



**(Impact of the
Strategic Plan
2018 – 2022**

World Coalition Against the Death Penalty
Mundo M - 47 avenue Pasteur - 93100 Montreuil – France
www.worldcoalition.org



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(Introduction

In 2018, the World Coalition adopted its first Strategic Plan with specific objectives, expected results and indicators. 5 years later, it is time to assess if these have been achieved, and if they have not, why and what was learned in the process.



(Specific Objectives, Expected Results and Indicators)

A. SECURING ABOLITION

Because in some places, the very idea of the abolition of the death penalty was under threat, the World Coalition wanted to secure abolition and to strengthen the growing trend towards abolition.

1) Abolition of the death penalty

→ **Indicator:** 5 countries abolish the death penalty between 2018 and 2022 (one per year on average)

→ **Target countries set in 2017:**

1. **Burkina Faso**
2. Cuba
3. Gambia
4. Ghana
5. Niger
6. **Sierra Leone**
7. Sri Lanka



8. Tajikistan
9. Tanzania
10. Thailand
11. Uganda
12. **3 US states**
13. Zimbabwe

→ **Results:** Since January 2018, **9 countries and 4 US States** have abolished the death penalty according to Amnesty International:

- **Burkina Faso** (for ordinary crimes only) in 2018
- **State of Washington** (declared unconstitutional) in 2018
- **State of New Hampshire** in 2019
- Chad in 2020
- **State of Colorado** in 2020
- Suriname (for all crimes) in 2021
- **State of Virginia** in 2021
- Kazakhstan (for all crimes) in 2022
- Papua New Guinea in 2022
- **Sierra Leone** in 2022
- Central African Republic in 2022
- Equatorial Guinea (for ordinary crimes only) in 2022
- Zambia (for ordinary crimes only) in 2022

Lessons learnt:

The abolitionist trend is growing faster than anticipated, with several countries abolishing in 2022 after years of internal processes- possibly catching up from the COVID-19 pandemic period. In Sierra Leone, the bill for abolition was passed in the Parliament in 2021 but the law was only promulgated in 2022. There also seems to be a snow-ball effect in West Africa and

Southern Africa where several countries are taking steps towards abolition at the same time, following the examples of recent abolitions, and where civil society has been able to share strategies and best practices to advocate for these steps.

2) Ratification of abolitionist treaties

Because even abolition in law is sometimes questioned afterward, the World Coalition wanted to continue its ratification campaign for the international and regional treaties prohibiting the use of the death penalty.

→ **Indicator:** 10 new countries have ratified a treaty by the end of 2022 (2 countries per year on average)

→ **Target countries:**

- 1. Angola
- 2. Armenia
- 3. Cambodia
- 4. Congo (Republic of)
- 5. Cote d'Ivoire



- 6. Gambia
- 7. Guatemala
- 8. Guinea
- 9. Haiti
- 10. Morocco
- 11. Samoa
- 12. Suriname

→ **Results:** Since January 2018, 5 countries have ratified OP2-ICCPR¹: Gambia (2018); Angola (2019); State of Palestine (2019); Armenia (2021) and Kazakhstan (2022)

Why and lessons learned:

Only one country per year on average ratified OP2-ICCPR. No country ratified in 2020 and this is possibly linked to COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed during that time, several processes needed to secure ratification were stalled : legislative process was impacted, participation in the United Nations Treaty Event in New York to deposit the instruments of ratification with the UN Secretary General was impossible. Also governments worldwide had other priorities. Finally, the World Coalition was unable to organize advocacy missions in target countries for two years and previous evaluations of the campaign have shown that these were critical in securing ratification in countries where it was a low priority for the government.

3) Preventing the reintroduction of the death penalty

Because in some abolitionist countries, calls to reintroduce the death penalty had increased, the World Coalition wanted to make sure that abolition would prevail.

→ **Indicator:** no country reintroduces the death penalty between 2018 and 2022

¹ <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/MTDSG/Volume%20I/Chapter%20IV/IV-12.en.pdf>

→ **Target countries:**

1. **Israel**
2. **Mongolia**
3. **Philippines**
4. **Turkey**

→ **Results:** **No** abolitionist countries in law reintroduced the death penalty between 2018 and 2022

Lessons learned: What we learned in the countries at risk campaign is that ratification of international and regional protocols to abolish the death penalty is really key in securing abolition in the long term. In Mongolia, the Philippines, Turkey and also in Brazil, willingness to use the death penalty at the highest level was stopped thanks to these treaties. In the Philippines for example, two bills passed the House of representatives but were stopped at the Senate precisely because of the Philippines' ratification of OP2-ICCPR and the international commitment not to reintroduce it. We also learned that ratifying several of these treaties, both regional and international protocols, is even more secure. In Brazil, which has ratified the Protocol to the American Charter for Human Rights on abolition and OP2-ICCPR, and in Turkey, which has ratified Protocol 6 and Protocol 13 to the European Convention for Human Rights as well as OP2-ICCPR, the authorities felt that they could not even push for a bill in parliament.

As a consequence, the ratification campaign will be strengthened in the next 5 years to make sure that all abolitionist countries have also ratified at least one international treaty to secure abolition in the long term.

B. PROMOTING MORATORIA ON EXECUTIONS IN VIEW OF FULL ABOLITION

Because in some countries, abolition was not likely on the short term, the World Coalition wanted to promote the right to life and encourage moratorium on executions.

4) Contributing to a worldwide moratorium on executions

→ **Indicator:** **120** countries vote in favour of the UNGA moratorium resolution (1 new vote per resolution – 3 resolutions 2018, 2020 and 2022, 1 new abolitionist country per year)

→ **Target countries:**

- 2018: DRC / **Niger**
2020: Morocco / Tanzania / Zambia
2022: **Equatorial Guinea** / Kenya

→ **Results:** **125** countries voted in favor of the 2022 UNGA moratorium resolution, including **Equatorial Guinea**. **Niger** had voted yes in 2018 but abstained in 2022.

Lessons learned:

The abolitionist trend is growing faster than anticipated, and as a result, more countries voted in favor of the resolution. Equatorial Guinea is a good illustration of this: they abolished the death penalty prior to the vote in New York and voted in favor of the resolution. Zambia abolished just after the vote and abstained during the vote when it had voted against before. As a consequence, the moratorium campaign will target more specifically recent abolitionist countries or countries that have taken steps towards abolition and not so much long time abolitionist in practice countries.

5) Encouraging official moratorium

→ **Indicator:** 2 countries officially declare a moratorium on executions over the next 5 years

→ **Target countries:**

1. Belarus
2. DRC
3. South Korea
4. Taiwan

→ **Results:** 2 countries officially declared a moratorium on executions: Malaysia and Gambia in 2018, still in place at the end of 2022

6) Preventing resumption of executions

→ **Indicator:** no abolitionist in practice countries resume executions

→ **Target countries:**

1. Cameroon
2. Liberia
3. Maldives
4. Papua New Guinea

→ **Results:** No target countries reintroduced the death penalty between 2018 and 2022. Papua New Guinea abolished the death penalty in 2022. In Liberia, the Senate passed a bill to abolish the death penalty in the penal code also in 2022 and the Maldives have confirmed their commitment to a moratorium on executions.

However, Myanmar, which was classified as an abolitionist country in practice by Amnesty International, executed 4 people in 2022, for the first time in four decades.

Lessons learned:

What we learned in the countries at risk campaign is that the best way to prevent the resumption of executions is actually to advocate for abolition or official moratorium. Preventing executions, while an honorable goal in itself, is more like a stop-gaz measure and not an effective objective in the mid-term.

C. LIMITING THE USE OF THE DEATH PENALTY

In the hard core retentionist countries, the World Coalition wanted to save as many lives as possible and reduce the number of people facing the death penalty.

7) Reducing the scope of the death penalty

Reducing the scope entailed reducing the number of crimes punishable by death (drug-related offenses, economic crimes...), excluding categories of people from the death penalty (juveniles, elderly...) or abolishing the mandatory death penalty for a number of crimes (a mandatory sentencing scheme is one where the imposition of a death sentence is automatic upon conviction of a crime). It can be done through amending the criminal code or by a ruling of the supreme court (or its equivalent).

→ **Indicator:** 5 countries reduce the scope of the death penalty between 2018 and 2022 (one per year on average)

→ **Target countries:**

1. Barbados
2. China
3. Indonesia
4. Iran
5. Kenya



6. Malaysia
7. Mauritania
8. Morocco
9. USA states (Texas, Virginia, Alabama)
10. Vietnam

→ **Results:** 5 countries and 1 US State reduced the scope of the death penalty

- The Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) declared the mandatory death penalty unconstitutional in Barbados on 27 June 2018
- In August 2019, the Parliament of Uganda passed a bill for the reduction of the scope of the death penalty. The President signed it into law in November 2019.
- The State of California in the USA extended the ban on the death penalty for intellectually disabled individuals to include those individuals who are over 18 years of age in 2020.
- On 20 August 2021, the Chinese National People's Congress adopted a new law to improve access to legal aid across the country, including by making legal assistance mandatory in criminal cases involving life imprisonment and the death penalty if a lawyer has not been privately engaged.
- In 2022, in Indonesia, the parliament adopted a new Criminal Code that would allow for the commutation of death sentences after 10 years if certain conditions are met. In December 2022, the National Assembly of Pakistan adopted a bill abolishing the death penalty for drug-related offenses.

Lessons learned:

Even in retentionist countries, there is a trend to reduce the use of the death penalty, but it is not linear and while some progress were seen in Iran (with less sentences for drug-related offenses) or Saudi Arabia (for juveniles sentenced to death) there were setbacks in 2021 and 2022.

8) Reducing the number of people executed

→ **Indicator:** 10% decrease in 5 years (Amnesty figure for 2017: 993 excluding China)

→ **Target countries:**

- | | |
|------------|------------------|
| 1. Belarus | 7. Jordan |
| 2. China | 8. Malaysia |
| 3. Egypt | 9. Palestine |
| 4. Iran | 10. Pakistan |
| 5. Iraq | 11. Singapore |
| 6. Japan | 12. Saudi Arabia |



→ **Results:** 11% decrease between 31 December 2017 and 31 December 2022 according to Amnesty International (figure for 2022: 883 – excluding China) Looking at longer trends, there was a 40% decline in the number of people executed between 2018-2022 compared to 2013-2017 (3,292 and 5,497 respectively).

9) Reducing the number of people sentenced to death

→ **Indicator:** 10% decrease in 5 years (AI figure for 2017: 2,591– excluding China)

→ **Target countries:**

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Algeria | 7. Lebanon |
| 2. Bahrain | 8. Morocco |
| 3. Bangladesh | 9. USA |
| 4. India | 10. Trinidad and Tobago |
| 5. Iran | 11. Taiwan |
| 6. Kenya | 12. Tunisia |



→ **Results:** 22% decrease between 31 December 2017 and 31 December 2022 according to Amnesty International (figure for 2022: 2,016 – excluding China)

10) Reducing the number of people on death row

The number of people on death row will be decreased by encouraging commutations, pardons, resentencing following reduction of the scope of the death penalty, and imposing fewer death sentences.

→ **Indicator:** 20% decrease in 5 years (Total figure from Cornell Center on the death penalty worldwide in 2017: slightly less than 40,000 people. According to Amnesty International's annual report: "at least 21,919 people were known to be under a sentence of death worldwide at the end of 2017")

→ **Target countries:**

1. **Algeria**
2. **India**
3. **Iran**
4. **Japan**
5. **Kenya**



6. **Niger**
7. **Nigeria**
8. **Pakistan**
9. **Sri Lanka**
10. **USA**

→ **Results:** the number of people on death row as reported by the Cornell Center on the Death Penalty worldwide has slightly increased over the period and with more than 40,000 people under a death sentence worldwide. It has increased by 29% according to Amnesty International data with 28,282 people under a death sentence at the end of 2022.

Why and lessons learned:

Part of the reasons for this increase (small increase if we consider the Cornell Center's data and significant one if we rely on Amnesty International reports) in reported number of people on death row is linked to gaps in information and the difficulty in many countries to have access to people on death row and data regarding their cases. For example, in 2019 Amnesty International included 8,000+ people on death row for Iraq, up from 285+ in 2018. However, during the same period, Amnesty was able to confirm 271+ new death sentences in Iraq. So most of these 8,000 people had been sentenced to death prior to 2018 but were unreported. Another reason is that because there are more new death sentences than executions each year (2,016 death sentence and 883 executions in 2022), the number of people on death row is growing. However, thanks to commutations and resentencing (for example in Kenya, Malawi and Pakistan), exonerations (USA, Taiwan), pardons (especially during COVID or before abolition), it is not an exponential increase.



(Action Plan

The overarching goal and specific objectives for this strategic plan were underpinned by 6 cross-cutting programs:

(World Day against the Death Penalty – 10 October

Since 2003, the World Coalition has established 10 October as World Day against the Death Penalty. In addition to **producing common tools** and **mobilising abolitionists all around the world** for the day, the World Coalition called for common actions as a movement with a longer-term vision, and ensured the follow-up of past World Days.

- **Indicators:** **1,000 events** organised and **2,000 media** coverage by 2022
(608 initiatives recorded in 96 countries and 1,023 media coverage in 104 countries in 2016)
- **Results:** **1,023 events** organized and **982 media** coverage in 2022

Why and lessons learned:

Despite a drop in the number of events during COVID, the World Coalition reached its goal in 2022 to celebrate the 20th World Day. The result for media coverage was disappointing mostly because of a capacity issue to track media coverage all over the world in multiple languages. The external evaluation of the 2021 World Day provided recommendations to better monitor World Day activities and coverage.

(Speaking tours of death row survivors and victims' families worldwide

What was, just a decade ago, a mostly US phenomenon, is increasingly now a worldwide trend: **judicial exoneration** of death row survivors and **victim's families speaking out** against the death penalty.

- **Indicators:** at least **5 Speaking Tours** are organised by 2022 (one in each region of the world for each World Day)
- **Results:** **5 Speaking Tours** were organised by member organizations and supported by the World Coalition (in Africa, the Caribbean, Asia and Europe). Because of COVID-19, most of them were held online.

Why and lessons learned:

Over the last 5 years, we have learnt that while sharing the testimonies of directly impacted people is key to abolition, the role of exonerees, victims families and families of people on death row should be not confined to speaking about their experience. In the future, they will be key in decision-making process and activities at all level.

(Need assessment for members

To better know its member organisations, to better engage with them, to better support their work and to efficiently strengthen their capacities, the World Coalition will create a **directory**

of services and expertise offered by members and services and expertise needed by members and share this directory with all members.

An exercise of “match making” will then be coordinated by the World Coalition and will lead to **joint activities, training sessions, and translation or creation of advocacy tools**, including during General Assemblies and World Congresses. It will ultimately make training easier and more accessible for the members as well as increase their advocacy skills by using the internal expertise of the World Coalition.

- **Indicators:** the directory is launched within 2 years and is kept updated overtime leading to **15 joint actions** by 2022
- **Results:** the directory was created in 2019 and has been useful to better understanding the needs and expertise of the members. However, it has not been kept updated. Training sessions (in Africa, in countries at risk, at the ACHRP, ...) and joint advocacy tools have been created with the impetus of the World Coalition.

Why and lessons learned:

Horizontality between member organisations has been a challenge and joint activities happened when the secretariat of the World Coalition acted as an intermediary to connect members.

(Index of death penalty resources

The idea was that the World Coalition’s Website would become a **data hub on the death penalty abolition movement worldwide**. It would be a repository of materials and a library of resources (films, books, articles, reports, fictions, non-fiction) as well as a unique place to look for tools for members and abolitionists at large.

- **Indicators:** the new website is launched within 2 years and is kept updated overtime, with **50,000 annual visits** in 2022.
- **Results:** the new website was launched in 2021 and was updated overtime, with **133,000 annual visits** in 2022.

(Coordinating international advocacy

As written in the bylaws, the World Coalition aims at “leading and coordinating action at an international level, particularly lobbying activities”. Its objective for 2018-2022 was to place **abolition of the death penalty as one of the priorities of the United Nations and regional institutions**.

- **Indicators:** common strategies, joint submissions, side events, joint statements and advocacy missions are coordinated during all international and regional meetings
- **Results:** dedicated working groups (africa, advocacy, moratorium), shared agendas, increased number of joint submissions, side events, joint statements

and advocacy missions during all international and regional meetings. During COVID, World Coalition and its members have adjusted to online participation.

(Expansion of the network

The World Coalition has engaged in discussion about the role and diversity of its constantly evolving network of member organisations. With the new membership rules adopted in 2016, the objective for 2018-2022 was to carry out a targeted expansion of its membership so that it continues to **diversify geographically** and includes **new types of organisations**.

- **Indicators:** By 2022, the World Coalition will have **200 member organisations** from all over the world, including at least one member active in each retentionist country.
- **Results:** By 2022, the World Coalition has **170 member organisations** from all over the world, including at least one member active in each retentionist country

Why and lessons learned:

The expansion of membership has not been linear, some member organizations have stopped operating, others have considered joining but not made the official requests. With the COVID-19 pandemic, less meetings were organized, so less new organizations were invited. Internal changes with a new membership subcommittee, and new staff dedicated to this objective will have a greater impact in the future.



(Conclusions

The abolition trend is growing faster than anticipated five years ago, but the number of people on death row worldwide has increased during the same time. The number of ratifications of international and regional treaties has also been lesser than anticipated and more efforts need to be put to promote such ratifications as the past 5 years have shown that they are the most effective way to prevent the reintroduction of the death penalty after abolition.

The Action Plan of the World Coalition has also evolved over the years and a new paradigm has been adopted for the 2023-2027 strategy based on consultations held in 2022. The World Coalition will refocus on its role as a network to support the movement in advocacy, communication, sharing best practices, leading global campaigns, supporting national campaigns and funding the movement.

(For more information:

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Mundo M – 47 avenue Pasteur - 93100 Montreuil – France

✉ contact@worldcoalition.org ☎ +33 1 80 87 70 43

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