



International Commission  
against the Death Penalty

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## Press Release Geneva

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP) met in Geneva on 22 and 23 March 2012.

ICDP welcomed the announcement that **Mongolia** has ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.

ICDP condemned the recent executions in **Belarus** of Dmitry Konovalov and Vladislav Kovalyov. (See ICDP press release of 19 March 2012). Belarus is the only country in Europe that still carries out executions.

ICDP welcomes the progress on liberty and human rights in the **Arab Spring countries**. The right to life is the most fundamental of all rights and therefore ICDP asks Arab Spring States to abolish the death penalty without delay.

ICDP has confirmed its participation in the **5<sup>th</sup> World Congress against the Death Penalty** that will take place in Madrid in June 2013.

Further specific actions to be taken by the ICDP:

ICDP will visit **California** (24-26 April 2012) to participate in meetings and media events on the abolition of the death penalty. Opponents to the death penalty in California have collected more than 800,000 signatures in an initiative (the SAFE California Act) which will put the abolition of the death penalty to a public vote on 6 November 2012.

ICDP will also participate in **Japan** in the Symposium organized by the European Union "Towards Death Penalty abolition: European experience and Asia Perspectives", 18 April 2012.

Federico Mayor  
President of the International Commission  
against the Death Penalty

## **Background**

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP) was founded in Madrid in October 2010. 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 non governmental organizations to further the abolition of capital punishment worldwide.

ICDP is composed of 13 personalities of high international standing from all regions of the world who act with total independence and neutrality and work under its President Federico Mayor. The work of the ICDP is supported by a diverse group of 16 states from all regions of the world that are committed to abolition of the death penalty. Switzerland currently holds the Presidency of the Support Group which will pass to Norway in October this year. There is small secretariat in Geneva which is responsible for organizing the work of the ICDP.