



International Commission  
against the Death Penalty

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Navanethem (Navi) Pillay

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Marta Vilardell

#### Founding Members

Rodolfo Mattarollo

(1939-2014)

Asma Jilani Jahangir

(1952-2018)

#### Secretariat

Pl. Marqués de Salamanca, 8

P.02.020, 28006

Madrid, Spain

Tel: +00 34 91 3799458

[rajiv.narayan@icomdp.org](mailto:rajiv.narayan@icomdp.org)



North-South Prize  
of the Council of Europe

Madrid, 9 April 2023

ICDP 04/2023

### Statement by the International Commission against the Death Penalty: ICDP delegation participates in the 13th International Congress of Justice Ministers on the issue of the death penalty organized by Community San't Egidio in Rome

On 1 and 2 March 2023, a delegation of the International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP), led by ICDP Commissioner Martin O'Malley, participated in the 13th International Congress of Justice Ministers (Congress), which was organized by Community San't Egidio and held in Rome. The Congress brought together Justice Ministers, senior government officials, predominantly from Africa and Asia, and stakeholders including the hosts Community San't Egidio, who discussed the current state of capital punishment, shared experiences, identified challenges and noted the tools adopted by some of the leaders who had abolished the death penalty. During the Congress, speakers highlighted the important role of political leadership, dialogue, and cooperation in the global movement to abolish the death penalty.

ICDP Commissioner and former Governor of Maryland Martin O'Malley delivered a keynote speech at the opening session of the Congress, which was held in the Italian Parliament. He highlighted his experiences of abolishing after several attempts, when he was the Governor, the capital punishment in the US state of Maryland underlining his commitment, patience, and leadership. He joined several the participants later in a closed-door session, when ideas, experiences and advice were shared on how to move countries away from the death penalty towards its eventual abolition.

Commissioner O'Malley was accompanied by the ICDP Secretariat. During the visit, the ICDP delegation held important bilateral meetings.

The global fight against the death penalty has gained increased momentum, with an increasing number of African countries moving towards abolition, with Zambia most recently repealing capital punishment for all crimes in December 2022. The ministers and officials of some other countries, which still retain the death penalty, requested support from the international community to support their countries in their journeys of moving away from capital punishment towards the goal of abolition.

#### Background

Composed of 24 Commissioners of high international standing from all regions of the world, ICDP works with total independence and neutrality under President Navanethem (Navi) Pillay.

The Commission 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 advocates for a moratorium 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 ICDP is supported by a group of Member States from all regions of the world that are committed to the abolition of the death penalty. Its Secretariat is based in Madrid, Spain, and is responsible for the day-to-day work of the Commission.