



Madrid, 23 February 2021

**International Commission  
against the Death Penalty**

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Navanethem (Navi) Pillay

**ICDP 02/2021**

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Marta Santos Pais

Ivan Simonovic

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Marta Vilardell

**Founding Members**

Rodolfo Mattarollo,  
(1939-2014)

Asma Jilani Jahangir  
(1952-2018)

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**Statement by the International Commission against the Death Penalty: ICDP welcomes former UN Assistant Secretary General Marta Santos Pais as its new Commissioner**

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP or Commission) warmly welcomes former Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Violence against Children Marta Santos Pais as its new Commissioner.

“It is my great pleasure to welcome Marta Santos Pais as a Commissioner of the ICDP and have her join our struggle to achieve worldwide abolition of the death penalty.

“I am very happy to announce Marta Santos Pais as a fellow Commissioner at ICDP, noting her highly accomplished career in senior responsibilities within the United Nations system, including as United Nations Assistant Secretary General and Special Representative of the Secretary General on Violence against Children, as UNICEF Director for Policy, Planning and Evaluation and UNICEF Director of the Innocenti Research Centre, and holding important positions in bodies at the UN, Council of Europe and Portugal. Her long, distinguished career underlined by her important contributions in the area of abolition of death penalty legislation at the UN, in Europe, on setting standards related to violence against children, including torture, in Asia, Africa and Latin America is an inspiration to every individual dedicated to the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights, especially for those most vulnerable in society. Ms. Santos Pais’ advocacy for the abolition of the death penalty can be attested by her key contributions to the development of the Second Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming at the abolition of the death penalty and in incorporating abolition of capital punishment in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which has been accepted by nearly all countries in the world.

“I believe that Ms. Santos Pais’ highly respected experience, in-depth human rights expertise and global prestige will add immense value to our Commission in our endeavours, our fight for a world free of capital punishment. I join my fellow Commissioners in warmly welcoming Marta Santos Pais to the Commission and we look forward to working with her,” said ICDP President Judge Navi Pillay.

**Background**

ICDP Commissioners are persons of high international standing from all regions of the world who act with total independence and neutrality and work under its President Judge Navi Pillay.

The Commission opposes the death penalty under any circumstances believing that it violates the right to life enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Commission promotes the abolition of capital punishment in law in those states that observe a *de facto* moratorium on



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the use of the death penalty and promotes moratoriums on executions in states that rarely use the death penalty.

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 Commission is supported by a diverse group of 23 Member-States from all regions of the world that are committed to the abolition of the death penalty. Its secretariat is based in Madrid.