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**Statement by the
International Commission against the Death Penalty
on the proposed
Belize Constitution Eighth Amendment Bill**

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP) has received with great concern the information on the proposed 8th Constitution Amendment Bill tabled in the House of Representatives on 13 May 2011 that would reduce drastically the fundamental rights and freedoms for the prisoners sentenced to death.

According to the information received, the Amendment Bill is based on the wrong assumption that the death penalty deters violent crime effectively. Recent scientific investigation have demonstrated that the application of the death penalty has no dissuasive effect on society, and therefore should not be used as an instrument against the increase of violence produced in the last years, which can only be combated efficiently investing in justice system, social and citizen security measures.

The death penalty undermines human dignity and violates the right to life recognized by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and it should not be applied whatever the circumstances, regardless of the gravity of the crime.

ICDP would like to highlight that Belize has not carried out executions since 1985, and urges the authorities to refrain from adopting the Amendment Bill taking into account the existing worldwide trend towards the abolition of capital punishment.



Federico Mayor
President of the International Commission
against the Death Penalty