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Madrid, 22 December 2010

**Statement by the
International Commission against the Death Penalty on the
UNGA Resolution 65/206 on a Moratorium on the Use of the
Death Penalty**

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICPD) welcomes that the resolution on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty with a view to abolishing the death penalty was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 21th 2010.

The resolution has been approved by a majority of 109 states, whereas 35 have abstained and 41 voted against it. As the results show, the minority of states choosing the retentionist vote is steadily diminishing, as it can be gathered when compared with the result of the resolution 63/168 approved in December 2008 on the same subject and for which 106 states voted in favour, 34 abstained and 46 voted against it.

The adoption of the resolution confirms the clear and continuous trend towards the abolition of this cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment in all regions of the world. It is confirmed by both the number of states which have supported the resolution and by the observations and recommendations which the resolution addresses to the states that still retain the death penalty in their legislations or still carry out executions.

The resolution highlights three fundamental aspects of the fight against the death penalty which have been widely recognized by the International Community: Firstly, a moratorium on the use of the death penalty contributes to the respect of human dignity and to enhance the progressive development of human rights. Secondly, the death penalty has no deterrent value. And thirdly, the irreversible and irreparable nature of the death penalty puts the life of innocent persons at risk. Furthermore, the resolution calls on the states that still retain the death penalty to respect the international standards that provide safeguards guaranteeing the protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, and to reduce the scope of the crimes for which the death penalty is applicable.

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ICDP considers that the resolution is an essential instrument to encourage the countries that still maintain the death penalty to exclude it from their national legislations joining the majority of abolitionist countries and to demand that no executions shall be carried out in any region of the world. Despite of the significant progress during the last years, it is necessary to strengthen the activities and efforts made by the civil society, the United Nations and other International and Regional Organizations, as well as political leaders of the world, until the universal eradication of the death penalty is achieved.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Federico Mayor', is positioned above the printed name.

Federico Mayor
President of the International Commission
against the Death Penalty