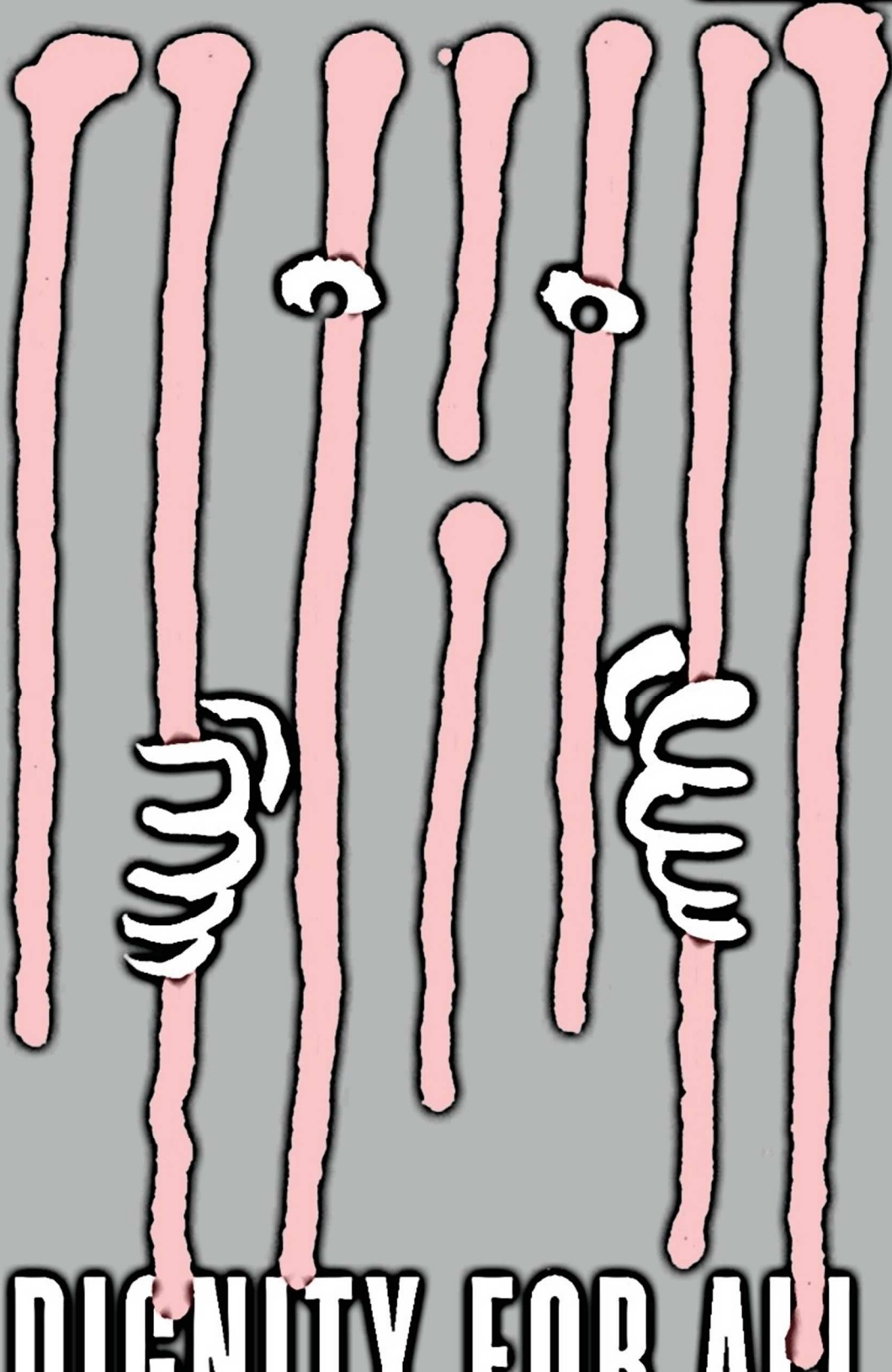


**WORLD
COALITION**
— AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY —

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DIGNITY FOR ALL

10.10.2018 - World day **against** the death penalty



Why a World Day on Living conditions on death row?

The aim of the World Coalition is to reinforce the international dimension of the fight against the death penalty. Its ultimate objective is to achieve universal abolition of the death penalty. In those countries which still use the death penalty, the World Coalition is working to reduce its use, invoking in particular the respect of international standards. Since the creation of the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty in 2002, significant progress towards the universal abolition of the death penalty has been achieved. Numerous states which maintained the death penalty have abolished it in practice or have restricted its use.

Every year on World Day, the World Coalition highlights one problematic aspect of the death penalty. On 10 October 2018, the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty and abolitionists around the world celebrated the 16th World Day Against the Death Penalty. This World Day focused on the living conditions of those sentenced to death. The World Coalition addressed the issue because it is aware that regardless of the prospect of execution, the imprisonment of those sentenced to death in itself inflicts considerable physical and psychological harm, which can, in some cases, amount to torture.

Striving for the complete abolition of the death penalty also means we cannot ignore the daily treatment imposed by retentionist countries on prisoners sentenced to death.

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For more information:

www.worldcoalition.org

[1] Main objective: Raising public awareness on the inhumane living conditions of people sentenced to death, to convince people that the death penalty should be abolished

1) Institutional resonance of the 2017 World Day

The main objective of this 16th World Day was to raise public awareness on the inhumane living conditions of people sentenced to death, to convince people that the death penalty should be abolished. Several intergovernmental and supranational organizations answered the call and reasserted their opposition of the death penalty at the occasion of the World Day, giving to the latter an international resonance. The awareness raising and information spreading activities conducted before the World Day by the World Coalition towards institutional representatives bore results.

The UN General Secretary, **Antonio Guterres**, made clear in his statement, that the application of the death penalty often involves methods amounting to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment or even torture, such as executions by stoning. Several UN experts also urged governments around the world to address the situation of women on death row: "Women and girls are an invisible population on death row whose plight and needs are too often ignored," they said.

The Council of Europe and the **European Union** released a joint statement which reaffirms "*their strong and unequivocal opposition to capital punishment in all circumstances and for all cases.*" They reaffirmed their support for the UN General Assembly resolution for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty, which was adopted in December 2018 with a very positive outcome. Finally, the Council of Europe and the EU urged countries that still apply the death penalty to commute any remaining death sentences to prison sentences and, in any case, to **ensure that conditions of detention respect human dignity.**

➤ The awareness-raising work undertaken by the World Coalition

- The secretariat participated in a session of the **African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights** during which a statement on the theme of this World Day was made.
- The Secretariat also participated in a hearing on the death penalty at the 170th session of the **Inter-American Commission on Human Rights**, during which the conditions of detention of people sentenced to death on the American continent were discussed.
- In July 2018, packages containing the mobilization tools were sent to **108 representatives of international organizations.**
- **NHRIs**, true vectors between governments and civil societies were also targeted and **73 NHRIs** around the world received the World Day toolkit.

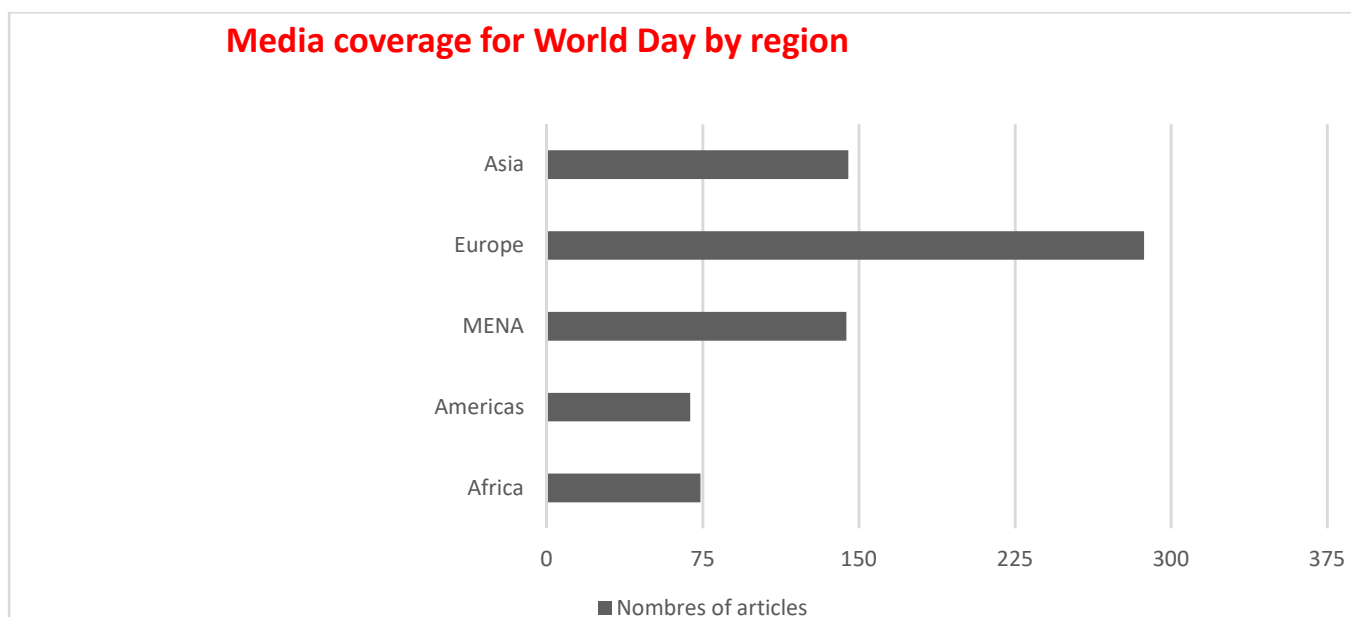
2) Media coverage of the 2018 World Day

World Day enjoyed significant media coverage, although slightly lower than the previous year. A total of **693 articles** from **100 countries** mentioned the World Day. By way of comparison, 854 articles from 100 countries were identified last year. Despite this decline in media coverage, the theme of this World Day was widely covered by the media. Particular emphasis was placed on the situation of women on death row, echoing the report published by Cornell University and the World Coalition in September 2018.

The statements by the **Secretary General of the United Nations**, the **Council of Europe** and the **European Union**, as well as the mobilization of the abolitionist movement, have been widely reported and commented on by the media.

Also, the news about the abolition of the death penalty in **Washington** State in the United States and the Prime Minister's announcement of the abolition of the death penalty in **Malaysia** have been widely publicized.

Media coverage for World Day by region



3) Social media coverage of 2017 World Day

For the 16th edition of the World Day, the World Coalition developed a social media campaign to raise awareness among a wider audience: a Twitter and Facebook campaign was launched on 1st October with the publication of 5 infographics (French/English), and a new account was opened on **Instagram** to publish stories of people who have suffered directly or indirectly from living conditions on death row.

On Twitter, the hashtag **#Nodeathpenalty** has been taken over by many Internet users and organizations.

In October 2018, **3,996** interactions with Coalition publications were recorded with the Facebook page, a significant increase from 2017. In total, in one month, the World Coalition has gained more than **112** followers on its English Twitter account and **100** new Facebook subscribers.

[2] Strengthen advocacy for the abolition of the death penalty by sharing arguments and information tools

1) Creating and sharing mobilization tools for the 16th World Day

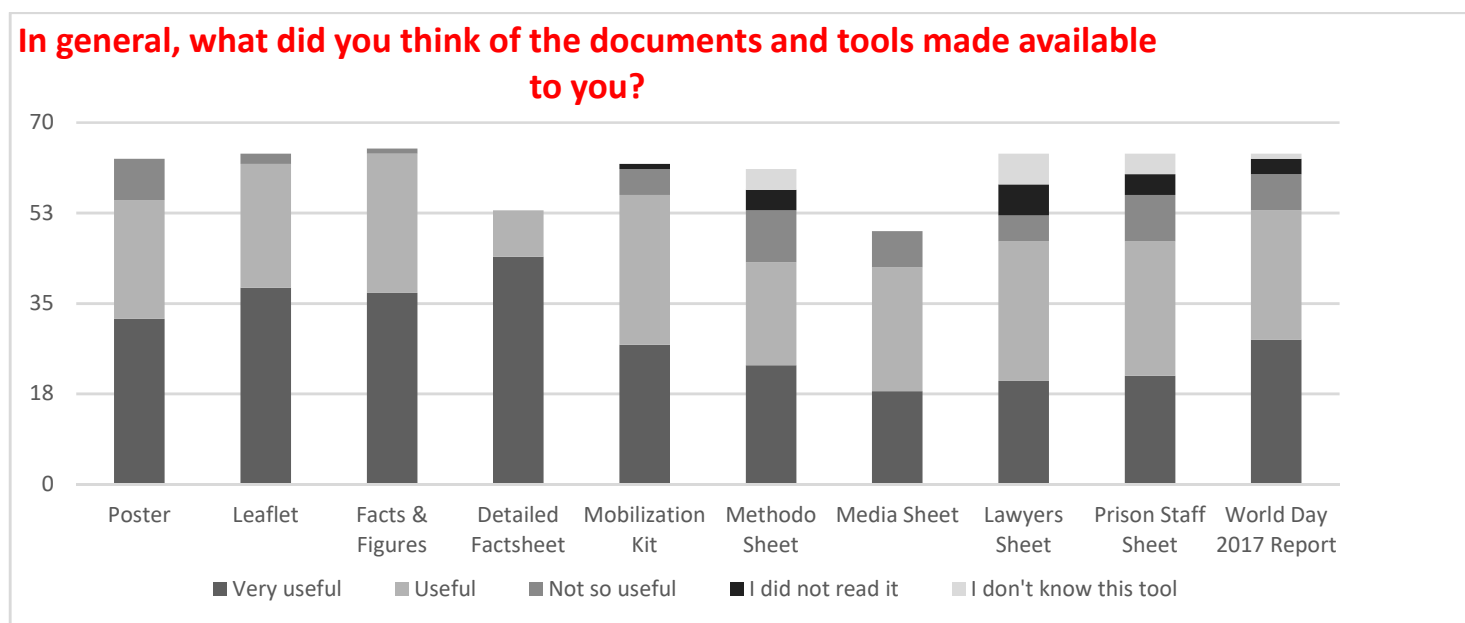
To foster the widest participation possible to the World Day against the Death Penalty and to strengthen the abolitionist civil society, especially in countries still implementing the death penalty, the World Coalition put together information and mobilization tool packs. Those are made available to members, the media, and anyone who wants to take part in the World Day in order to raise awareness and mobilize people on a local level in as many countries as possible. The tool packs were sent out to all members of the World Coalition and its partners in July 2018. The tool packs were also available on request and could be downloaded from the World Coalition's website:

- [Poster - 16th World Day against the Death Penalty](#)
- [Leaflet - 16th World Day](#)
- [Facts And Figures 2018](#)
- [Detailed factsheet on living conditions on death row](#)
- [Mobilisation Kit](#)
- [Prison conditions for women facing the death penalty: A factsheet](#)
- [Factsheet for Lawyers](#)
- [Factsheet for Prison Staff](#)
- [Factsheet on how to conduct a prison visit](#)
- [Factsheet for the Media](#)
- [2017 World Day Report](#)

❖ Distribution

515 recipients received all the tools. **1410** posters and **2350** brochures were sent during the mailing with all the other tools. The other printed brochures and posters (3650 brochures and 790 posters) were sent to members who requested additional tools and distributed at events where the World Coalition was represented (African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, United Nations, training...).

- **2,026** tools available online were downloaded from the World Coalition's website.
- In total, the World Day page was consulted **15,566 times** on the World Coalition website. Between October 1st - 30th, the World Coalition website was accessed **23,121 times**, including 6,145 pages between 9 and 11 October 2018. On 10 October 2018, **3,388** pages were consulted.



2) Encouraging the organization of local initiatives and strengthening the abolitionist civil society

a. Various events in numerous countries

With **476** events recorded in **84** countries, this 16th World Day generated less mobilization than the previous year. This significant decrease can be explained by the low participation of the general public, which has not been as successful as in other years. Indeed, the World Coalition was aware of the difficulty of mobilizing the general public with the theme of conditions of detention on death row. However, the mobilization was important for abolitionist stakeholders:

- Members of the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty;
- National and regional coalitions against the death penalty;
- Human rights organizations (international or local) active against the death penalty;
- Intergovernmental organizations and abolitionist diplomats.

A wide variety of events took place. Educational events (school visits, round tables, various publications, workshops), combined with media events, represent **40%** of the mobilization. Mobilization on social media represents only **7%** of the reported activities this year, while traditional events (sit-in, petitions, demonstrations) clearly increased (8% in 2017 compared to 29% in 2018), particularly because one of the actions carried out by the different sections of Amnesty International was the signing of petitions. Cultural events (film screenings, theatre plays, exhibitions) did not change from the previous year. Finally, unlike in previous years, political events (advocacy meeting, meeting with institutional and governmental bodies) increased significantly by 50% compared to the previous year.

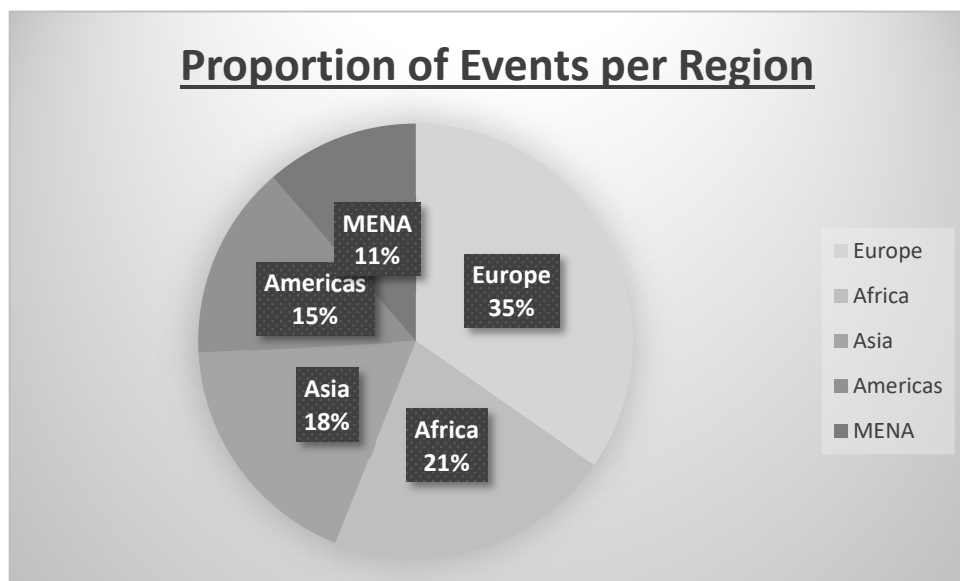
b. Worldwide mobilization to raise awareness on the death penalty

➤ Africa

For the 2018 World Day against the Death Penalty, **99** events took place in 20 sub-Saharan African countries, representing 21% of the actions of abolitionists around the world. Several members of the World Coalition in the DRC, Niger, Uganda, Sierra Leone and Kenya **conducted prison visits**, reflecting the importance of this year's theme and fulfilling one of the objectives of this edition: to **bring people sentenced to death out of oblivion**. In the same vein, Journey of Hope conducted a testimonial tour in Uganda, some of which was conducted in partnership with the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative in Kampala.

Finally, media events also had their place in the mobilization in sub-Saharan Africa, with press conferences, radio interviews and the publication of articles and op-eds.

Media coverage in Africa, although less extensive than the previous year, still included **74** press clippings. Many articles have denounced the conditions of detention of persons sentenced to death, particularly in Cameroon, Ghana and Nigeria.



➤ Americas

With **67** events recorded, the mobilization in North and South America and the Caribbean was less significant than in the 15th edition (108 events), but more significant than in the 14th edition (33 events). The Caribbean has been mobilized, particularly in Puerto Rico, with actions carried out by the Colegio de Abogados y Abogadas de Puerto Rico: radio interviews, particularly with Juan Melendez, sentenced to death then exonerated, but also the publication of articles and seminars at the university. Actions were also held in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and on the island of Dominica. The Cornell Center on the Death Penalty Worldwide, in partnership with the World Coalition, has published a report on women on death row, as well as a fact sheet on the same subject, in partnership with Penal Reform International. The information contained in these documents has been included in many press articles. Media coverage is lower than the previous year with **69** press clippings recorded.

In a press release, **Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs** reiterated that "the death penalty is a form of inhuman and barbaric punishment that is contrary to all Canadian values and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms". He also announced that Canada has joined the Friends of the Protocol group initiated and coordinated by the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty.

➤ Asia

With **84** events organized this year compared to 64 last year, the number of initiatives in Asia is up. Similarly, the number of press clippings has also increased, with **145** clippings collected (compared to 96 in 2017). This increase is mainly due to the fact that the Asian continent has better adhered to the theme of the 16th World Day, unlike the previous year's theme on the death penalty and poverty.

In 2018 again, World Day was well attended in Pakistan. In particular, Justice Project Pakistan sponsored "No Time to Sleep", a 24-hour online theatre performance broadcast worldwide. The play is about the last 24 hours of "Prisoner Z", showing the ordeal of the one who awaits his death. This event was followed by the press not only locally but also internationally, with more than 20 articles on the subject.

Taiwan Alliance to End Death Penalty organized various actions in Taiwan: a press conference, a seminar at the university, as well as a public debate on this year's theme. In Australia, Reprieve Australia coordinated the screening of the film Guilty in 14 Australian cities.

The **Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission** sent a letter to the secretariat of the World Coalition confirming its willingness to mark the World Day and sending a copy of two letters to the government recommending not to restore the death penalty and to abolish it completely. The **Human Rights Commission of the Philippines** was also mobilized with the organization a conference on the death penalty and the publication of the results of a survey on general public's perception of the application of the death penalty

➤ Europe

As in other regions, mobilization on the European continent was less strong than in previous years with **161** events organized in **22** countries. Media coverage has also decreased but remains high with **267** press clippings recorded.

The **German Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty** has published a collection of artworks by people detained on death row. **Lifespark** also marked the World Day with a collection of letters and poems written by people detained on death row in the United States. **Viasna**, a new member of the World Coalition in Belarus, the only country still executing on the continent, contributed to the World Day by sharing a video of the testimony of a mother whose son was executed. In France, the World Coalition and its members **ACAT-France**, **Amnesty International-France**, **Collectif Mumia** and **ECPM** sponsored the film "Lindy Lou, juror #5" screened in 8 French cities. In addition, many debates and discussion panels on the issue of living conditions on death row also took place. In Paris, the **Paris Bar**, in partnership with **ECPM**, organized a conference on living conditions on death row, with guest speakers from Cameroon, Indonesia and the United States sharing their knowledge of the conditions on death row in their respective countries. During this conference, the association **Planète Réfugiés-Droits de l'Homme** launched an initiative supported by the World Coalition on international standards specific to the conditions of detention and treatment of death row inmates.

➤ Middle East and North of Africa (MENA)

With **53** initiatives in **10** countries, the number of initiatives is almost identical to the previous year (54 initiatives in 12 countries).

Iranian organizations in exile have mobilized strongly, including through the publication of statements, as well as a letter signed by people on death row in Iran. **Human Rights & Democracy for Iran** has published a collection of quotes from people on death row in Iran, entitled "The death penalty: a punishment that does not stop at the gallows". In **Lebanon**, **AJEM** organized an artistic and sporting competition in a prison.

119 press clippings were collected for this 16th edition. Press clippings called for the abolition of the death penalty in Algeria, Iran and Lebanon. Media coverage was strong in Morocco, with articles calling on Morocco to vote in favor of the UN Moratorium Resolution, but also mentioning the mobilization of Moroccan civil society on the occasion of the World Day.

[3] Contributing to strengthen the defense of the people sentenced to death

1) Mobilization of members and organizations that support victims of the death penalty and innocent people (families of murder victims, families of people on death row and innocent people)

On this 16th World Day and with the aim of denouncing the isolation of people sentenced to death and their families, the World Coalition focused on the testimonies of direct or indirect victims of the death penalty. The secretariat contacted member organizations working with victims of the death penalty, but also innocent people (TAEDP, Lifespark, Witness to Innocence...) in order to collect testimonies and disseminate them to its members. The **Leaflet** and the **Detailed Factsheet** have been enriched with testimonies from all continents. An **Instagram** account was created on this occasion to publish and distribute the stories collected in the form of photos, videos, drawings or poems.

In the same vein, for this edition of the World Day, the World Coalition wanted to mobilize the abolitionist community in order to break people sentenced to death and their relatives' sense of isolation. It encouraged civil society to send messages of support, to establish correspondence with a person sentenced to death, to organize a prison visit to report on conditions of detention and finally to meet with people on death row to better understand their needs. Through this initiative, the Coalition has played its coordinating role and has been contacted on several occasions by individuals wishing to contact people sentenced to death. The secretariat has been able to connect individuals wishing to write to a person sentenced to death with civil society organizations that coordinate such actions.

2) Creation of specific tools

Still with the objective of lifting people sentenced to death and their relatives out of isolation, the World Coalition, in partnership with its members, has created various specific tools to improve the visibility of this population, but also with the objective of establishing good practices and improving working conditions, particularly for prison staff.

- A practical sheet for prison staff: This tool is intended to help prison staff to act and react in a professional manner, in accordance with current international standards for the supervision of people sentenced to death.
- A practical sheet for carrying out a prison visit: The purpose of this tool is to provide practical advice to civil society organizations wishing to visit prisons in order to report on the conditions of detention faced by people sentenced to death.
- A practical fact sheet for the media: The purpose of this tool is to encourage journalists to investigate the conditions of detention of people sentenced to death and to guide them in identifying the elements to which they should pay attention in their investigations.

Professor Roger Hood, a leading expert on the death penalty worldwide, sent a letter to the World Coalition secretariat **congratulating the World Coalition on the quality of the tools produced this year.**

[5] ANNEXES

- **Annexes to the 2018 Report on the World Day against the Death Penalty**

- 1) List of 476 events recorded in 84 countries
- 2) Press coverage: 693 articles in 100 Countries

See the electronic version of the report published online at:

www.worldcoalition.org/worldday

- **List and contact details of all 159 member organizations of the World Coalition:**

www.worldcoalition.org/Member-organizations



World Coalition Against the Death Penalty

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► World Coalition Against the Death Penalty

The World Coalition Against the Death Penalty, an alliance of more than 150 NGOs, bar associations, local authorities and unions, was created in Rome on 13 May 2002. It was founded as a result of the commitment made by the signatories of the Final Declaration of the 1st World Congress against the Death Penalty organised by the French NGO Together Against the Death Penalty (ECPM) in Strasbourg in June 2001.

The aim of the World Coalition is to strengthen the international dimension of the fight against the death penalty. Its ultimate objective is to obtain the universal abolition of the death penalty. To achieve its goal, the World Coalition advocates for a definitive end to death sentences and executions in those countries where the death penalty is in force. In some countries, it is seeking to obtain a reduction in the use of capital punishment as a first step towards abolition.

Since 2003, the Coalition has established 10 October as the World Day against the Death Penalty.

For more information:

www.worldcoalition.org