



International Commission
against the Death Penalty

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Navanethem (Navi) Pillay

Vice-Presidents

Ruth Dreifuss
Ibrahim Najjar

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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:
mission to Malawi, 29 October – 3 November 2022**

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP or Commission) undertook a mission to Lilongwe, Malawi between 29 October and 3 November 2022.

The mission was led by Commissioner Tsakhia Elbegdorj, the former President of Mongolia, who led the abolition of the death penalty in his country in 2017 during his presidency, and Commissioner Sylvie Kayitesi, former Deputy Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Rwanda, former Commissioner of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and Chairperson of the Working Group on Death Penalty in Africa.

The objective of the visit was to congratulate President Lazarus Chakwera for his historic decision to commute all persons who were under sentence of death in July 2022. The mission presented an excellent opportunity to listen, on the perspective of moving Malawi away from the death penalty, from President Chakwera, members of the government including the Minister of Justice Titus Mvalo, the Leader of the House and Minister of Youth and Sports Richard Chimwedo Banda, the Leader of the Opposition Kondwani Nankhumwa, the Attorney General Thabo Chakaka-Nyirenda, the Chair of the Parliamentary Legal Affairs Committee Peter Dimba, traditional chiefs, the Bishop of Lilongwe Archbishop George Desmond Tambala, senior representatives of the Malawi Human Rights Commission, as well as members of several civil society organizations including the Association of Persons with Albinism. The meetings were organized in close cooperation with the NGO Reprieve. ICDP also co-organized an event with the participation of 40 Members of the Parliament, including five Ministers, in order to discuss the abolition of the death penalty.

“Listening to key voices on the situation of the death penalty in Malawi and noting that there is general consensus in the Parliament to move the country towards abolition, I feel the time is ripe for the country to join the abolitionist world. Malawi is on the verge of establishing its model of abolition with consultation at the grassroots and by a vote at the Parliament. It is democracy in action and would constitute a great legacy for President Chakwera, for the Malawi Parliament, for the ministers concerned,” said Commissioner Elbegdorj. Commissioner Kayitesi shared the good practices of other African countries, including Rwanda, and provided technical background to the stakeholders for Malawi to move away from capital punishment. They both commended the steps that key stakeholders in Malawi had already taken towards the abolition and encouraged them to



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take further measures. ICDP Commissioners were very happy to note that the government shared their views and agreed to adopt further steps to move forward towards the abolition of the death penalty for all crimes.

Background

Composed of 24 Commissioners of high international standing following highly respected careers in public service and representing all regions of the world, the International Commission against the Death Penalty acts with total independence under the leadership of President Navi Pillay.

The Commission promotes the abolition of capital punishment in law in States that observe a *de facto* moratorium on the use of the death penalty and promotes moratoriums on executions in States that retain capital punishment. ICDP works with the United Nations and other international and regional organizations, governments and nongovernmental organizations to advocate for worldwide abolition of the death penalty.

The work of ICDP is supported by a geographically diverse Support Group of Member States who are committed to the abolition of the death penalty. Its Secretariat is based in Madrid and is responsible for the day-to-day work of the Commission.



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