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against the Death Penalty

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Statement by the International Commission against the Death Penalty: ICDP co-organises event on Ibero-America towards regional abolition of the death penalty at Ateneo Madrid

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP), in collaboration with the Ateneo de Madrid and supported by Member-States of ICDP's Support Group, organized the event "Ibero-America towards regional abolition of the death penalty" on 11 December 2024. The well-attended event, which was held as a discussion panel at the historic Ateneo de Madrid to commemorate International Human Rights Day, brought together key voices advocating for the abolition of the death penalty in the Ibero America region.

The panel featured a video address by ICDP Commissioner Michelle Bachelet, the former President of Chile and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and in-person contributions by President of the ICDP Support Group Ambassador Alberto Cerezo Sobrino, Spain's Ambassador for Human Rights, Rule of Law and Democracy. Ambassador Juan Bolívar Díaz, Ambassador of the Dominican Republic to Spain; Esteban Beltrán, Director of Amnesty International Spain; and Asunta Vivó Cavaller, Co-Executive Director of the ICDP.

The panellists explored the commitment of countries in Ibero-America region to the abolition of the death penalty, the history and progress of abolition in Spain and the Dominican Republic, and the global and regional evolution of abolition of capital punishment. They recognised that the Ibero-American region had not carried out executions for over two decades, that there was no person under sentence of death in the region. Noting this, the panellists supported ICDP's call for regional dialogue and cooperation to take steps towards achieving the crucial goal of a region free of the death penalty. They backed the recommendation by Commissioner Michelle Bachelet to use the 2026 Ibero-American Summit in Madrid as a platform for sharing experiences on their journeys to abolish the death penalty with the goal of starting discussions for a declaration announcing the region free of the death penalty.

The Commission expresses its gratitude to the panellists, while acknowledging the vital role of the Ateneo de Madrid and ICDP's Support Group in organizing this impactful event.

Background

The International Commission against the Death Penalty is currently composed of 26 Commissioners of high international standing following highly respected careers in public service. The Commission acts with total independence under the leadership of President Judge Navi Pillay. The work of ICDP is supported by its Support Group of 24 Member States who are committed to the abolition of the death penalty. Both ICDP's Commissioners and Member States of its Support Group come from all regions of the world. ICDP's Secretariat is based in Madrid and is responsible for the day-to-day work of the Commission.

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.



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René Cassin