



**International Commission
against the Death Penalty**

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Geneva, 2 October 2013

Statement by the International Commission against the Death Penalty: Support grows for UN Protocol to abolish the death penalty - Guinea-Bissau and Angola

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP) warmly welcomes Guinea-Bissau's ratification on 24th September 2013 of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.

Guinea-Bissau is the 78th state party to the Second Optional Protocol.

The last known execution in Guinea-Bissau was in 1986 and the government abolished the death penalty for all crimes in 1993. Guinea-Bissau also supports UN General Assembly resolutions calling for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty.

ICDP also welcomes Angola's signing of the Second Optional Protocol on 24 September 2013. During the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Review Process the government accepted recommendations from other States to ratify the Second Optional Protocol. ICDP urges the government of Angola to ratify the Protocol as soon as possible

Angola abolished the death penalty for all crimes in 1992. Angola also supports UN General Assembly resolutions calling for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty.

Ratification not only reinforces a State's legal obligations on abolition of the death penalty but also strengthens the global trend towards the eradication of this cruel and inhuman punishment.

These positive steps by Angola and Guinea-Bissau should also encourage other States in the African region to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and to support a regional treaty on abolition of the death penalty as recommended in the study on the "Question of the Death Penalty in Africa" adopted by the African Commission on Human and People's Rights in 2011.

ICDP considers that the death penalty undermines human dignity and violates the right to life proclaimed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and it should not be applied whatever the circumstances, regardless of the gravity of the crime. Furthermore, there exists no conclusive evidence on the deterrent effect of the death penalty, and there is a real risk of executing innocent people.

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President of the International Commission against the
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Background

ICDP was founded in Madrid in October 2010. ICDP is composed of 15 personalities 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 17 states from all regions of the world that are committed to abolition of the death penalty. Its secretariat is based in Geneva.