP) condemns the death sentences handed down to 683 individuals following a trial held on 28 April 2014 by the Criminal Court in Minya, Egypt.

According to reports, the 683 persons were sentenced to death on various charges, including murder, attempted murder, burning Adwa police station, membership of a banned organisation (the Muslim Brotherhood) and participating in a gathering of more than five persons with the intention of committing the above mentioned crimes. Those sentenced to death include 70 year old Mohamed Badie, the Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood. Those convicted appear not to have received adequate access to defence lawyers, the exact charges against each defendant were not individually read out in court and over 600 of those convicted were charged in absentia.

On the same day, the criminal court in Minya reversed the death sentences of 492 of the 529 persons that it had sentenced in March, commuting them to 25 years of imprisonment and fines amounting to 20,000 Egyptian pounds.

“ICDP reiterates its deep concern at the mass death sentences being handed down by the court in Minya. In March, we had expressed concerns at the unprecedented number of sentences to capital punishment passed by the same court. We call for the retrial of those sentenced to death where they are brought to justice without recourse to capital punishment. We urge the Egyptian authorities not to pass sentences of death. The death penalty is irreversible and a violation to the right to life,” said Federico Mayor, President of ICDP.

The sentencing of 683 people in a single trial following the sentencing of 529 persons in March 2014 represents a spiralling increase of those sentenced to death in Egypt. In 2013, courts in Egypt handed down at least 109 death sentences; at least 91 individuals were sentenced to death in 2012 and 123 in 2011. The last known execution was carried out in October 2011. The authorities in Egypt do not release official figures on death sentences and executions.

Most States no longer use the death penalty. According to the United Nations, some 160 countries from all world regions and cultures have abolished capital punishment or no longer execute. These nations have recognized that state killing is wrong and fails to deter crime more effectively than other punishments.

ICDP calls on the Government of Egypt to commute all death sentences to terms of imprisonment. We also call on Egypt to declare



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an immediate moratorium on executions as a first step towards abolition of capital punishment in line with the UN General Assembly Resolutions calling for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty which were adopted in 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2012.

Federico Mayor
President of the International Commission
against the Death Penalty

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.