

**REPORT 2008**

Sixth edition  
WORLD DAY AGAINST  
THE DEATH PENALTY

**Asia: it's time to end  
executions**



**Open your eyes**

**OCTOBER 10<sup>TH</sup>**  
**2008**  
WORLD DAY  
AGAINST THE  
DEATH PENALTY

[www.worldcoalition.org](http://www.worldcoalition.org)

**WORLD  
COALITION**  
AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY

## **WORLD COALITION AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY**

The World Coalition Against the Death Penalty (WCADP) was created in 2002 to reinforce the international dimension of the fight against the death penalty.

It brings together 83 NGOs, bar associations, trade unions and public bodies that are active across the world in support of abolition of the death penalty.

The World Coalition endeavours to strengthen international action in the fight against the death penalty, lead and coordinate international action (particularly lobbying), bring together new abolitionists and increase its influence in countries where capital punishment still exists as part of national legislation. It helps creating national and regional coalitions and organizing worldwide events.

In 2003, the WCADP made October 10<sup>th</sup> the World Day Against the Death Penalty.

# WORLD DAY AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY

## **10 OCTOBER 2008**

### **Sixth Edition**

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#### **World Coalition Against the Death Penalty**

ECPM,

197/199 Avenue Pierre Brossolette

92120 Montrouge – France

Tel.: + 33 1 57 21 07 53

[contact@worldcoalition.org](mailto:contact@worldcoalition.org)

[www.worldcoalition.org](http://www.worldcoalition.org)

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[ PREAMBLE ]

By Maiko Tagusari



Maiko Tagusari with her young daughter in Palais Wilson,  
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Right in Geneva in May 2008.

**"I BELIEVE COUNTLESS FRIENDS IN ASIAN AND OTHER RETENTIONIST COUNTRIES HAVE ALSO RECEIVED ENERGY FROM THE WORLD DAY MESSAGES."**

In May 2002, I was in Rome to join the official launching of the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty as the only participant from Asia. At that time I had been involved in the domestic abolition movement for 10 years here in Japan and been representing those who are facing the death penalty in both criminal and civil cases. But in the previous year, 2001, I participated in an epoch-making event dedicated to abolition of the death penalty, the First World Congress Against the Death Penalty, which was held in Strasbourg, France. The Congress gave me international perspectives, a great momentum for domestic movement and various precious opportunities to meet wonderful activists from all over the world.

One of the most important initiatives taken by the World Coalition in its early stage is the creation of the World Day against the Death Penalty. The Coalition set October 10th as the World Day so that we can disseminate a clear message that the use of the death penalty must be abandoned throughout the world and work together toward the common goal of abolition beyond borders. Since then, the World Day campaign has steadily extended its reach and has raised more and more public awareness. In 2007, Council of Europe and European Union also decided October 10th as European Day against the death penalty. 2007 should be also noted as the year when the World Day campaign greatly contributed to successful adoption of Resolution on "Moratorium on the use of the death penalty" at the United Nations' General Assembly.

In spite of the overwhelming victory of the United Nation General Assembly resolutions on moratorium on the use of the death penalty, the situations in Asia, where 85 to 95 % of the world executions take place, still remain serious. In 2006, activists from Asia-Pacific region got together in Hong Kong and established the Anti Death Penalty Asia Network (ADPAN) on the fourth World Day Against the Death Penalty with a strong support by WCADP. Taking Asian situations seriously, WCADP decided to focus on Asia on the 6<sup>th</sup> World Day and selected 6 target countries: Pakistan, India, Taiwan, Vietnam, South Korea and Japan. Circumstances surrounding these countries and problems they are tackling vary. Now South Korea is next to abolish the death penalty for all crimes and Taiwan has continued a de-facto moratorium on executions for more than three years. Although China still resorts to mass production of death penalty, numbers of death sentences and executions are dramatically decreasing. Regrettably, however, situations in Japan have worsened in recent years. In 2008, executed prisoners amounted to 15, which hit the highest number in the past 30 years, and the number of death sentences is also increasing. It is true that many of my colleagues have desperate feelings about the current situations, but the World Day campaign reminds us that we are never isolated and in the mid of the world trend toward abolition. A clear and simple message calling for abolition conveyed by activists from five continents has definitely encouraged

us to move forward. I believe countless friends in Asian and other retentionist countries have also received energy from the World Day messages.

This book brings you the new report of 2008 World Day including various challenges by Asian activists among 289 initiatives in 50 countries by the members of the World Coalition. In Japan, hundreds of citizens marched in downtown of Tokyo and Osaka. In Taiwan, arts festival was organized. The initiatives were taken in Hong Kong, Mongolia and India as well.

I stress that we can accomplish the universal abolition despite the difficulties we are facing today in solidarity with friends of the world.

**Maiko Tagusari**  
Lawyer

Centre for Prisoners' Rights (Japan)  
Member of the WCADP since 2002.

[ 1 ]  
A WORLD DAY  
TO SAY NO  
TO THE DEATH PENALTY  
IN ASIA



South Korean abolitionists invaded the Parliament for the introduction of an abolition bill.

## THE PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF THE WORLD DAY: 6 YEARS OF MOBILIZATION

In 2003, the WCADP made October 10th the World Day Against the Death Penalty. For six years now, initiatives have been developed worldwide. In 2007, it was officially recognized as the 'European Day Against the Death Penalty'.

During the previous editions, local actions took place all over the world: in 2003, 63 countries joined forces and took 188 actions against death penalty. For the second occurrence, in 2004, 205 initiatives were taken in 24 countries.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> World Day, in 2005, was celebrated in 46 countries through 263 actions. For this occasion, a petition, inviting the African Heads of State to abolish the death penalty, collected over 42,000 signatures and was delivered to the African Union's Chairmanship.

In 2006, 450 local actions were taken all over the world. In addition, 5 petitions circulated to support five emblematic death row inmates who were convicted after justice failures: conviction of innocents; discriminatory sentences; unfair trials; cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and death sentence for mentally ill. These petitions collected over 145,000 signatures.

In 2007, on the occasion of the World Day, the World Coalition decided to encourage an international mobilisation in favour of the resolution calling for the establishment of a global moratorium on the death penalty at the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly. More than 411 initiatives were organised in 60 countries across five continents and over 160,000 petition signatures were collected.

The main action of 2008 was a call to end executions in Asia. More than 289 initiatives have been listed in more than 50 countries all over the world. This year, mobilization has been particularly good in Asia where abolitionists have organized both original and efficient campaigns. More than 20,000 appeals have then been sent to the Indian, Japanese, Pakistani, South Korean, Taiwanese and Vietnamese governments.

## WHY FIGHTING FOR THE GLOBAL ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY?

- **The death penalty is irrevocable:** no justice system is safe from judicial errors and innocent people are likely to be executed.
- **The death penalty is inefficient:** it has never been shown to deter crimes more effectively than other punishments.
- **The death penalty is unfair:** the death penalty is discriminatory and is often used disproportionately against the poor, the mentally ill, those discriminated against for reasons of sexual orientation, or from racial, ethnic and religious minorities.
- **The death penalty is a cruel, inhuman, and degrading punishment:** waiting on death row inflicts extreme psychological suffering and execution is a physical and mental assault.
- **The death penalty is applied overwhelmingly in violation of international standards:** it breaches the principles of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that everyone has the right to life and that no one shall be

subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. It is also in contradiction with the international trend towards abolition recognized by a vote at the United Nations' General Assembly calling for the establishment of a universal moratorium on the use of the death penalty (Resolution 62/149 adopted on 18 December 2007 and Resolution 63/168 adopted on December 2008).

## FACTS AND FIGURES: THE DEATH PENALTY AROUND THE WORLD

The following facts and figures are those published by Amnesty International in 2007 and 2008 when the source is not specified. Amnesty International and Stop Child Executions are both members of the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty.

### Abolitionist and Non-Abolitionist Countries

In 2007, more than two thirds of the world's countries have abolished the death penalty in law or practice.

- 93 countries have abolished the death penalty for all crimes;
- 9 countries have abolished the death penalty for all crimes except extraordinary crimes such as those committed in times of war;
- 35 countries are de facto abolitionists: the death penalty is still provided for in legislation but no executions have been carried out for at least ten years.

Therefore, 137 countries have abolished the death penalty in law or practice. However, 60 countries and territories still uphold the death penalty and use this punishment and 24 countries carried out executions in 2007.

### Progress Made Towards World Abolition of the Death Penalty

Since 1990 more than 54 countries have abolished capital punishment for all crimes: in Africa (recent examples include Ivory Coast and Rwanda); the Americas (Canada, Mexico, Paraguay and Argentina); Asia-Pacific (Bhutan, the Philippines, Samoa and Uzbekistan); and Europe (Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cyprus, Montenegro, and Turkey).

### Death Sentences and Executions

During 2007 at least 1,252 prisoners were executed in 24 countries and 3,347 people were sentenced to death in 51 countries. These figures only reflect cases of which Amnesty International was aware and the actual number is certainly higher because the death penalty is a state secret in many countries.

In 2007 88% of executions registered took place in China, the United States, Iran, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

### Asia: China and Pakistan

Amnesty International estimates that China executed at least 470 people during the course of the year 2007 but the actual number is probably far higher. The US-based organization "Dui Hua Foundation" estimates it to be around 6,000 people. Official national statistics on the application of capital punishment remain a state secret. It is therefore very difficult to obtain real, reliable information on the situation of the death penalty in the country.

Pakistan executed at least 135 people and about 7,500 inmates are on death row, including children. On 21 June 2008 Prime Minister sent a proposal for President's approval to commute all current death sentences as a tribute to Benazir Bhutto, the former leader of the Pakistan People's Party who was killed in December 2007. However, the Pakistan Law Ministry strongly opposed this proposal claiming that the decision was a violation of Islamic laws<sup>1</sup>. According to the Federal Sharia Court, the legal heirs of a murder victim are the sole persons entitled to grant mercy to the culprit. It has thus limited the possibilities of pardon by the president. The proposal has been referred to the Supreme Court whose verdict was not delivered yet in December 2008.

### Iran and Saudi Arabia

According to Amnesty International's information Iran executed at least 317 people in 2007 (almost twice as many as in 2006 and four times as many as 2005) and Saudi Arabia at least 143 in 2007. In 2008, 102 people were beheaded according to Hands Off Cain.

### United States of America

In the United States 10 States carried out executions in 2007, taking the lives of 42 people (compared to 53 in 2006 and 60 in 2005), therefore bringing the total number of people executed since capital punishment was reinstated in 1977 to 1,099.

From September 2007 there has been a de facto moratorium in the United States following the seizure of the Supreme Court to establish whether the practice of lethal injection, used by 36 federal States, complied with the Constitution or not. Executions were suspended until 16 April 2008 when the Supreme Court handed over its decision. It stated that lethal injections did not break the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment protecting citizens against any "cruel and unusual punishment". Since then, between May 2008 and December 2008, 37 people have been executed in the United States, 18 of them in Texas according to Death Penalty Information Center<sup>2</sup>.

### Use of the Death Penalty against Juvenile Offenders

International human rights treaties forbid the use of capital punishment for all those under 18 at the time of the crime of which they are accused.

This ban is inscribed in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the American Convention on Human Rights. The 104 countries which still uphold capital punishment for some crimes expressly forbid the execution of juvenile offenders in their legislation, or are party to one of these treaties and should exclude child executions.

However, a small number of countries continue to execute juvenile offenders. In 2007 a total of ten child offenders were executed: eight in Iran, one in Saudi Arabia and one in Yemen. Iran was in December 2008 the only known country in the world where executions of juvenile offenders took place in 2008: at least six executions this year according to Amnesty International. In late 2008, at least 140 juvenile offenders were still believed to be on death row in Iran according to the organization Stop Child Executions.

On 16 October 2008, the Assistant Attorney General for Judicial Affairs in Iran announced that no one under the age of 18 would be sentenced to death any longer, irrespective of the type of crime allegedly committed. Three days later, he went back on this statement and distinguished between murder and other offences punishable by death under Iranian law. He explained that capital punishment for murder was the victims' family responsibility to decide (*qisa*).<sup>3</sup>

### International Instruments Supporting Abolition

One important aspect of the progress which has been made recently is the adoption of international treaties through which States pledge not to use capital punishment. Currently, there are four such treaties:

- **Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**, which aims to abolish the death penalty and has been ratified by sixty six States. Six other countries have signed the Protocol, thereby signalling their intention to become party to this instrument at a later date;
- **Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights on the abolition of the death penalty**, which has been ratified by nine States on the American continent and signed by two others;
- **Protocol No. 6 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms** (European Human Rights Convention) on the abolition of the death penalty, which has been ratified by 46 European States and signed by one other;
- **Protocol No. 13 to the European Human Rights Convention** concerning the abolition of the death penalty in all circumstances, which has been ratified by 40 European States and signed by five others.

In addition to these treaties, several resolutions adopted the past 10 years at the General Assembly of the United Nations refer to the issue of the death penalty. Among the most recent ones, the Resolution 62/149 on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty adopted on 18 December 2007 calls upon all States that still maintain the death penalty to progressively restrict the use of the death penalty, to reduce the number of offences for which it may be imposed and to establish a moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty. This resolution was opposed by several retentionist states in a statement of dissociation initiated by Singapore. Its opponents insist on the fact that the death penalty is not a matter of international law, but of national law.

In December 2008, a new resolution reaffirming the resolution 62/149 of 18 December 2007 on the moratorium on the use of the death penalty has been adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations.



The resolutions of the General Assembly are not legally binding but they have a very great symbolic significance. They represent the legitimate expression of the majority of member states of the United Nations and are endowed with a considerable moral force. They attest to a global trend towards abolition.

## **THE 2008 EDITION OF THE WORLD DAY: IT'S TIME TO END EXECUTIONS IN ASIA**

### **Death Penalty in Asia**

Asia alone represents about 60% of the world's population and 95% of this population lives in a country with the death penalty. If 27 countries have already abolished the death penalty in law or in practice, 14 countries among the most populated countries in the world continue to carry out executions: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, North Korea, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

According to Amnesty International, at least 664 executions and 2561 death sentences have been reported in Asia in 2007. Amnesty International and others believe that the real figures are much higher. A recent study by Franklin Zimring and David Johnson estimates that 85 to 95% of the world's executions take place in Asia<sup>3</sup>.

Despite the huge diversity of legislations, culture and history in Asia, common trends in the use of the death penalty emerge all over the continent:

#### **Opaque systems**

Many Asian countries refuse to reveal information on the use of this punishment. In China, the death penalty is a state secret and no figures on the numbers of death sentences or executions are available. In Japan executions of death sentences are carried out in secret: people on death row live in total isolation, they are banned from talking to other prisoners and contact with the outside world is limited to infrequent and supervised visits from family and lawyers. They are not allowed to watch television or engage in personal interests or hobbies. They are notified of their execution only a few hours before it takes place and their families are not informed. Some prisoners thus spend decades under sentence of death, waking up every morning with the fear of an imminent execution.

#### **Unfair trials**

In many cases the accused cannot access adequate legal representation, trials are held in secret, or deadlines are so short that there is no time to appeal. In Pakistan, parallel judicial systems and anti-terrorism courts deprive the accused of adequate defence and this results in a considerable number of death sentences being handed down. Appeals for presidential pardons remain limited. In murder cases the law is discriminatory against disadvantaged people, as in accordance with the Islamic *diyāt* custom, those sentenced to death may "compensate" their

punishment to the families of their victim by paying them "blood money". Thus only the richest and most influential Pakistanis escape the death penalty.

#### **Use for a wide range of crimes, including non-violent ones**

In a large number of countries, the death penalty may be used as punishment for dozens of non-violent crimes: the death penalty is provided for approximately 160 offences in South Korea, 68 in China and 27 in Pakistan. Some of these crimes are non-violent, like tax evasion or drug trafficking. In Vietnam, 29 offences are punishable by death including non-violent ones such as embezzlement, smuggling, forgery, offering and accepting bribes and drug production or trafficking. The majority of death sentences monitored had drug-related crimes and last year over 80 people were sentenced to death for this crime alone. In Singapore, drug smuggling is automatically punishable by death, even for possession of a few grams of drugs.

### **A Trend towards Abolition**

Over the last few years, the total figures of death sentences and executions have decreased in Asia. Across the continent, periods of moratorium (i.e. the temporary suspension of executions) are longer and more frequent. In Taiwan, the new President Ma Ying-jeou elected in May 2008 and the new Minister of Justice Wang Jing-feng have stated their personal opposition to the death penalty and have promised not to sign any execution orders. In South Korea, the last execution was carried out in 1997 but more than 60 prisoners remain on death row. In India, although there is no official moratorium on executions, the last execution – the only one in ten years – took place in 2004.

Alongside this reduction in the number of executions, there are more and more organised Asian activists in favour of the abolition of the death penalty. The Anti-death Penalty Asia Network (ADPAN) launched on World Day 2006, has currently 37 members in 21 countries.

[ Abstracts of “A Brief Introduction to a Buddhist View of the Death Penalty”  
By Jin-ker WEN<sup>4</sup>

Buddhism has had great influence in the history of Asia. Buddhist doctrines are still deeply rooted in people’s minds. According to research conducted in Taiwan, Buddhist scriptures reflect a clear and strong attitude against the death penalty. Historically Buddhist teachings have had a substantial impact on penalty policy in a number of countries. Given the current trend to abolish the death penalty promoted by international human rights groups, Buddhism can provide traditional thought and faith-based resources to urge those Asian countries where the death penalty has not yet been abolished to reflect upon their use of this form of punishment..

**The impact of the Buddhist attitude against the death penalty on history**

Buddhism is probably the first religion that clearly opposed the death penalty. It advocates the abolition of the death penalty, and exerts its influence where Buddhism is prevalent.

In Japan the death penalty was suspended from 810 to 1156 AD. In Tibet a Buddhist legal system was established and the death penalty was abolished in 1349.

**The doctrine and practice of opposition to the death penalty**

According to Buddhism, those who pursue absolute spiritual freedom shall hold to the discipline of doing no harm to other lives, and adopt a merciful attitude to protect other lives from harm. An attitude that opposes the death penalty has developed under this principle.

The root cause of Buddhist opposition to death penalty is the Buddhist principle of *ahimsa*, which means ‘no killing’. An act of killing takes place under three conditions: first of all, the sought-after targets of killing must have lives. Second, there has to be an attempt to seek to take someone’s life. Third, an act of killing is carried out. Under these conditions, the crime of killing is committed whether it is done by oneself, or ordered, accepted, encouraged, or praised by someone else.

In Buddhism, murderers, executioners, and judges, who sentence to death, have all committed the crime of killing, which will cause them to enter hell in their afterlives.

The political ideal of Buddhism is to establish a society without the death penalty and a society in which benevolence is cultivated. Since the beginning of modern times, the movement towards the abolition of death penalty, based on Western ideas of justice and human rights, justifies our expectation of a benevolent society and matches our Buddhist ideals.

**The Six Targeted Countries**

These changes are signs of hope for a death penalty-free Asia. For the 2008 World Day, the WCADP calls for the support of the abolitionist movement in Asia by focusing on six countries: India, Japan, Pakistan, South Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam. Three countries were chosen because progress towards abolition has been made (India, South Korea and Taiwan). The same demand is linked to these three countries: the introduction of moratoria on executions

In the three other countries (Japan, Pakistan and Vietnam) there are concerns about the application of the death penalty, and especially about the non respect of transparency for the death row inmates and the application of the death penalty in Japan; the high frequency of unfair trials in Pakistan; and the important number of capital offences in Vietnam.

China was not chosen as a targeted country despite the huge number of executions carried out each year because it was already the target of a specific campaign focusing on China in the view of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. This campaign started in January 2008 and ended in July 2008 with the symbolic handover of the petitions to the Chinese authorities following a press conference in Hong Kong.

[ India

- STATUS - Retentionist

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: ratified in 1979.

United Nation General Assembly Resolutions 62/149 and 63/168 for a moratorium on the death penalty: India has voted against but did not sign the statement of dissociation initiated by Singapore<sup>5</sup>.

- HISTORICAL BACKGROUND -

At independence in 1947, India retained the 1861 Penal Code which provided for the death penalty for murder

- FIGURES -

1950-1980: between 3000 and 4000 executions

1980-1997: 2 to 3 people hanged per year

1997-2004: de facto moratorium on executions

August 2004: 1 execution for rape and murder

After 2004: no execution

- EVOLUTION -

Although every year tens of people are still sentenced to death, there has been only one execution since 1997.

Minister of Justice declared to “the Indian Express” newspaper that he was against death penalty and that it shouldn’t exist in Indian legislation, but it’s only the competence of the Parliament to abolish it.

Private members’ bills to abolish the death penalty were introduced in both houses of parliament in the last two decades, but none of them was adopted.

## [ South Korea

- STATUS - Abolitionist in practice (last executions: 1997)

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: ratified in 1990.

United Nation General Assembly Resolutions 62/149 and 63/168 for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty: South Korea abstained and did not sign the statement of dissociation initiated by Singapore.

- HISTORICAL BACKGROUND -

1910-1945: Under Japanese colonial rule the death penalty was imposed abusively to suppress the Korean Independence Movement.

1950: the new Penal Code re-establish the death penalty

1960-1989: The number of executions has been highest in the aftermath of the Korean War and the authoritarian governments of the 1970s and 1980s were accused of using capital punishment as a political tool.

Since 1989, after the democratic revolution, no death sentences have been imposed on political crime cases. Most of the sentences were imposed on murder.

- FIGURES -

December 1997: 23 people executed, last executions in South Korea

2006: 2 people sentenced to death for murder, last death penalty sentences in the country

December 2007: 6 death row inmates had their sentence commuted to life imprisonment by the President in a traditional amnesty before the New Year.

November 2008: 60 prisoners are still on death row

- EVOLUTION -

Since December 1999, four Special bills to abolish the death penalty have been introduced at the National Assembly; the last one was introduced for the World Day Against the Death Penalty on October, 10th 2008. A fifth bill is being prepared by the democratic party.

The bills need to be approved first by the Legislation and Judiciary Committee and then by a majority of the Assembly before it can become law. Until now, all of them have been rejected by the Legislation and Judiciary Committee.

## [ Taiwan

- STATUS - Retentionist

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: signed in 1967 but not ratified yet.

United Nation General Assembly Resolutions 62/149 et 63/168 for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty: Taiwan is not a member of the United Nation so they could not take part in the vote

- HISTORICAL BACKGROUND -

1945: the Republic of China attained administrative power over Taiwan

May 1949: Martial Law was instituted and it rigorously circumscribed most of the rights guaranteed by the Constitution, many special criminal laws were adopted which subjected numerous crimes to the death penalty, some mandatorily.

1986: Taiwan's democratic processes starts, Martial Law is lifted in July 1987.

- FIGURES -

1994-2005: 198 people executed but executions progressively decreased between 1998 and 2004 with 3 executions in 2004 and 2005.

December 2005: last execution

2006-2008: no execution

2007: 5 people sentenced to death joining around 70-100 prisoners on death row

- EVOLUTION -

In May 2000, the Democratic Progressive Party candidate Chen Shui-bian was elected, after Kuo Min Tang's 55-year rule over Taiwan. He inaugurated a policy of 'state building on human rights', including the 'gradual abolition of the death penalty'.

As former Minister of Justice, President Ma Ying-jeou, who came to power in March 2008, refused to sign three execution orders (the "Hsichih Trio") because he believed there had been flaws in the prosecution process.

In a meeting with representatives of the World Coalition against the Death Penalty in June 2008, he made no firm commitments to declare a formal moratorium on executions, but said that his Minister of Justice, Wang Jing-feng, would not sign any execution as she has personally declared her opposition to the death penalty.

## [ Japan

### - STATUS - Retentionist

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: ratified in 1979.

United Nation General Assembly Resolutions 62/149 and 63/168 for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty: Japan voted against and signed the statement of dissociation initiated by Singapore.

### - HISTORICAL BACKGROUND -

810-1156: Japan became the world's first de facto abolitionist nation from 810 until 1156 during a period of peace and flourishing Buddhism.

1156-1800: the next seven centuries of samurai rule, capital punishment was again a common sanction. Most crimes, from petty larceny to murder, were punishable by death.

1989-1993: de facto moratorium on executions

Since Minister of Justice Hatoyama Kunio who came to power on 27 August 2007, there has been a huge increase in the number of executions.

In 2007, the courts confirmed sentences in 23 capital cases, the highest annual number since 1962.

### - FIGURES -

2005-2006: de facto moratorium because the then Minister of Justice, a fervent Buddhist, refused to sign the order of execution.

2006: 4 people were executed

2007: 9 people were executed

2008: 15 people were executed. It is the highest number of people executed in less than a year since 1975.

Over 100 prisoners currently on Japan's death row have completed the appeals process and could be executed at any time, subject to the Minister of Justice's authorization

### - EVOLUTION -

The recent exponential increase in sentences and executions is particularly worrying. In Japan executions of death sentences are carried out in secret: people on death row live in total isolation, they are banned from talking to other prisoners and contact with the outside world is limited to infrequent and supervised visits from family and lawyers. They are not allowed to watch television or engage in personal interests or hobbies. They are notified of their execution only a few hours before it takes place and their families are not informed. Some prisoners thus spend decades under sentence of death, waking up every morning with the fear of an imminent execution.

## [ Pakistan

### - STATUS - Retentionist

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: signed in 2008 but not ratified yet

United Nation General Assembly Resolutions 62/149 and 63/168 for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty: Pakistan voted against and signed the statement of dissociation initiated by Singapore.

### - HISTORICAL BACKGROUND -

1947: independence, only homicide and treason were punishable by death penalty. 1977-1988: increase in sentences and executions under General Ziaul Haq's regime, beginning of the Islamisation of the country.

1990: The *Qisas* and *Diyat* Ordinance (1990) allows to pay "blood money" to relatives of the victim in lieu of execution: under Islamic law, the punishment can either be in the form of qisas (equal or similar punishment for the crime committed) or diyat (compensation payable to the victim's legal heirs).

1996: last year of Benazir Bhutto's reign, only 9 executions occurred. Her father had been sentenced to death and executed after an unfair trial under General Ziaul Haq's regime.

### - FIGURES -

1978: highest rate of executions per year with 207 executions

1989: no execution

2006: 82 executions, one of which was a young offender, and 446 sentences

2007: at least 135 people have been executed including one young offender and about 310 were sentenced to death

### - EVOLUTION -

The last five years have seen an increase of convictions to death after the 2003 Supreme Court ruling which stated that, in cases of murder, "the normal penalty of death should be awarded and leniency in any case should not be shown".

Many strongly opposed the new Prime Minister proposition of June 2008 about the commutation of the death penalties of 7,000 convicts to life terms, claiming that the decision was a violation of Islamic laws. According to Islamic law, the legal heirs of a murder victim are the sole persons entitled to grant mercy to the culprit, limiting the possibilities of pardon by the president.

The practice of qisas and diyat is discriminatory as the rich and powerful usually have the means to obtain the pardon of the victim's family and thereby obtain their release, whereas the poor and powerless are often executed.

## [ Vietnam

### - STATUS - Retentionist

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: ratified in 1982.

United Nation General Assembly Resolutions 62/149 and 63/168 for a moratorium on the death penalty: South Korea abstained and did not sign the statement of dissociation initiated by Singapore.

### - HISTORICAL BACKGROUND -

December 1992: death penalty for drugs-related offences is introduced

July 1999: revision of the Criminal Code, reduction of the number of capital offences from 44 to 29 capital offences.

### - FIGURES -

2006: 14 executions et 36 death sentences

January 2007 - June 2008: 3 men were executed for drug trafficking and 91 people, including 15 women were sentenced to death for drug trafficking offences, 3 for murder and 1 woman for embezzlement.

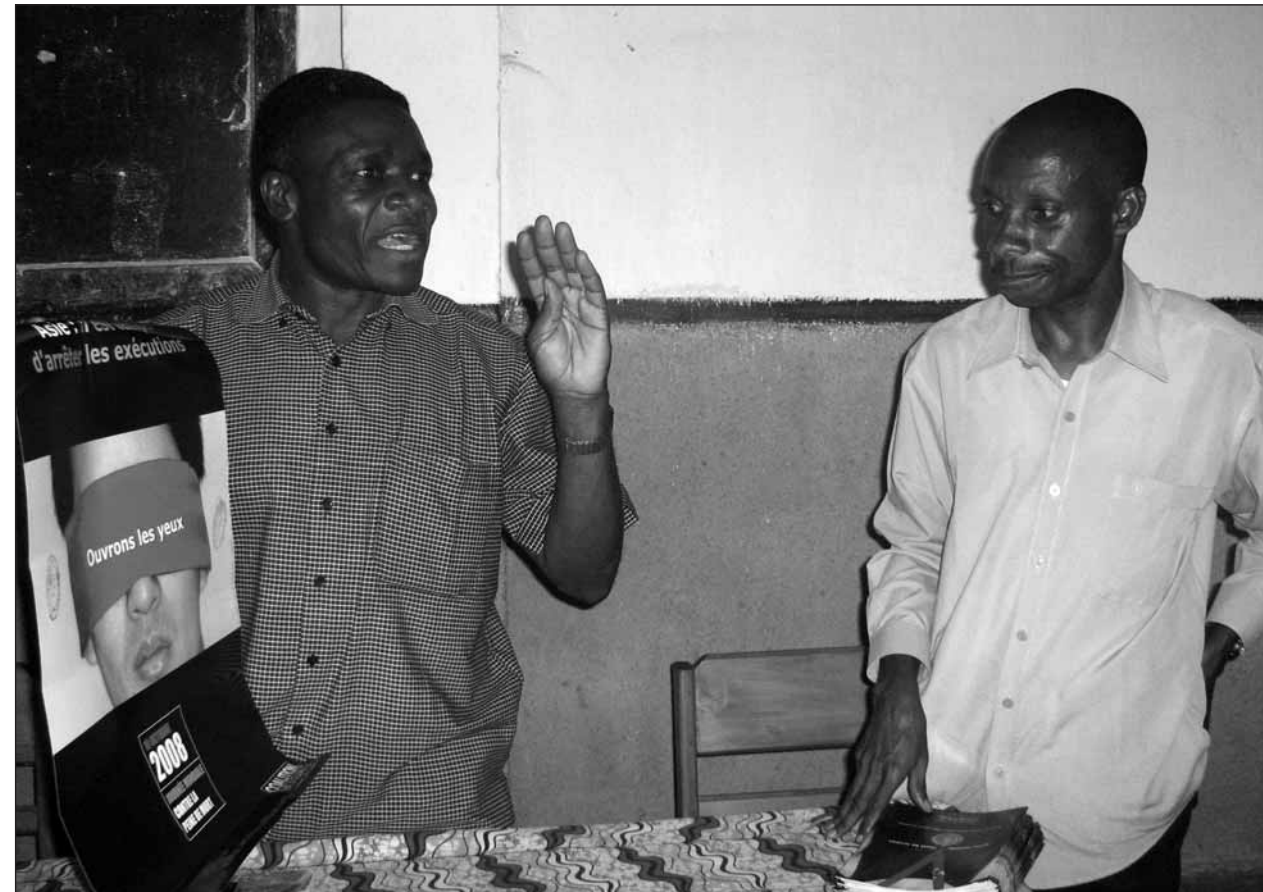
### - EVOLUTION -

The number of drugs-related death sentences and executions has increased dramatically over the last decade. The majority of death sentences monitored are drug-related crimes.

In February 2006 the Ministry of Public Security proposed a reduction in the number of capital offences punishable by the death penalty "in line with the general tendency around the world". The proposal reportedly recommended that economic crimes should no longer be capital offences. Other offences are also reportedly under consideration, which would reduce the number of capital offences from 29 to 20. However, the Legislative Committee of the National Assembly has recently stated that it was against this proposition.

[ 2 ]

# THE ACTIONS OF THE WORLD COALITION AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY



Posters of the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty presented by Pax Christi Uvira, member of the WCADP in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

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As founder of World Day, the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty has a unifying role to play in the organisation of the event. This role takes different forms: informing member organisations, mobilising abolitionists, lobbying governments, coordinating initiatives and sending petitions. Yet it is important to remember that those actions would have no effect without the involvement of activists worldwide in favour of abolition.

## SIX APPEALS FOR SIX ASIAN COUNTRIES

The call of the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty and its members have spread through six appeals (Appendices I) and a petition translated in more than seven languages:

*"We, the undersigned,*

*Call on the **Japanese government** to end secrecy surrounding the death row inmates and the application of the death penalty and appeal to the Japanese Minister of Justice to commute the sentence and review the case of Hakamada Iwao, sentenced to death in 1968 and detained in solitary confinement for the last 28 years.*

*Call on the **Pakistani government** to guarantee the right to a fair trial and appeal to the President to commute the sentence of Younis Masih, sentenced to death on 30 May 2007 for blasphemy following an unfair trial.*

*Call on the **Vietnamese president** and government to reduce the number of offences punishable by death and appeal to the Vietnamese president to commute the sentence of Tang Thi Ba, a former post office treasurer sentenced to death for embezzlement in May 2008.*

*Call on the **Taiwanese government** to declare a moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty as provided by the UN General Assembly resolution 62/149; and appeal to the Taiwanese president to bring the case of Liu Bing-lang, Su Chien-ho and Chuang Lin-hsun known as the "Hsichih Trio" to swift conclusion. They were sentenced to death in 1991 after they had confessed under torture committing a murder and their trial has been continuing for 17 years without conclusion.*

*Call on the **Indian government** to declare a moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty as provided by the United Nation General Assembly resolution 62/149.*

*Call on the **South Korean government** to affirm the moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty in law for all crimes."*

The double format used this year (one petition and six appeals) offered World Day events' organisers great freedom in the way they used it. Some chose to circulate the petition to collect the greatest possible number of signatures (as in Spain); others preferred to link the two aspects, collecting signatures for the petition while campaigning on a single country such as Taiwan (as ACAT-France did). Still others went for long-term actions and focused on one country per week for six weeks, as did *Amnesty International* in Norway.

The two-fold campaign also meant that the World Coalition's demands were disseminated in varied ways. In target countries such as India, petitions and appeals were sent directly to the governments; in other countries, they were sent to the Japanese or Pakistani embassies. Finally, the World Coalition's executive secretariat sent target governments six parcels on November 10 and six more on December 10. Each shipment contained 10,000 signatures and included a letter stating the World Coalition's demands and calling on those governments to vote in favour of the UN General Assembly's resolution for a global moratorium on executions. In January 2009, the WCADP received an answer from the South Korean minister of Justice. He acknowledged receiving the letters and assured that he will consider the suggestion to end death penalty in his country.

Unfortunately, although this format allows greater efficiency in terms of actions and dissemination, it makes it much harder to count precisely the signatures collected on petitions and appeals. Only signatures notified to the World Coalition's executive secretariat are listed in the table below.

### Petitions and Appeals signatories by Country

Countries	Number of signatures
Australia	73
Austria	367
Benin	70
Belgium	590
Brazil	18
Canada	795
Chile	105
Denmark	4,784
France	11,091
Germany	26
Ghana	20
Greece	1
Japan	23
Italy	1,178
Luxemburg	50
Madagascar	38
New-Zealand	61
Netherlands	36
Puerto Rico	228
Spain	1,108
Switzerland	16
United Kingdom	193
United States of America	11
Online signatures on the WCADP's website <sup>6</sup>	1,008
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,890</b>

## MISSION IN SOUTH KOREA AND TAIWAN

Speedy Rice, an active member of *Death Penalty Focus* and the *National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers*, represented the World Coalition's Steering Committee at the ceremony marking the introduction of an abolition bill at the South Korean National Assembly. On that occasion, he met abolitionist activists from institutions, professional bodies, religious groups and non-governmental organisations.

The ceremony was marked by the presence of National Assembly speaker Hyong O, renowned for his neutrality. National Human Rights Commission of Korea chairman Prof. Ahn Kyong-When, British ambassador Martin Uden and a Catholic bishop also spoke at the event.

Speedy Rice then met Chong-Hoon Kim, who is in charge of human rights at the ministry of justice. During a fruitful discussion, they discussed the abolition bill's – the fourth since 1999 – chances of success. All previous bills were defeated by opposition from the Legislation and Judiciary Committee. The World Coalition unsuccessfully requested a meeting for Speedy Rice with the chairman of that committee.

The Democratic Party, which has always campaigned for abolition, also filed a bill at the National Assembly in late 2008.

During the discussion, the human rights representative for the ministry of justice mentioned the issue of popular support for the death penalty. Some 65% of South Koreans are believed to support capital punishment. Regarding the UN resolutions for a moratorium, the government said it would keep its position from 2007 and abstain from the vote as it regarded the wording of the text as too radical and too far away from South Korea's public opinion. South Korea indeed abstained during the vote on the Resolution 63/168 for a Moratorium on the use of the death penalty in December 2008.

The mission to South Korea echoed a similar visit to Taiwan, another World Day target country, in June 2008. A delegation from the World Coalition comprising Speedy Rice, Japanese lawyer Maiko Tagusari – an active member of the *Centre for Prisoners' Rights* and of *Forum 90* – as well as *Amnesty International* researcher Mark Allison met Taiwan's president and justice minister at that time.

Both stated their support for abolition but added that there was too much opposition to enshrine it in legislation. They pledged not to sign any execution warrants during their term.

## HIGH PROFILE ABOLITIONISTS' PUBLIC STATEMENTS

In cooperation with *Amnesty International's* international secretariat, the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty wrote to eleven Asian abolitionist figures asking them to publicly state their support for the abolition of the death penalty on World Day 2008.

This action's objective was to support abolitionist voices in the six target countries. In India and Pakistan, as well as in Japan, they are seldom heard and World Day was an opportunity to amplify them. The World Coalition's letters were directed at professional groups in the judicial area including judges, parliamentarians and members of influential non-governmental organisations. They obtained results in India and Pakistan where people answered the World Coalition's call.

Five letters were sent to bar associations and lawmakers in India. One of them, Chennai representative Ravikumar, responded to the World Coalition's appeal by publishing an article in a popular Indian weekly, *Junior Vikatan*. He also published the article on his website, together with the World Coalition's appeal to the Indian government.

In Pakistan, a non-governmental organisation, *the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan*, carried the World Coalition's campaign. Its leaders spoke publicly on World Day. Their interviews received coverage in many news stories across Pakistan. In total, five letters were sent to Supreme Court justices, lawyers and NGO members there.

The Japanese Federation of Bar Association also received a letter. It refused to speak in favour of abolition but renewed its support for the World Coalition's appeal for a moratorium on executions in Japan.

The same letters were sent to UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions Philip Alston and EU Commissioner for external relations Benita Ferrero Waldner. They both answered with a letter of support to the World Coalition. In addition, the EU commissioner published a press release on October 10 to encourage the global trend towards the abolition of the death penalty.

*All these public statements are included in Appendices II.*

## **INFORMATION AND MOBILIZATION TOOLS**

The concept of World Day – and its primary objective – is to provoke and encourage local mobilization in the largest possible number of countries, especially in countries that still use the death penalty. To achieve this goal, the World Coalition made information and mobilization tools available to its members, to the media and to any person wishing to take part in World Day 2008.

### **Appeals**

The appeals were available in the form of letters that could be downloaded from the WCADP's website.

### **Petition**

The petition was available for online signatures on the WCADP's website. Members and abolitionists were invited to post it on their website or blog with a link to the WCADP's site. The petition was also available in a word document that could be printed to facilitate signatures campaigns of the members during the World Day.

### **Poster of the World Day**

Printed in 3,000 copies in English and as much in French, they were aiming at events' organisers. Copies could be ordered for free from the WCADP's Secretariat by members, media or individuals. They were also available as a pdf file online.

### **Information Leaflet**

This leaflet gave a lot of information about the death penalty in Asia and in the targeted countries. Printed in 5,000 copies in English and French, it was a useful tool for people organising events. Copies could be ordered for free from the WCADP's Secretariat by members, media or individuals. They were also available as a pdf file online.

### **Public opinion awareness leaflet**

This shorter leaflet informed the public and invited everyone to take action. It recalled the main arguments against the death penalty and presented the campaign to end executions in Asia. It was designed to be printed in a large scale at a low cost.

### **Mobilisation Kit**

Designed to help organising events, it provided information about former World Days and 2008 World Day's theme. It also gave examples of past mobilisations that worked well and ended with a list of the WCADP members' contact details by country.

### **Facts and figures on the death penalty**

This document presented an updated version of the use of the death penalty around the world in 2007.

### **Country Profiles**

These cards summed up the history of the death penalty in the six Asian countries of the campaign and draw the situation in terms of ratification of international treaties, last executions and specificities of each country in 2008.

### **Web Banner**

It was a Flash animation in English or French to illustrate the websites of WCADP members and partners. This web banner announcing the World Day Against the Death Penalty could be downloaded for display on any website with a link to the WCADP's website. The English banner alone was downloaded 2 244 times in three months. It is four times more than last year.

All these tools were updated regularly and were downloadable from the WCADP's website at this address:

<http://www.worldCoalitionmondiale.org/modules/news/article.php?storyid=150>



[ 3 ]

## THE INITIATIVES



Demonstration in Japan: "Asia can say no to the death penalty".

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WORLD DAY AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY  
10 OCTOBER 2008

[ 33 ]

WORLD DAY AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY  
10 OCTOBER 2008

Altogether **289 initiatives** were identified **in 50 countries** on 5 continents. The examples below are a selection from the list of World Day events known to the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty.

*The full list is available in Appendices III.*

## THE WORLD TAKES ACTION

The mobilization against the death penalty spread to Asia for the latest edition of World Day, especially in the countries targeted by the World Coalition for the 6<sup>th</sup> occurrence of the event. A wide variety of actions took place in those target countries. Various types of action were used, from traditional events with strong agendas to innovative and original ones.

**Other retentionist countries also got involved**, although most initiatives there focused on internal demands, e.g. in the United States or in the Democratic Republic of Congo. World Day was an opportunity for abolitionists in Africa and in the Arab World to take stock of the death penalty situation and to think about future strategies in locations such as Ghana and Morocco.

**Abolitionist countries answered the call** even though they were not directly affected. Activists advocating universal abolition got involved once more. In Europe, where mobilization is always very strong, regional institutions, professional groups and non-governmental organisations took part in World Day.

## ASIA / PACIFIC (40 ACTIONS IN 9 COUNTRIES)

### **Anti Death Penalty Asia Network: photo competition for young Asians**

The Anti Death Penalty Asia Network was created in 2006 and has since proved very dynamic. It was heavily involved in this Asia-focused edition of World Day. For instance, the Asia Pacific Youth Network organised a photo competition on *Facebook*<sup>7</sup> to collect the best pictures of youths from the Asia-Pacific region holding a sign against the death penalty.

### **South Korea: bill for the abolition of the death penalty filed**

Six Korean organisations (*National Human Rights Commission Korea, Amnesty International South Korea, Catholic Human Rights Committee, Catholic Bishops' Conference Justice and Peace Committee, National Council of Churches in Korea Justice and Peace Committee, Buddhist Human Rights Committee* and *Won Buddhist Human Rights Committee*) joined together to organise a far-reaching ceremony. The event took place at the South Korea National Assembly to celebrate the filing of an abolition bill to the Assembly on World Day. Speakers included the lawmaker who sponsored the bill, the British ambassador as well as members of NGOs and religious groups. The ceremony ended with a theatre and music performance on the death penalty.

### **India: march of the sentenced**

In India, a group of five people wearing black t-shirts printed with the words "Save me" and a noose around their necks marched through the streets of New Delhi. The procession led by the five "sentenced" ended at the Parliament, where the participants handed a paper calling for a moratorium on executions to the prime minister, the president and the interior minister.

### **Hong Kong: origami for life**

Origami workshops sprung up in Hong Kong, offering passers-by a chance to make paper cranes out of printed appeals for the abolition of the death penalty. The action, called "A message of life – Cranes against the death penalty", invited Hong Kong residents to send the origami paper cranes to the Japanese consulate as a way of inviting the country to establish a moratorium. In Asia, cranes are symbol-laden animals as they represent longevity.

### **Japan "Echoing the voices of abolition: from death row to you"**

A conference organised by *Forum 90* and *Amnesty International* allowed death row inmates to speak up. It featured an exhibition of poems, drawings and other works and the screening of a film depicting a prison warden asked to take care of a death row inmate, then to execute him.

## NORTH AMERICA, SOUTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (19 ACTIONS IN 7 COUNTRIES)

### Canada: "38 years behind bars – prison chaplains' testimonies".

Testimony from a former death row inmate convicted of murder, now involved in supporting long-term prisoners with the "Life Option" organisation.

#### [ THE ROW

That morning, as I ran unheeding  
I hoped to move away from this reality  
From this globe where, as an unwilling witness,  
I saw executions, death sentences – cold waves...

I saw her being stoned, her body forever bruised  
I dreamed of the other, electrocuted, his skin so blackened  
My nightmare drew me to a hanging  
In front of the beheaded, I asked for forgiveness.

Imprint your signature at the centre of the row  
So that passers-by can see it as a sketch  
On his naked hand, past this dying place,  
Where he experiences the opposite of justice.

Imprint your signature at the centre of the row  
In proud letters, on this wall so black  
So that the other one, with chains around his heart,  
Can quietly feel this deserving gesture.

At the end of the row, I saw someone's shadow  
And to him, violence was the only language  
He carried it secretly, next to injustice  
I then became convinced that I had to invite

The citizens of the world to rally...  
To bring change to the Earth, one must know how to dream  
How could I look at myself in a mirror  
If I let my brother be executed?

Imprint your signature, I know of your struggle  
At times, it may be hard, but remember all those  
Who no longer take part in this battle  
Keep walking every day, experience liberty

Imprint your signature, then say a prayer  
Inside you, God will watch over your brother  
Say his name, say his name as if shouting their message  
So that mankind at last shows some courage

Do not let those witnesses go forgotten  
Their chains and their deaths have been pushing us  
Towards this beautiful struggle for liberty  
Towards this sweet dream, this humanity

World Day, for the sixth time  
Denounces capital punishment  
Stop! Stay still, take some time to pray  
If we are to win, this is the only way.

Imprint your signature at the centre of the row  
In proud letters, on this wall so black  
So that the other one, with chains around his heart,  
Can quietly feel this deserving gesture.

Rita Amabili-Rivet  
(Canadian author and campaigner, member of ACAT Canada)

### USA: National meeting on mental handicap and the death penalty

On the request of *Murder Victims' Families for Human Rights* and *National Alliance on Mental Illness*, some twenty families of victims and executed prisoners in the United States shared their experiences at the University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio.

### Mexico: "Executions and democracy" Exhibition

The *Dragon Dance Theatre* and the Sierra Gorda History Museum organised an exhibition at the museum. 20 works by Sam Kerson were displayed which show the injustices, the contradictions, the racism and the sexism characteristic of the Mexican 'injustice' system. Arguments against the death penalty were provided alongside the images and they clearly called for abolition.

### Puerto Rico: "The Death Penalty: not in our children's name" conference

The Puerto Rican Coalition against the death penalty and the Institute for research and the promotion of human rights co-organised a conference at the University of Sacred Heart in Puerto Rico. This gave victims of crime a chance to defend their opposition to the death penalty.

## **NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST** (14 ACTIONS IN 4 COUNTRIES)

### **The Arab Coalition Against the Death Penalty (ACADP) press release - "No to violations of the right to life, No to the death penalty"**

In an eloquent press release, the Arab Coalition Against the Death Penalty called on Arab countries to remove the death penalty from their penal codes; to develop a new Charter outlining the relationship between states and citizens; to follow the example of the Lebanese judicial system where the Court of Cassation decided to repeal the death penalty and use other sentences in its place and to dismiss all death sentences dealt out by the courts of justice.

### **Amman Center for Human Rights Studies (ACHRS): launch of an observatory on the death penalty**

To coincide with World Day Against the Death Penalty, the Amman Center for Human Rights Studies launched an observatory on the death penalty. Its electronic version can be consulted at the following address: <http://dp.achrs.org>. The site is available in Arabic only.

### **Lebanon: public statement against the death penalty by the Lebanese minister of justice**

On October 10 2008, Minister of Justice Ibrahim Najjar expressed the wish to file a bill to abolish the death penalty and to replace it by life imprisonment or forced labour. This announcement received widespread media coverage and support from European diplomats. The bill was filed at the National Assembly in November 2008.

### **Morocco: seminar to reflect on the death penalty**

The Conseil consultatif des droits de l'Homme (Consultative Council on Human Rights) and Ensemble contre la peine de mort (Together Against the Death Penalty) organised this seminar together. Its aim was to open a scientific debate on the death penalty using a varied approach (legal, religious, sociological, and human rights) and to develop arguments for the abolition of the death penalty with the relevant stakeholders in Moroccan society (civil society, ulemas, political parties, parliamentarians, academics and intellectuals).

### **Tunisia: letters for a resolution**

The member organisations of the National Tunisian Coalition collected three letters to send to the president of the Republic, to the president of the Tunisian parliament and the ministry of justice and human rights at the opening of the parliamentary year. The aim was to encourage Tunisia to vote in favour of a new resolution in 2008 calling for a global moratorium on executions and to immediately abolish the death penalty. Tunisia representative did not participated in the vote in 2007 and he was again absent for the vote of the Resolution 63/168 on a moratorium for the use of the death penalty on 18 December 2008. Tunisia's position remains unclear.

## **SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA** (36 ACTIONS IN 15 COUNTRIES)

### **Ghana: a rewarding breakfast**

*Amnesty International* Ghana held a breakfast to unite human rights campaigners in Ghana. Over coffee, the speakers discussed the death penalty strategy to be developed in the country. This rewarding exchange enabled them to define the scope of the campaigns to be run for the abolition of capital punishment in Ghana.

### **Uganda: book launch of "Towards Abolition of the Death Penalty in Uganda"**

The publication was produced by the Civil Society Coalition for the Abolition of the Death Penalty in Uganda and was launched on October 10 through the publication of an opinion column on the death penalty in the *New Vision* newspaper. The *Foundation for Human Rights Initiative* also had a thirty-minute talk show on the subject on *Vision Voice* 94.8 fm radio.

### **Nigeria: the independent African voice**

The Nigerian *Civil Liberties Organisation* (CLO) took part in the KAKAAKI *The African Voice* show on *African Independent Television* (AIT), the pan-African television channel available by satellite. This show was broadcast across Africa and could be seen by many viewers.

### **Democratic Republic of Congo: workshop for law students**

The organisation 'Culture pour la Paix et la Justice (CPJ – Culture for Peace and Justice)' organised a workshop to reflect on the death penalty in the DRC for final-year students in undergraduate and graduate studies in Kinshasa's universities. The majority of death sentences in the DRC were handed down by the Military Court. The workshop was an opportunity to reflect on that issue. For example, there was time to discuss the memorandum addressed to the director of public prosecutions and to the Minister of Justice about the ruling of the Supreme Court on the decisions handed down by the Military Court.

### **Togo: lobbying by ACAT and Amnesty International Togo**

Representatives of ACAT and *Amnesty International* met the President of the Human Rights Commission of the National Assembly; the Minister for Human Rights and Democratic Consolidation; and the Minister of Justice's principal Secretary. World Coalition posters and brochures were given to the authorities met.

## EUROPE (178 ACTIONS IN 15 COUNTRIES)

### **Unwavering support from the Council of Europe and the European Union**

The Council of Europe and Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe organised a joint round-table discussion bringing together French Senator and former Minister of Justice Robert Badinter, a pioneer in the struggle against the death penalty, international campaigner and Goodwill Ambassador to the Council of Europe Bianca Jagger, Council of Europe Secretary General Terry Davis, and Swedish Ambassador for Human Rights Jan Nordlander. The press release disseminated in advance of the event was widely picked up in the media in Europe and elsewhere.

The Vice President of the European Parliament, Luisa Morgantini, organised a screening of the film *15 SECONDS*. Raoul Bova, the film's actor and producer, and Gianluca Petrazzi, its director, used the occasion to speak of their commitment to a global moratorium on executions. Shown in the European Parliament in Brussels, the short film defends the idea of a global moratorium on the death penalty using interviews with parliamentarians, intellectuals, philosophers, writers, journalists and sociologists. It was supported by the European Parliament.

### **Austria: cut the rope to reduce the number of executions**

*Amnesty International* installed gallows in the streets of Vienna and invited passers-by to cut a piece of rope used to hang those sentenced to death. The rope thus grew shorter and shorter, symbolising the reduction in the number of executions in the world. This event attracted a great number of passers-by and provoked many interesting debates.

### **Belgium: a redder than white flag**

This demonstration, held in front of the Japanese embassy, brought together the majority of Brussels-based human rights organisations. Various speakers described the death penalty situation in Japan and in the world. A *tableau vivant* with a Japanese flag in the background represented the last three prisoners sentenced to death in Japan a few days before World Day. This visual event ensured widespread media coverage and the publication of a photo by the American press agency *Associated Press* (AP), which was used by numerous newspapers and websites to illustrate World Day.

Furthermore Belgium has officially recognised October 10 as World Day. Notably thanks to collaboration with the *Fédération des Etudiants Libéraux* (Liberal Students' Federation), a proposal aiming to obtain the official recognition by Belgium of the October 10 date as official Day Against the death penalty was unanimously adopted on June 5 last by all democratic parties.

## FRANCE

### **Paris Bar Association: a link with European professionals**

The President of the Paris Bar Association, Christian Charrière-Bournazel, published a "general appeal for Mr Troy Davis and all the others..." in *Le Monde* newspaper. It was co-signed by Senator Nicole Borvo Cohen-Seat, Vice-president of the Senate Law Commission, Marie-Laure Denès, secretary general of Justice and Peace Europe (an organisation of the French bishops' conference), Member of the European Parliament Hélène Flautre, *Amnesty International* France President Geneviève Garrigos and lawyer Denys Robilliard, who represents *Amnesty International* and the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty. The article defends the argument that "relative justice means relative sentencing" and is especially aimed at the United States.

The Paris Bar Association also appealed to more than 70 European bar associations to mobilize for World Day. Information on the campaign was provided in the association's newsletter and on its website. It also disseminated leaflets and posters on the 2008 World Day at the Law Courts and the Paris Bar Association Headquarters.

### **Reporters Without Borders (RSF): media also concerned by the urgent need for abolition**

RSF issued a press release against the death penalty for World Day. The association condemned "its use against journalists or defenders of freedom of speech" in Afghanistan, Iran, Ethiopia and the United States. Thanks to RSF's wide network and the press release's availability in French, English, Spanish and Arabic, it was widely printed in the press and even more so on the Internet across the world.

### **International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH): Japan, the law of silence**

The FIDH took advantage of World Day to publish a new report on the death penalty in Japan. Entitled "*Death penalty in Japan - The law of silence, going against the international trend*", this international fact-finding mission report condemns the secrecy and isolation in which those sentenced to death are held. Five years after the FIDH's first report on Japan, the situation has barely changed. A press release issued for the launch of the report was widely referenced by the media.

### **Collectif Mumia Abu-Jamal: audio press conference with Mumia in Lyons**

A press conference held by Deputy Mayor of Lyons Heidi Giovacchini and attended by Danielle Mitterrand, Robert R. Bryan (Mumia Abu-Jamal's lawyer), Livia (film producers) and Colin Firth (actor) was held in Lyons' town hall. To their great surprise, the fifty participants were able to converse live with Mumia Abu-Jamal, a prisoner on death row in the United States. His lawyer, Robert R. Bryan had organised a ten-minute audio conference with him.

Later that evening, the Collectif Mumia organised a preview showing of *In Prison my Whole Life* (an anti-death penalty documentary dedicated to Mumia Abu-Jamal) as part of the Lyons *Hors-Ecran* Film Festival. The film was followed by a long debate against the death penalty with Colin Firth, who produced the film, and Robert R. Bryan. Messages from Mumia Abu-Jamal and Danielle Mitterrand were read during the debate.

### Norway: the exonerated tell their stories

Numerous debates and conferences were organised by the Norwegian section of *Amnesty International*, giving former prisoners sentenced to death an opportunity to share their experiences. Speakers included Kerry Cook, a death-row prisoner in the United States for over twenty years found innocent in 1997, and Iraj Masdaghi, a death-row prisoner in Iran for ten years. These gatherings, organised in universities, cafés and at the Oslo opera, were a chance to develop irrefutable arguments against capital punishment. Alongside these debates, a photographic exhibition entitled "*Voices from death row*" was held at the Opera House. It included photographs of prisoners on Texas' death row. The photographer, John Holbrook, a former police detective, also attended the debates.

### Portugal: Portuguese pupils vote for the moratorium resolution at the UN

The Portuguese section of *Amnesty International* organised a simulation of the United Nations General Assembly vote on the moratorium on the use of the death penalty. More than a hundred students participated in the simulation while animated debates surrounded the session. Each school represented a country and was obliged to put aside personal opinions on the death penalty to defend that country's best interests. Volunteers also represented NGOs but, in keeping with the procedure, they could not vote. Discussions in favour or against the resolution were rich and the turnout was high.

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## MEDIA COVERAGE



The demonstration in front of the Japanese embassy in Morocco brought important media coverage.

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All these actions went hand-in-hand with widespread media coverage which brought the World Coalition's aims to the attention of numerous citizens all over the world. Overall, 138 newspaper articles and radio and television shows were noted in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish. In addition, an impressive number of articles appeared on World Coalition Against the Death Penalty members' websites, and on general online information, institutional and personal websites.

## REVIEW REGION BY REGION

The Asian media carried the World Day theme. More than 33 articles in English were published in the region's newspapers. Nevertheless, it is difficult to count those that were published in the many Asian languages or using other media (radio, television, Internet in Urdu, Korean or Vietnamese) but it is very probable that information circulated by those means too.

In Pakistan, where actions were less followed due to the political climate there, national newspapers picked up the abolitionists' appeals. Public statements from the *Human Rights Commission of Pakistan* were republished in some very long articles in the *Pakistan Daily Times* and in the *Post*. Original articles were also written in *Nation* and in *Kashmir Media Service*.

On the American continent, the media coverage noted was mainly the result of abolitionist mobilization. Most of it took place before October 10 to announce World Day.

In Africa and in the Arab World, there is a strong correlation between actions carried out and media coverage. All the articles counted mention associations that organised events on or before World Day. In Morocco particularly, the actions of the Moroccan Coalition were picked up in French and in Arabic by prestigious media including *Al Jazeera* and the *BBC*, as well as by numerous local media.

The deepest coverage occurred in Europe thanks to coordination between governments, international institutions and NGOs. Italy was a good example: national newspapers including *La Stampa*, *Il Corriere*, *La Repubblica* and *Il Tempo*, union newspapers, a fashion magazine and alternative media all addressed World Day. Some cited *Amnesty International* figures, others those of *Hands Off Cain*, others mentioned press releases from the European Union or the Italian parliament. Finally some mentioned the next vote on the resolution for a moratorium at the United Nations. Whatever the source may be, all mentioned October 10.

The number of articles depended on the regions of the world, the media culture and the countries' political climate. There were, however, some constants: wire agencies from all over the world covered the event and their dispatches were used by national media; long articles were dedicated to the announcement of the World Day event on all continents using the facts and figures from World Coalition members.

Two types of mobilizations should be noted as being good communication practices:

- Locally organised events benefit more from regional or local media coverage than from national or international coverage;
- Press releases picked up by national media are often linked to the publication of a report, as with the launch of the report on Japan by the FIDH. They are

also picked up when they approach an original angle like that of Reporters Without Borders describing the cases of journalists sentenced to death. Non-specific releases are only used if associated with other sources (Council of Europe, European Commission, ministries of justice, bar associations, religious organisations etc.) Working together ensures that the message gets through!

## WEB REVIEW

More than one hundred different Internet sites mentioning World Day in Chinese, English, French, German, Italian and Spanish were counted. Most of them dedicated several pages to the issue, with links to the World Coalition's website. These facts confirm last year's trend: World Day has found a place in the virtual world.

Internet is a multimedia network characterised by versatile formats (articles, video, sound) and by the diversity of its information sources: official sites (European Union, governments, parliaments), online information sites (online pages of the main press organs or alternative media), commercial business sites, NGO sites, blogs and personal sites.

Information on World Day 2008 was obviously used on the web pages of the World Coalition's members and on those of the day's organisers. It was also found on numerous online information sites. Most articles printed in newspapers were also published on the Internet. Many official websites like those of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs or of the European Parliament communicated the information. Finally, many blogs and personal sites of human rights campaigners mentioned World Day.

The Internet is a perfect tool for signing petitions online – that of the World Coalition was signed by more than 1000 people – or for organising and coordinating actions, but for those not in the know, this vast web provides such a multitude of information that it is sometimes difficult not to feel lost. Internet users have a greater choice of information than readers or listeners of traditional media. Rather than being directed towards the wider public as television, radio or the press are, the sites discussing World Day are addressing people already interested in the issue.

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## FOLLOW-UP TO THE WORLD DAY



Group of young people looking at the 6<sup>th</sup> World Day Against the Death Penalty poster on a wall in Togo.

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## ABOLITION IN PROGRESS

During and after the World Day, several governments or members of Parliaments have declared that they will start a legislative process to officially abolish the death penalty in their country. In Asia, on the World Day, a bill to abolish it was introduced in the South Korean Parliament. Another bill for the same purpose was later filled in by the Democratic Party. In Vietnam, one of the calls of the WCADP was to reduce the number of offences punishable by death. In November, the Vietnamese government presented amendments to the Criminal Code to reduce the number of crimes leading to death sentences from 29 to 12. In the Arab World the Lebanese Minister of Justice declared that he plans to abolish the capital punishment; in Algeria, an abolition bill was introduced and a regional conference on the death penalty created a real debate in the country. In Africa, Togo's Council of Ministers decided to abolish the death penalty and the President of Ghana commuted all death sentences before leaving the presidency.

Contrary to this global trend the situation seems to have worsened in the English speaking Caribbean: The Jamaican Parliament voted in favour of a motion to maintain the death penalty although no executions have taken place in this country since 1988 and St. Kitts and Nevis executed a man for the first time in ten years. More conclusive are the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. In 2008, five new countries ratified it: Honduras (April 2008), Argentina and Chile (September 2008), Uzbekistan and Rwanda (December 2008). This treaty states that: "No one within the jurisdiction of a State Party to the present Protocol shall be executed" (Article 1.1) and it prevents future reintroduction of death sentences in the country. The WCADP will be launching a campaign of ratification in 2009 to strengthen the worldwide trend toward abolition and make sure it is irreversible.

## CONTINUING THE MOBILIZATION

Resolution 63/168 for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty was adopted on 18 December 2008 by the United Nations General Assembly. Supported by an increasing number of co-sponsor countries (89), it reaffirms the resolution 62/149 of 18 December 2007 and recognizes "*the global trend towards the abolition of the death penalty*". It was supported by two more governments compare to 2007 (106<sup>8</sup>). 46 countries voted against the Resolution which represent eight less than the previous year and 34 (+5) abstained.

The text of the resolution 63/168 welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 62/149 "*and the conclusions and recommendations contained therein*". The Secretary-General is requested to provide a report every two years on this issue, notably based on the information produced by Member States.

The next resolution will be put for consideration to the United Nations General Assembly in December 2010. The WCADP hopes that until then, the abolitionist movement will grow. In February 2010, the fourth World Congress against the Death Penalty, organized by Ensemble contre la peine de mort (ECPM) in

cooperation with the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty will take place in Geneva. It will be the occasion to monitor the implementation of Resolution 63/168 calling for a moratorium on executions and it will gather abolitionists involved for worldwide abolition of the death penalty.

## 2009 WORLD DAY AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY: TEACHING ABOLITION

2009 World Day will be about 'Teaching Abolition'. It will be the occasion to raise awareness about the death penalty among the youth by preparing activity kits and attractive materials. It is also a good opportunity to create new partnership with Ministries of Education; universities, schools and teachers.

2009 World Day will differ from previous World Days as 10 October will be the launching day of a longer campaign in partnership with schools and universities over the 2009-2010 school year.

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# APPENDICES

[ 1 ] **The Appeals**

[ 2 ] **High Profile Abolitionists' Letters**

[ 3 ] **List of Initiatives**

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## THE APPEALS

### [ Japan

Minister of Justice Eisuke Mori  
Ministry of Justice  
1-1-1 Kasumigaseki  
Chiyoda-ku  
Tokyo 100-8977, Japan  
Fax: +81 3 3592 7088 or +81 3 5511 7200  
Email: webmaster@moj.go.jp

Dear Minister

I am writing to express my concern about Hakamada Iwao, who was sentenced to death in 1968 after an unfair trial. He is now 72 and one of Japan's longest-serving death row inmates. He is suffering from mental illness after spending over 28 years in solitary confinement.

I understand that, being the Minister of Justice, you are the only person who can grant him a pardon or a retrial. I am writing to ask you to act urgently in this case to commute this death sentence, to immediately release Hakamada Iwao on account of his mental health condition and to grant him a retrial.

I further urge the Japanese authorities to lift the secrecy surrounding those sentenced to death and executed, starting with the abolition of the daiyo kangoku or substitute prison system, where suspects can be detained for up to 23 days of questioning without limit on the length of interrogation sessions and without lawyers' access to clients.

I also ask the authorities to respect the recommendation of the United Nation Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston, in the 2006 report on transparency and the death penalty.

As you know, today 137 – or over two thirds – of the world's countries have abolished the death penalty in law or in practice. Unfortunately, Japan is still one of the 60 countries which retain this cruel, inhuman, degrading and useless punishment.

I am convinced that this punishment constitutes a major denial of human rights and I urge you to reduce its application.

Thank you for giving this matter your urgent attention, I look forward to hearing from you.

[ 52 ]

### [ Pakistan

President Asif Ali Zardari  
President House  
Islamabad  
Pakistan  
Fax: +92 51 9221422

Dear President,

I am writing in concern for Younis Masih who was sentenced to death for blasphemy on 30 May 2007. The trial was reportedly unfair, as it is claimed that the prosecution case was based on hearsay, and not direct evidence. It is also claimed that changes had been made to the original prosecution witness statements. Since then, Younis Masih and his lawyer have been under constant death threat.

On 21 June Prime Minister announced that his government will send a proposal for President's approval to commute all death sentences. I understand that, under Article 45 of the Constitution, only the President can commute death sentences. I am writing to ask you to act urgently in this case to commute Younis Masih's death sentence and to provide protection to him and his lawyer.

I further urge the Pakistani authorities to guarantee the right to a fair trial for every citizen, regardless of their religion, social background or wealth.

As you know, today 137 – or over two thirds – of the world's countries have abolished the death penalty in law or in practice. Unfortunately, Pakistan is still one of the 60 countries which retain this cruel, inhuman, degrading and useless punishment.

I am convinced that this punishment constitutes a major denial of human rights and I urge you to reduce its application.

Thank you for giving this matter your urgent attention, I look forward to hearing from you.

[ 53 ]

## [ Vietnam

President Nguyen Minh Triet  
Office of the President  
35 Ngo Quyen  
Ha Noi  
Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Your Excellency,

I am writing to express my concern about Tang Thi Ba who was sentenced to death on 29 May 2008 on charges of embezzlement. A court of appeals upheld the death sentence on 28 August 2008. Her final recourse now is appealing for pardon.

In February 2006 the Ministry of Public Security proposed a reduction in the number of capital offences punishable by the death. It recommended that economic crimes should no longer be capital offences.

I am writing to ask you to act urgently in this case to commute this death sentence to terms of imprisonment on the ground that it is an economic crime.

I further urge the Vietnamese authorities to reduce the number of offenses punishable by death, as proposed by the government in February 2006.

As you know, today 137 – or over two thirds – of the world's countries have abolished the death penalty in law or in practice. Unfortunately, Vietnam is still one of the 60 countries which retain this cruel, inhuman, degrading and useless punishment.

I am convinced that this punishment constitutes a major denial of human rights and I urge you to reduce its application.

Thank you for giving this matter your urgent attention, I look forward to hearing from you.

## [ India

Dr. Manmohan Singh  
Prime Minister of India  
South Block, Raisina Hill,  
New Delhi,  
India-110 011.  
Telephone: 91-11-23012312.  
Fax: 91-11-23019545 or 23016857

Dear Prime Minister,

As you know, today 137 – or over two thirds – of the world's countries have abolished the death penalty in law or in practice. Unfortunately, India is still one of the 60 countries which retain this cruel, inhuman, degrading and useless punishment.

At least 100 people were sentenced to death in 2007 although no executions took place and apart from one execution in 2004, there have been no executions in the country in the past ten years.

We are convinced that this punishment constitutes a major denial of human rights so, although your country voted in December 2007 against the United Nation General Assembly resolution 62/149 calling for a moratorium on executions, we exhort you to take a first, important step towards abolition by immediately imposing a moratorium on all death sentences and on executions.

Dear Prime Minister, by rapidly adhering to the international movement for abolition of the death penalty, your government will guarantee one of the fundamental human rights for future generations in India.

Thank you for giving this matter your attention, I look forward to hearing from you.

## [ Taiwan ]

President Ma Ying-jeou  
Office of the President  
No. 122, Sec. 1, Chongqing S Road  
Jhongjheng District  
Taipei 100  
Taiwan  
Fax: +886 2 2383 2941

Your Excellency,

I am writing to express my concern about Liu Bing-lang, Su Chien-ho and Chuang Lin-hsun – known as the “Hsichih Trio”, who were sentenced to death in 1991. They have consistently argued that their confessions were extracted through torture at the hands of the police, allegations that the Taiwanese High Court has persistently refused to investigate. Their trial has been continuing for 17 years without conclusion.

You refused to sign the three execution orders of the “Hsichih Trio” because you believed there had been flaws in the prosecution. I am writing to ask you to act urgently to bring the case to swift conclusion.

As you know, today 137 – or over two thirds – of the world's countries have abolished the death penalty in law or in practice. Unfortunately, Taiwan is still one of the 60 countries which retain this cruel, inhuman, degrading and useless punishment.

I am convinced that this punishment constitutes a major denial of human rights and I urge the Taiwanese authorities to immediately establish a moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty as provided by United Nation General Assembly resolution 62/149.

Thank you for giving this matter your urgent attention, I look forward to hearing from you.

## [ South Korea ]

Lee Myung-bak  
Office of President  
Cheong Wa Dae  
Seoul 110-820  
Republic of Korea

Dear President,

I am writing to express my concern about the death penalty situation in the Republic of Korea. At the end of 2007, 58 prisoners were on death row. The last executions took place in December 1997.

I am convinced that the Death Penalty punishment constitutes a major denial of human rights. It is a cruel, inhuman, degrading and useless punishment.

I am writing to ask you to affirm the moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty in law for all crimes as provided by UN General Assembly resolution 62/149.

The Special Bill to Abolish the Death Penalty, introduced in 2005 and held at the Legislation and Judiciary Committee of the 17<sup>th</sup> National Assembly, lapsed in March 2008. I am urging you to re-introduce the bill in the National Assembly.

Thank you for giving this matter your attention, I look forward to hearing from you.

[ 2 ]

## HIGH PROFILE ABOLITIONISTS' LETTERS

Here are four public statements sent to the WCADP. It is the original letters, they are not translated.

### [ Article from Ravikumar, Indian member of parliament

Abstract from an article written by Ravikumar, representative of the Chennai region in India (also known as Madras). He has been involved in the fight against the death penalty. The article deals with the use of capital punishment in India and it was published on 8 October 2008 in *Vikatan Junior* a popular bi weekly Tamil magazine (from the Southern region of Tamil Nadu). It is in Tamil language.

ரவிக்குமார் எம்.எல்.ஏ.  
வேண்டாம் மரண தண்டனை!

குற்றம் இழைத்த ஒருவருக்கு வழங்கப்படுகிற தண்டனையின் நோக்கம் அவர் மீண்டும் அந்தக் குற்றத்தைச் செய்யாமல் தடுப்பது மட்டுமல்ல, அவரைத் திருந்தச் செய்வதும்தான். தவறு செய்த ஒரு நபரை பழி வாங்குவதற்கும் தண்டிப்பதற்கும் வித்தியாசம் இருக்கிறது. பல சமயங்களில் குற்றத்தின் கொடூரத்தன்மை நம்மை உணர்ச்சிவயப்படுத்தி, நிதானமிழக்கச் செய்து விடுகிறது. அப்போது நீதி வழங்குவதற்கும், பழி தீர்ப்பதற்கும் இடையிலான வேறுபாட்டை காணத் தவறிவிடுகிறோம். சிறு குழந்தை ஒன்று கொடூர மாக கொல்லப்படும்போது, அபலைப்பெண் ஒருவர் அநியாயமாகச் சீரழிக்கப்படும்போது, பயங்கரவாதி களின் வெடிகுண்டுத் தாக்குதல்களில் அப்பாவி மக்கள் வெடித்துச் சிதறும்போது அதைக் காணுகிற நமக்குள் மேலோங்குவது பழி உணர்ச்சிதான். இந்தக் கொடுமைகளை செய்தவர்களை உயிரோடு விடக் கூடாது என்றுதான் நம்முடைய மனம் எண்ணும். ஆனால், அதையே ஆறாமர யோசித்துப் பார்த்தால், நாம் வேறுவிதமான முடிவுக்கு வருவோம். நம்முடைய நீதி அமைப்பு பழி தீர்ப்பதற்கானதல்ல. இதன் தனித் தன்மையை உணர்ந்தால்தான், உலகெங்கும் மரண தண்டனை ஒழிப்புக்கான குரல் இப்போது வலுவடைந்து வருகிறது.

1980-ம் ஆண்டில் உலகில் இருபத்தைந்து நாடுகள்தான் மரண தண்டனையை கைவிட்டிருந்தன. இன்றோ, தொண்ணூறு நாடுகளில் அது முற்றிலும் ஒழிக்கப்பட்டு விட்டது. பதினோரு நாடுகள் ராணுவ குற்றம் தவிர, சாதாரண குற்றங் களுக்கு மரண தண்டனை விதிப்பதில்லை. இவை தவிர, மேலும் முப்பத்திரண்டு நாடுகள் மரண தண்டனையை சட்டப்படுத்தத்தில் வைத்திருந்தாலும், அதை நடைமுறைப்படுத்துவதில்லை. மொத்தத்தில் உலகில் 133 நாடுகளில் இப்போது மரண தண்டனை விதிக்கப்படுவதில்லை. இந்தப் பட்டியலில் இந்தியாவை இடம்பெறச் செய்யவேண்டுமென்று இங்குள்ள மனித உரிமை ஆர்வலர்கள் முயற்சித்து வருகிறார்கள்.

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## [ Public Statement of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan

This article was published on 11 October 2008 in the Daily Times of Pakistan. It is one among many articles that quoted the NGO Human Rights Commission of Pakistan about the death penalty in this period.

### “Open Your Eyes: World Day Against the Death Penalty”

By Ali Usman

LAHORE: World Day Against The Death Penalty is being commemorated across the world on Friday (today) with a specific focus on Asia where, according to Amnesty International, at least 664 executions were reported in 2007. The slogan of this year's observance is “Open Your Eyes”.

In 2006, Pakistan was one of the six countries where 91 percent of the world's executions were carried out. According to Amnesty International, the other countries are China, Iran, Iraq, Sudan and the United States (US). Around the world, 137 countries have abolished the death penalty. In 2007, Pakistan voted against a United Nations General Assembly resolution for a moratorium on the death penalty. However, the current Pakistan People's Party (PPP) government announced that it would commute the death sentence of 7,024 prisoners to life imprisonment. Despite the announcement, however, four condemned prisoners have been hanged, according to data released by the Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC). The AHRC said that 465 prisoners at Rawalpindi Adiala Jail had been moved from death row cells to the open barracks of ordinary prisoners on President Asif Ali Zardari's orders. The president, under Article 145 of the constitution, has the power to commute the death penalty himself. However, he has not issued the notification to commute all death penalties since the announcement was made on June 21.

Talking to Daily Times, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) Punjab Vice-Chairwoman Hina Jilani said that human rights activists had been demanding the abolishment of the death penalty for several years, adding that the public should be made aware that there are other ways to control the crime rate. She said that a commission should be made comprising of retired judges, human rights activists, legal experts, civil society representatives and government officials to work and suggest a law to commute the death penalty. An AHRC spokesman said that only murder and treason carried the death penalty when Pakistan was established, adding that now extra-marital sex, blasphemy, and even drug offences carry the death penalty.

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[ **Letter from Philip Alston,  
United Nations Special Rapporteur**

New York University  
*A private university in the public service*

School of Law  
Faculty of Law

40 Washington Square South, Rm 305  
New York, New York 10012-1099  
Telephone: (212) 998-6173  
Facsimile: (212) 995-4658  
Email: philip.alston@nyu.edu

Philip Alston, *John Norton Pomeroy Professor of Law*  
*Faculty Director and Chair, NYU Center for Human Rights and Global Justice*  
*United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions*  
*Editor-in-Chief, European Journal of International Law, 1996-2007*

9 October 2008

Ms. Cécile Thimoreau  
World Coalition Against the Death Penalty  
Paris

Dear Ms. Thimoreau,

As UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, arbitrary or summary executions, my role with regard to the death penalty is to collect information on the way in which the strict safeguards with which international law limits its use are respected by States that have not yet abolished capital punishment, and to report my findings to the Human Rights Council. To this effect, I try to engage Governments in a constructive dialogue and seek invitations to visit countries in which violations of the right to life, including in connection with the death penalty, are reported.

While the number of countries abolishing the death penalty or adopting formal or informal moratoria increases each year, my reports to the Human Rights Council show that the death penalty continues to be imposed and carried out in violation of the safeguards firmly enshrined in international law.

Some States continue to use the death penalty for offences such as drug trafficking, adultery, and non-violent expression of political dissent. They argue that sovereign States have the right to determine in full independence their policies to combat crime and protect the citizenry. International law, however, is very clear in banning the death penalty for all but the most serious crimes, i.e. those involving intentional killing. Laws rendering the imposition of the death penalty mandatory for murder, or limiting the judge's discretion to impose a lesser penalty in light of the

circumstances of the individual case, also violate this crucial "most serious crime requirement".

Because of the extreme and irremediable nature of the death penalty, the most scrupulous respect for all the rights of accused persons enshrined in international law is particularly important in capital cases. The reality of many trials in which the death penalty is imposed is in strident contrast with this requirement. The accused is often kept in prolonged incommunicado detention, confessions are extorted by torture and then used as evidence at trial, judges turn blind eyes and deaf ears to torture complaints of capital defendants, and persons risking the death penalty go to trial without the assistance of a lawyer or assisted by legal aid counsel who manifestly fail to mount a diligent defence. Due process also requires that condemned persons, their families and their lawyers must be provided with timely and reliable information on the procedures and timing of appeals, clemency petitions, and executions. Instead, all too often post conviction proceedings are shrouded in secrecy. As the UN Human Rights Committee has stressed, disregard for procedural safeguards in capital cases constitutes not only a violation of fair trial obligations, but also a violation of the right to life.

There are not many rules of international human rights law as clear, categorical and universally accepted as the prohibition on the imposition of the death penalty for crimes committed by offenders under the age of 18 at the time of the crime. In spite of this absolute and unambiguous ban, enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child which they have ratified, a few States continue to impose the death penalty against juvenile offenders.

As Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, arbitrary or summary executions, I have repeatedly drawn the attention of all States to the obligation of transparency regarding the number of death sentences imposed, executions carried out, instances in which clemency has been granted, and persons remaining on death row. Transparency regarding these facts and figures is a prerequisite for a meaningful public debate on the death penalty. Many States, however, choose secrecy over transparency, but still claim that capital punishment is retained in part because it attracts widespread public support.

The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has designated the week of 6 -12 October as the "Dignity and Justice for Detainees Week". It is most appropriate that the World Day Against the Death Penalty called for by the WCADP should fall in this week. Death row prisoners are often kept for years, sometimes decades, in abject conditions, shackled day and night, or without access to daylight, as if the death sentence had done away also with their right to be treated with humanity and respect for their inherent dignity, which international law recognizes to all persons deprived of their liberty.

Best regards.

Philip Alston  
Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, arbitrary or summary executions

[ Letter from Benita Ferrero-Waldner,  
European Commissioner

*Benita Ferrero-Waldner*  
Member of the European Commission

*Rue de la Loi 200 - B-1049 Brussels*  
*Wetstraat 200 - B-1049 Brussel*

Brussels, 23 October 2008  
BFW D(2008) 1566

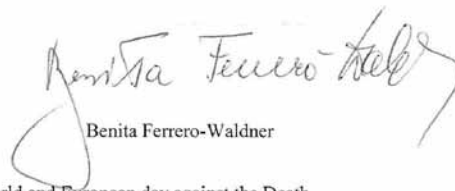
Dear Mrs Thimoreau,

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the World Coalition against the Death Penalty, concerning the 10 October: World Day against the Death Penalty.

I fully share the objective of the World Coalition against the Death Penalty concerning the worldwide abolition of the death penalty, with a reduction of its use as a first step. These are also the policy goals of the EU. The EU encourages public debate, strengthening public opposition and putting pressure on retentionist countries to abolish the death penalty, or at least introduce a moratorium as a first step. The EU also acts against the death penalty in multilateral fora, such as the United Nations; a culmination of this effort was the resolution on the moratorium on the use of the death penalty, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 2007. In 2006, the EU adopted a Regulation on trade in goods which could be used for capital punishment or torture, which inter alia prohibits the export and import of goods whose only practical use is to carry out capital punishment. The EU's political commitment has been matched by substantial financial support (more than €15 million since 1994) for concrete projects, given that the death penalty is one of the priorities under the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR).

Concerning your request to make a contribution, in the form of a public statement or an open letter, in support of the World Day against the Death Penalty, I issued a statement (see attached for the statement text) on the occasion of the World and European Day against the Death Penalty this year, as I have done in previous years.

Yours sincerely,



Benita Ferrero-Waldner

Enclosure : Statement on the occasion of the World and European day against the Death Penalty

Ms Cécile Thimoreau  
World Coalition Against the Death Penalty  
197/199 avenue Pierre Brossollette  
92120 Montrouge  
France

Press Release of Benita Ferrero-Waldner, European Commissioner

Brussels, 10 October 2008

Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner calls for continued efforts to achieve universal abolition of death penalty

On the occasion of the World and European Day against the Death Penalty Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner said: "I am proud of the EU's leading role in the international efforts to abolish the death penalty. Although over half the countries in the world have abolished the death penalty in law or practice, the global figures for its use remain much too high. I fully recognize the plight of victims of violent crime, but the death penalty is not the solution. On the contrary, it only serves to aggravate a culture of violence and retribution. The Commission is determined to work towards the universal abolition of the death penalty through all available diplomatic channels and as a leading donor in this field.

A culmination of the EU's efforts, actively supported by states from all regions of the world, was the adoption of the resolution on the moratorium on the use of the death penalty, by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2007. EU encourages public debate, strengthening public opposition and putting pressure on retentionist countries to abolish the death penalty, or at least introduce a moratorium as a first step. The EU also acts against the death penalty in multilateral fora, such as the United Nations; a culmination of this effort was the resolution on the moratorium on the use of the death penalty, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 2007. The EU's political commitment has been matched by substantial financial support for concrete projects, given that the death penalty is one of the priorities under the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR).

- 92 countries and territories have abolished the death penalty for all crimes;
- 10 countries have abolished the death penalty for all but exceptional crimes such as wartime crimes;
- 35 countries can be considered abolitionist in practice. They retain the death penalty in law but have not carried out any executions for the past 10 years or more and are believed to have a policy or established practice of not carrying out executions. This makes a total of 137 countries which have abolished the death penalty in law or practice. Since 2005, ten countries have abolished the death penalty.

However, figures of death penalty application around the world still remain high. During 2007, at least 1,252 people were executed in 24 countries, and at least 3,347 people were sentenced to death in 51 countries. 88 per cent of all known



executions took place in five countries: China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and the USA. The EU's action, as the worldwide leader on the fight against death penalty, remains urgent and necessary.

Under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, more than ?15 million have been allocated to support civil society projects since 1994, aimed at raising public awareness in retentionist countries through public education, outreach to influence public opinion, studies on how states' death penalty systems comply with international minimum standards, informing and supporting strategies for replacing the death penalty and efforts for securing the access of death row inmates to appropriate levels of legal support and training for lawyers.

## LIST OF INITIATIVES

The following list of actions is non exhaustive. Only events notified to the WCADP are briefly discribed here.

### ASIA-PACIFIC (40 ACTIONS – 9 COUNTRIES)

#### ADPAN

E-PHOTO COMPETITION - Amnesty International's Pacific Youth Network held a photo competition via Facebook to select the best pictures of activists holding placards against the death penalty.

#### [ AUSTRALIA

##### Amnesty International Australia

DEMONSTRATION in Melbourne in front of the Indian and Japanese embassies.

ARTICLE IN THE *BALTIMORE* from Katie Wood the Amnesty International Australia Campaign Coordinator.

#### [ INDIA

##### Amnesty International India (New Delhi)

STUNT ACTIVITY involving five young people who wore a black hood and a noose around their neck and a black t-shirt which said 'Save Me' and *Mujhe Bacha Lo!* in Hindi. The group marched and performed on the streets of Delhi and prominent places in media gaze while other AI members interacted with the public and handed out leaflets.

MEMORANDUM CALLING FOR MORATORIUM was handed over to the Prime Minister of India, to the President and the Home Ministry.

PHOTOGRAPHY of banners "No to the Death Penalty" in front of symbolic buildings.

##### Amnesty International India (Andhra Pradesh)

PEACEFUL WALK in Vishakhapatnam.

##### Amnesty International India (Chattisgarh)

PEACEFUL WALK in Bhilai.

##### Amnesty International India (Haryana)

PEACEFUL WALK in Rohtak.

##### Amnesty International India (Kerala)

PEACEFUL WALK in Cochin.

### **Amnesty International India (Orissa)**

PEACEFUL WALK in Sonepur.

### **Amnesty International India (Punjab)**

PEACEFUL WALK in Mohali.

### **Amnesty International India (U.P.)**

PEACEFUL WALK in Agra.

PEACEFUL WALK in Amraha.

PEACEFUL WALK in Aligarh.

### **Amnesty International India (Karnataka)**

PEACEFUL WALK in Bangalore.

### **Amnesty International India (Chattisgarh)**

PEACEFUL WALK in Raipur.

### **Amnesty International India (Bihar)**

PEACEFUL WALK in Patna.

PEACEFUL WALK in Samastipur.

### **Amnesty International India (Gujrat)**

PEACEFUL WALK in Nadiad.

### **Amnesty International India (A.P.)**

PEACEFUL WALK in Hyderabad.

### **Amnesty International India (W.B.)**

PEACEFUL WALK in Jalpaiguri.

## [ JAPAN

### **Japan Federation of Bar Associations**

This is a World Day-related event: JFBA supports a moratorium rather than the abolition of the death penalty.

FILM SCREENING: film depicting a prison official who takes care of a death row inmate before being assigned the duty of his execution.

CONFERENCE "A day to think about the death penalty", keynote speech by Mr. Nobuto Hosaka MP, Secretary General of the Diet Members' League for Abolition of the Death Penalty.

REPORT on the Japan Federation of Bar Associations' draft bill calling for a moratorium by JFBA's moratorium committee member.

### **Forum 90, Amnesty International Japan**

SYMPOSIUM "Echo the Voices of Abolition 2008: From Death Row to You".

EXHIBITION inside the hall: poets, drawings or other works made by death row inmates were on display.

### **Amnesty International Japan**

DEMONSTRATION in a central part of Tokyo calling for the abolition of the death penalty all over the world.

## [ HONG KONG

### **Amnesty International Hong Kong**

ORIGAMI LETTER CAMPAIGN: "A Blessing for Life-Crane Action against Death Penalty" encouraged students and church members to make paper origami cranes and send them to Japanese Consulate to lobby them to sign for a death penalty moratorium.

## [ MONGOLIA

### **Amnesty International Mongolia**

CONFERENCE: "Human Rights and the Death penalty". The Conference included more than 60 participants such as judges, prosecutors, lawyers, police officers, human rights NGO representatives, law school teachers and students.

BROADCAST INTERVIEWS on the following channels: Mongolian National Broadcasting, C-1, and UBS about the death penalty in Mongolia and the global trends towards the abolition of the death penalty.

### **Amnesty International Mongolia's youth activists**

FREEDOM PARADE on October 4, 2008: actions were held with large scale and colourful electric chairs, lethal injections room and ropes.

## [ PAKISTAN

### **Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP)**

PRESS RELEASE published for the World Day.

## [ SOUTH KOREA

**National Human Rights Commission Korea, Amnesty International Corée du Sud, Catholic Human Rights Committee, Catholic Bishop's Conference Justice and Peace Committee, National Council of Churches in Korea Justice and Peace Committee, Buddhist Human Rights Committee et Won Buddhist Human Rights Committee**

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CEREMONY - "The way to Life, our way to go" in National Assembly Library Hall hosted by offices of MPs with performances by Amnesty International Youth group and Hong Soon Kwan, Singer.

## [ THAILAND

### **Union for Civil Liberty (UCL)**

ARTICLE - from Mr Danthong BREEN (President), in the *Bangkok Post*.

## [ TAIWAN

### **Taiwan Alliance to end the Death Penalty**

FILM FESTIVAL KAOSHIUNG - 'Life and Humanity' with several film projections.

CONCERT SAY YES TO LIFE on 10 October.

THEATRE PLAY- 'The Wind of Intending'.

SERIES OF CONFERENCES - The French Institute in Taipei, the German Institute in Taipei and the British Trade and Cultural Office organized forums that brought together legal experts from their countries and Taiwan.

A SHORT FILM about death penalty in South Korea was produced together with South Korean abolitionists.

## **NORTH AMERICA, SOUTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (19 ACTIONS IN 7 COUNTRIES)**

### [ BRAZIL

#### **ACAT Brazil**

PUBLIC ACTION on the death penalty to denounce the fact that the Olympic Games took place in the country where most world executions take place: China; to recall torture acts and executions during dictatorship time in Brazil and the impunity of torturers and to provide information on violence by the police.

### [ CANADA

#### **Foundation for Public Poetry**

POETS & POLITICIANS AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY: Montreal event to call for an end to the death penalty and for Canadian Ronald Smith to be repatriated to Canada from the USA to serve the remainder of his incarceration. Smith has been on Montana's death row for 25 years.

#### **Amnistie Canada francophone**

THEATER PLAY by a theater university company presenting the Kohail Brothers story. The Kohail brothers were threaten to be beheaded in Saudi Arabia.

SIGNATURE OF A PETITION in favor of the Kohail brothers of the World Coalition petition on Asia.

#### **ACAT Canada, Montreal**

CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING NIGHT on the theme "38 years in cell, testimonies from jail chaplains".

POEM, SEE FRAME « THE ROW» BY RITA AMABILI, MEMBER OF ACAT CANADA.

### [ CHILE

#### **Amnesty International Chile**

FORUM ON THE DEATH PENALTY with four guest speakers who spoke about their opinions for and against its use. Leonardo Aravena of Amnesty International Chile spoke about the Coalition's stand on the death penalty.

### [ MEXICO

#### **Dragon Dance Theatre and the Museo Historico de la Sierra Gorda**

EXHIBITION "EXECUTIONS AND DEMOCRACY" in the historical Museum of Sierra Gorda presenting twenty images of Sam Kerson's Linoleum Block print series that illustrated the inconsistencies, the injustices, the racism, the sexism and the blood mania that defines the Mexican system of injustice.

## [ PARAGUAY

### **Amnesty International Paraguay**

**PRESS RELEASE** published in *Un Mundo* on 10 October about the World Day and about the 10th anniversary of the execution of Ángel Francisco Breard, Paraguayan national who was executed in the US.

**PUBLIC DECLARATION** calling the government of Paraguay to support a moratorium on executions, to reform the Criminal Code and to lobby other governments to ratify the Second Optional Protocol of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

## [ PUERTO RICO

### **Puerto Rican Association of University Professors (APPU)**

**RADIO BROADCAST** at Radio Universidad of Puerto Rico, San Juan.

### **Puerto Rican Coalition Against the Death Penalty**

**CONFERENCE** organized by the Law School of the Pontifical Catholic University.

**CONFERENCE** at the University of Sacred Heart, Puerto Rico. The Puerto Rican Coalition Against Death Penalty in coordination with the Institute for Investigation and Promotion of Human Rights are co-sponsoring a symposium entitled: "Death Penalty: Not In The Name Of Our Children", in which victims of violent crimes present the view against capital punishment.

**CONFERENCE** at the University High School and at the University of Puerto Rico.

## [ USA

### **New Hampshire Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty**

**VIGIL** in observance of World Day Against the Death Penalty.

### **ACAT USA Tennessee**

**CONFERENCE:** 'Last rights: what are they?' by author, the Rev. Dr. Joe Ingle, minister to death row convicts in Tennessee and surrounding states for 17 years.

### **Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty**

"**TEACH IN**" on the death penalty with Dave Atwood (TCADP Board), Linda White (a murder victim family member), Clarence Brandley (an exonerated death row prisoner), Jared Tyler, Les Breeding and Nancy Bailey (TCADP).

### **Murder Victims' Families for Human Rights and National Alliance on Mental Illness**

**NATIONAL MEETING ON MENTAL ILLNESS AND THE DEATH PENALTY.** Speakers shared their perspectives as family members of murder victims and the executed murderers.

### **Montana Abolition Coalition**

**JOURNEY OF HOPE** From Violence to Healing: events were held throughout the state of Montana.

## **NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST** (14 ACTIONS IN 4 COUNTRIES)

### **Arab Coalition Against the Death Penalty**

**PRESS RELEASE:** "No, to the infringement on the right of life, No, to the death penalty": The Arab Coalitions believed stopping the codification and implementation of the death penalty in the Arab countries was a basic demand, urged Arab countries to draft a new charter that would spell out the relationship between the State and its citizens and also appealed to the judiciary branch of governments in the Arab countries to follow the steps of the Lebanese judiciary which decided to abrogate the death penalty, to substitute it for another penalty and to revoke all the death sentences issued by the criminal courts.

## [ JORDAN

### **Penal Reform International regional office**

**PRESS RELEASE:** Penal Reform International urged support for a United Nations initiative to end executions.

### **Amman Center for Human Rights Studies (ACHRS)**

**LAUNCHING AN ARAB OBSERVATORY ON THE DEATH PENALTY** with its electronic website: <http://www.dp.achrs.org> (in Arabic only).

## [ LEBANON

### **Lebanese Ministry of Justice**

Justice Minister Ibrahim Najjar presented a draft law to the Cabinet that would abolish the death penalty and replace it with life in prison at hard labor.

## [ MOROCCO

### **Ensemble Contre la Peine de Mort and Conseil Consultatif des droits de l'Homme**

**WORKSHOP ON THE DEATH PENALTY** to open a scientific debate about the death penalty through legislation, religion, sociology and human rights perspectives and to create a document of arguments in favour of abolition together with the protagonists of the Moroccan society (civil society, Ulema, political parties, members of parliament, members of universities and intellectuals).

### **Moroccan Coalition Against the Death Penalty**

**SIT-IN** in front of the Parliament to mark World Day Against the Death Penalty.

**PRESS RELEASE**

## [ TUNISIA

### **Coalition nationale tunisienne contre la peine de mort**

**LETTERS CAMPAIGN** to call for the abolition of the death penalty. Three letters were sent to

the President of the Republic, the President of the Tunisian Parliament and to the Minister of Justice and Human Rights for the opening of the parliamentary session.  
PRESS RELEASE with other Arab World Coalitions.

### **Amnesty International Tunisia**

CONFERENCE "for a world without death penalty" by the lawyer Rabah Khayfi about Tunisia civil society and international community activism to abolish the death.

INTRODUCTION OF AN ABOLITION BILL by a member of the opposition party Adel Chaouech at the Tunisian National Assembly.

CONFERENCE by Mr. Sami Brahem "Death Penalty in the Arab World and Islam". Representative of opposition parties, of NGOs and media attended the conference.

SIGNATURES CAMPAIGN for the petition to abolish the death penalty in Nigeria and for the World Day petition: Asia, it's time to end executions.

SCREENING OF THE FILM *Dancer in the Dark* at the *Institut supérieur des sciences humaines* in Tunis to raise students awareness about the death penalty.

## **SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA** (36 ACTIONS IN 15 COUNTRIES)

### [ **BENIN**

#### **ACAT Parakou**

RADIO PROGRAM on Urban FM community radio station in association with the coordination of human rights NGOs (Amnesty International, Human Rights League, Law Students).

#### **Benin Coalition for the International Criminal Court**

LOBBYING with the magistrate in charge of human rights at the Ministry of Justice.

TELEVISED INTERVIEW on a private channel.

RADIO BROADCAST on public and private radio.

PRESS RELEASE published by two major newspapers.

### [ **BURKINA FASO**

#### **ACAT Burkina Faso**

PRESS RELEASE AND PETITION SIGNATURES.

### [ **CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**

#### **ACAT Central African Republic**

Support message from ACAT-CAR President, Bruno Hyacinthe Gbiegba, who joined the WCADP call to abolish the death penalty because of the unreliability of human judgment.

### [ **CHAD**

#### **Association tchadienne pour la promotion et la défense des droits de l'homme (ATPDH)**

PRESS CONFERENCE about the World Day, the WCADP and the African Commission on Human and People's Rights.

### [ **CONGO (REPUBLIC OF THE)**

#### **Mary Robinson International Centre and Amnesty International Congo**

INFORMATION STAND on the death penalty.

COLLECTION OF PETITION signatures on President Denis Sassou Nguesso appeal to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.

### [ **DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

#### **Pax Christi Uvira**

CONFERENCE AND DEBATE: "the use of the death penalty in Christian philosophy and its impact on peace", as part of Peace Week organised every year by Pax Christi Uvira.

## **Culture pour la Paix et la Justice**

**STUDENTS' WORKSHOP:** discussion on the memorandum aimed at the Solicitor general and at the Minister of Justice about the death sentences ordered by the *Cour d'Ordre Militaire* (military Court).

**INTERVIEW** for the Canadian radio Chyz of Lievin Ngondji, Director of CPJ.

## **ACAT-Nord-Kivu**

**THINKING ABOUT THE DEATH PENALTY** by the MONUC in Goma: Is the death penalty necessary in DRC? How to reach abolition in DRC? It gathered delegates from public ministers, national and international NGOs, human rights defenders and police officers.

## **ACAT Sud Kivu**

**RADIO PROGRAMME** entitled "The death penalty: a cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment" and information campaign for Asians living in South Kivu.

## **[ GHANA**

### **Amnesty International Ghana**

**BREAKFAST MEETING** with selected human rights defenders to discuss the way forward for Amnesty International Ghana's campaigns on the death penalty.

**INTERVIEW** of Amnesty International Ghana director in his office with journalists. The interview was aired on the World Day.

## **[ MADAGASCAR**

### **ACAT Madagascar**

**DEBATE** at the *Alliance Française* of Tananarive with NGOs, ministries, the French embassy, teachers, clerics and parliamentarians.

## **[ MALI**

### **Amnesty International Mali**

**CONFERENCE** with magistrates, elected officials, women's organizations and religious leaders to debate about the context in Mali and about the abolition bill introduced at the National Assembly a year ago. This bill has not been on the agenda yet because of the so-called public opinion and because the State –voluntarily or not- refused to launch the debate.

## **[ NIGERIA**

### **Civil Liberties Organisation (CLO)**

**TV PROGRAM:** Civil Liberties Organisation took part in the 'KAKAAKI-The African Voice' show on pan-African satellite TV channel African Independent Television (AIT).

## **[ SENEGAL**

### **Organisation nationale des droits de l'Homme (ONDH)**

**CONFERENCES AND DEBATES** in all its newly founded "Boutiques des droits de l'Homme" (human rights shop) across Senegal to call for an abolitionist movement and encourage the position of Senegal.

## **[ SIERRA LEONE**

### **Amnesty International Sierra Leone**

**DEBATE** on the pros and cons of the death penalty.

**DEATH PENALTY STATISTICS** launch.

**MEETING** with the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights to engage them on Amnesty International Sierra Leone position on the death penalty.

## **[ TANZANIA**

### **Legal and Human Rights Center and Zanzibar Legal Service Centre**

**PRESS CONFERENCE AND DEBATE:** one day event to deliberate.

**PETITIONS SIGNED** for the abolition in Tanzania.

**SUBMISSION OF THE PETITIONS** against the death penalty to the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs of Tanzania.

## **[ TOGO**

### **Forum africain contre la peine de mort (FACPM)**

**LEAFLETS DISTRIBUTION** in the city of Lome, especially to the Asian community living in Lome ( Chinese and Indo-Pakistani). Posters were placarded in the main streets, in cultural centers, and in different public services and ministers.

**TV INTERVIEW** of FACPM's national coordinator on the Channel E47 during the program "Citizens' initiative".

### **ACAT Togo**

**HUMAN RIGHTS FILMS FESTIVAL.** It created debates with Secondary schools pupils and the population of different areas in Lome.

**RADIO BROADCAST** on 10 and 11 October about the death penalty.

### **ACAT Togo and Amnesty International Togo**

**LOBBYING :** meeting with the President of the National Assembly Human Rights Commission, with the Minister for Human Rights and Consolidation of Democracy, with the Ministry of Justice Chief of Staff. Posters and leaflets of the WCADP were given to all of them.

## [ UGANDA

### Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI)

**BOOK LAUNCH** "Towards Abolition of the Death Penalty in Uganda". The book, authored by the Civil Society Coalition for the Abolition of the Death Penalty in Uganda and published by Fountain Publishers, breaks new ground by shining a spotlight directly on the practice and development of capital punishment in Uganda, as well as placing the practice in its international legal context. It includes a review of landmark judicial challenges to the punishment around the world, and an especial focus on the recent constitutional challenge in Uganda.

**ARTICLE** published by FHRI on the subject of the death penalty in *the New Vision* newspaper.

**THIRTY MINUTE TALK SHOW** on *Vision Voice* 94.8 fm.

## EUROPE

(178 ACTIONS IN 15 COUNTRIES)

### Council of Europe and the PACE

**ROUND TABLE** with former Minister of Justice and pioneer in the fight for abolition, French Senator Robert Badinter; international activist and Goodwill Ambassador Bianca Jagger; Council of Europe General Secretary Terry Davis and Swedish Human Rights Ambassador Jan Nordlander.

### Vice President of the European Parliament, Luisa Morgantini

**MOVIE "15 SECONDS"** presented by Raoul Bova, actor and producer, and Gianluca Petrazzi, director of the short movie who reaffirmed their engagement for the implementation of the UN resolution on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty. Their project screened in the Parliament in Brussels had previously received the Patronage of the European Parliament.

**PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION** to celebrate the World Day Against the Death Penalty and the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

## [ AUSTRIA

### Amnesty International Austria

**VIGILS** in front of the Indian and Japanese embassies

**SIGNATURES COLLECTION** for the country appeals and additional for the case of Hakawada Iwao.

**SYMBOLIC ACTION:** a rope and a gallows were at displays in the streets. Pedestrians were asked to cut a piece of the rope so that it becomes shorter to symbolize the worldwide reduction of death penalty. The event attracted many people who then signed the appeals.

**INFORMATION TABLES** with the appeals for India and Japan.

**PERFORMANCES** in a Vienna city theatre. The play matters of a famous advocate who worked against the death penalty in the USA.

## [ BELGIUM

### ACAT België-Vlaanderen

**TESTIMONY** from death row by Peter and Sunny. In cooperation with Sant'Egidio and Inside Outside.

### ACAT Belgium

**CONFERENCE** "abolition of the death penalty, which stakes for tomorrow mankind?" with Guy Aurenche, criminal lawyer, long-term activist against torture and the death penalty.

### Amnesty International Belgium

**EMBASSY PROTEST** at the Embassy of Japan. Different personalities used this event to talk about the death penalty situation in Japan. A scene was set up representing the three Japanese prisoners executed a few days before the World Day in front of the Japanese flag.

### **Fédération des Etudiants Libéraux (FEL-Liberal students Federation)**

EMBASSY PROTEST organized by Amnesty International Belgium in front of the Japanese embassy calling for the abolition of the death penalty.

DRAFTING OF A RESOLUTION adopted by the National Assembly to officially recognize October, 10th as World Day Against the Death Penalty in Belgium.

### **Ordre des Barreaux francophones et Germanophones de Belgique (OFBG)**

CAMPAIGN SUBMITTED TO LAYERS AND APPEALS SENT.

### **Ordre des Barreau flamands**

CAMPAIGN SUBMITTED TO LAYERS AND APPEALS SENT.

### **Conseil de l'Ordre des avocats du barreau de Liège**

CAMPAIGN SUBMITTED TO LAYERS AND APPEALS SENT.

PRESS RELEASE SENT.

## **[ FRANCE**

### **Radio BLV**

RADIO BROADCAST AT 8:00 am and 12:30 am for the program: "Reportages": 10 minutes news on the death penalty.

RADIO PROGRAM: *Baroscope* (once every two months) and *Halte au Tabou* (every month) dedicated to the death penalty on 10 October 2008.

### **Collectif Mumia Abu-Jamal**

FILM PREMIERE: IN PRISON MY WHOLE LIFE (documentary against death-penalty focused on the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal) with the *Festival Hors-Ecran* in Lyon. The public then debated extensively on abolitionism.

PRESS CONFERENCE at Lyon City Hall chaired by Lyon deputy mayor, Mrs Heidi Giovacchini, with the participation of Mrs Mitterrand, former French Lady, Colin and Livia Firth, the producers and Nicole and Robert R. Bryan from San Francisco Bar.

### **Paris Bar Association**

NEWSPAPER COLUMN: "Appeal for Troy Davis and all the others..." by Paris Bar Association President Christian Charrière-Bournazel published in *Le Monde*.

APPEALS sent to 70 European Bars to encourage them to take action for the World Day.

ARTICLES published on the Bar Magazine and on their Website.

PETITIONS sent.

LEAFLETS AND POSTERS were distributed in the Law Courts and in the Paris Bar Association Headquarters.

### **Reporters Without Borders**

PRESS RELEASE about the World Day Against the Death Penalty and more specifically, about journalists sentenced to death.

### **FIDH**

PUBLICATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL FACT-FINDING MISSION REPORT on death penalty in Japan entitled "The death penalty in Japan: the law of silence, going against the international trend" on the occasion of the world day against the death penalty.

PRESS RELEASE to launch the report.

### **ACAT France and Amnesty International France**

SIGNATURES CAMPAIGN TOGETHER WITH AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL FRANCE.

THE APPEAL of October was about the situation in Taiwan.

### **ACAT France, Périgueux**

INTERRELIGIOUS CONFERENCE about "Death Penalty, religions and societies".

PUBLIC CONFERENCE in the evening on the same subject.

### **ACAT France, Mutzig**

ACTION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS in classes of civic education. Debates about the death penalty, art work on this theme and writing prisoners testimonies workshop.

ACTIONS IN CHURCHES about the importance of the fight for abolition.

### **ACAT France, Saint Lô**

SPEECHES DURING CHURCH SERVICES.

INFORMATION STAND and posters at disposal.

PETITIONS SIGNATURES.

### **ACAT France, Bar le Duc**

SIGNATURES CAMPAIGN in Churches.

SIGNATURES CAMPAIGN during markets. Oral interventions and posters.

### **ACAT France, Vendôme**

POSTERS OF THE WCADP on display and presentation of the situation in Taiwan in Churches.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE MONTHLY APPEAL about Taiwan.

ARTICLE in the newspaper *La Renaissance du Loir et Cher* about the Asian campaign quoting the ACAT and the WCADP on 17 Octobre 2008.

### **ACAT France, Cannes**

SPEECHES DURING CHURCH SERVICES.

PETITION SIGNATURES.

### **ACAT France, Thonon les bains**

SIGNATURES CAMPAIGN in the markets.

ARTICLES in the Newspaper *Dauphiné libéré* from 8 October and 10 October to inform about the actions of ACAT and about the World Day Against the Death Penalty.

### **ACAT France, Mulhouse**

SIGNATURES CAMPAIGN during Church services.



**ACAT France, Vichy**

SPEECHES DURING FOUR CHURCH SERVICES about Asia.  
SIGNATURES CAMPAIGN.

**ACAT France, Nancy**

PETITION SIGNATURES in the streets and debates with people in favour of the death penalty.

**ACAT France, Gap**

PETITION SIGNATURES in a market.

**ACAT France, Marles**

PETITION SIGNATURES.  
CALL TO PRAYER for death row prisoners.

**ACAT France, Saint-Malo**

POSTERS AT DISPLAY AND PETITION SIGNATURES during an Association Forum.

**ACAT France, Franconville-St Leu la forêt**

SPEECHES DURING THREE CHURCH SERVICES and distribution of leaflets.

**ACAT France, Lourdes/ Tarbes et ensemble des Hauts Pyrénées**

ACTIONS IN RETIRED PEOPLE ASSOCIATIONS, chaplaincies and during pilgrimage in Lourdes.

**ACAT France, Angers**

INFORMATION AND SIGNATURES STAND during Churches gathering and at nursing and rest home.

**ACAT France, Saint Nazaire**

SPEECHES DURING CHURCH SERVICES.  
PETITION SIGNATURES.

**ACAT France, Alençon**

INFORMATION AND PETITION STAND during a Book Fair.

**ACAT France, Ariège**

SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN during Church services.

**ACAT et Amnesty International France, Agen**

PRESS TABLE AND SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN.

**ACAT et Amnesty International France, Isère**

INTERVIEW of 12 minutes for a Christian radio about the World Day.

**ACAT France, Clermont Ferrand et Amnesty France Clermont Ferrand**

SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN during an Association Forum.

**Amnesty International Alfortville**

CONCERT with the bands *Trois bouts de ficelle*, *Traces d'Irlande*, *Atelier JAZZ d'Alfortville*, *Polyphonies corses*.

**Amnesty International Bourges**

JAZZ CONCERT and event on the issue of the death penalty with the *Louisiana Jazz Band* and *CO2 Jazz Karbonik*.

FOLK DANCE with an information session on the death penalty.

**Amnesty International Paris 11**

INFORMATION AND PETITION STAND.

**Amnesty International Marseille**

FILM SCREENING AND DEBATE on the death penalty in Asia, focusing on China, India, Pakistan and Vietnam. The film *Night Train* by Diao Yinan was shown.

**Amnesty International Nimes**

STREET DEMONSTRATION using dressing up and Amnesty International Banners.  
SIGNATURE GATHERING outside a cinema.  
SIGNATURE GATHERING on a square.

**Amnesty International France**

16 other actions were organised by Amnesty International France local groups (signatures campaign, participation to a Human Right Forum, during Book Fairs or second hand markets)

**[ GERMANY****Amnesty International Germany**

CAMPAIGN ON TAIWAN with a list of 29 Taiwanese death row prisoners in liaison with Taiwanese NGO, TAEDP (Taiwan Alliance to End the Death Penalty). Information was produced and distributed to the members all over the country.

**ACAT Germany**

SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN for a moratorium on execution in Asia. The monthly appeal was dedicated to a Japanese death row prisoner.

**[ GREECE****Athens Bar**

APPEAL AND INFORMATION CAMPAIGN.

**[ ITALY****Comitato Paul Rougeau**

OPEN LETTER TO JAPAN. On World Day, the Paul Rougeau Committee gathered signatures on a letter to the Japanese authorities, with copy to some newspapers.

THE SIGNED LETTER AND ALL THE SIGNATURES WERE DELIVERED by hand to the Japanese Embassy in Rome.

### **Hands Off Cain**

INTERVIEW WITH *IPS*.

### **Tuscany Region**

SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN with local governments and Human Rights NGOs.

DISTRIBUTION OF LEAFLETS AND POSTERS to the Region employees and to NGOs.

PRESSE CONFERENCE.

### **ACAT Italia**

PRESS RELEASE sent to Italian Press Agencies, for the World Day.

## [ LUXEMBURG

### **Luxemburg Bar**

APPEAL AND INFORMATION CAMPAIGN.

### **ACAT Luxemburg**

APPEALS SENT to the Japanese authorities.

PUBLICATION OF ARTICLES detailing the World Coalition's campaign in *Luxemburger Wort* newspaper.

## [ NETHERLANDS

### **Amnesty International Netherlands**

CONFERENCE in Amsterdam; two speakers came to talk about the death penalty and secrecy: Bikram Jeet Batra, an Indian Lawyer who cooperated on the new death penalty report on India, and Bart Stapert, national pride on the death penalty (in the US but also in Indonesia)

### **Amsterdam Bar**

APPEAL AND INFORMATION CAMPAIGN.

## [ NORWAY

### **Amnesty International Norway**

CONFERENCE at Oslo University. Participants: John Holbrook, Kerry Cook, ( he was a death row prisoner in Texas for over 20 years. He was exonerated 1997), Iraj Masdaghi who sat on death row for over 10 years under Khomeini in the 80-ties and representatives from Amnesty.

PUBLIC MEETING with Kerry Cook, Iraj Masdaghi and John Holbrook (previously homicide investigator, now photographer) in the new Norwegian Opera House. Participants included Fabian Stang, Mayor of Oslo, Kjell Bondevik, former Prime Minister, artists, writers, authors and art students.

PHOTO EXHIBITION "Voices from death row" in the Opera House with pictures of death row prisoners in Texas.

GATHERING OF SIGNATURES to send to John McCain and Barack Obama, 7,000 signatures were sent.

PUBLIC DEBATES IN A *café*. Participants included Christian Borch, anchor from Norwegian Broadcasting who has visited death row in Texas and John Peder Egenæs, General Secretary at Amnesty Norway.

LECTURE AT OSLO UNIVERSITY with Nils Christie, criminologist.

LECTURE AT OSLO UNIVERSITY with Johan Galtung, political scientist.

FIRST PERFORMANCE OF A NEWLY WRITTEN NORWEGIAN OPERA: "Dead Beat Escapement". It deals with the death penalty and the last words from prisoners just before execution.

LETTER WRITING ACTION on Japan, Pakistan, South Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam

INTERNET ACTION ON PAKISTAN.-

## [ POLAND

### **Student Chapter People to People**

MULTIMEDIA PRESENTATION made based on the information from Amnesty International and WCADP.

PETITION SIGNATURES

## [ PORTUGAL

### **Amnesty International Portugal**

DEBATE around death penalty where the participants could express their own opinion and their doubts around the theme; this discussion was very profound and very popular.

SIMULATION OF THE UN ASSEMBLY VOTE on a moratorium to end death penalty in the world. More than one hundred students around the metropolitan area of Lisbon participated. Each school represented a country, for or against the use of the death penalty and a group of volunteers represented civil organizations.

THEATRICAL PUBLIC EVENT expressing the need to end death penalty in the world.

CAMPAIGN SIGNATURE on the web and in the newsletter.

## [ SPAIN

### **Amnesty International Spain**

PRESS RELEASE and media work including a report with the main news on death penalty in 2008.

SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN FOR THE APPEALS AND THE PETITIONS to be sent directly to the Asian governments through the embassies on the basis of a country every week.

42 GROUPS IN 42 DIFFERENT PLACES have confirmed that they have organized an event.

### **Amnesty International Spain, San Sebastian**

CAMPAIGN OF INFORMATION AND APPEAL ON VIETNAM.

### **Amnesty International Spain Majorca**

INFORMATION AND APPEAL CAMPAIGN ABOUT VIETNAM.

## ACAT Spain

ECUMENICAL PRAYER.

SIGNATURE of the World Coalition's petition.

APPEAL to the governor of Texas in the case of death row inmate Eric Cathey.

## [ SWEDEN

### Amnesty International Sweden:

SEMINAR on the Death Penalty. Among the participants were: Erik Prokosch, international expert on Death Penalty and Colin Gonsalvez, founder and secretary general of Human Rights Law Network in India.

MUSIC CAFÉ AND MAKE-YOUR-OWN-T-SHIRT WORKSHOP

### Amnesty International Sweden, Uppsala

CANDLE LIGHT DEMONSTRATION.

### Amnesty International Sweden, Stockholm

DEMONSTRATION at Norrmalmstorg on Saturday 11 October 2008.

### Amnesty International Sweden Linköping

INFORMATION ON THE DEATH PENALTY in the provincial museum, which opened an exhibition about the death penalty.

## [ SWITZERLAND

### World Organisation Against Torture

Information and petition campaign.

### ACAT Switzerland

SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN.

FOCUS ON TWO COUNTRIES: Japan and Taiwan and call to all Churches to participate in this campaign.

## [ UNITED KINGDOM

### Reprieve

Report on the death penalty sent to the media.

Interview with *the Guardian*.

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## PRESS RELEASES

Only press releases that were quoted in the Initiatives part of the 2008 Report are compiled here.

## [ FIDH Press Release

### "The law of silence, going against the international trend"

Thursday 9 October 2008

Publication of an international fact-finding mission Report

On the occasion of the world day against the death penalty, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) publishes a report on death penalty in Japan, entitled "The death penalty in Japan: the law of silence, going against the international trend".

This report is the outcome of a fact-finding mission conducted by FIDH in July 2008, in order to assess the measures taken by the Japanese government to implement the recommendations made by a previous investigation, conducted in 2003.

The conclusions of the report are appalling. According to Florence Bellivier, General Secretary of FIDH "Japan continues to condemn criminals to death, and incarcerate them up for decades, in prisons where secrecy and isolation are commonplace, in total disregard of the world opinion". In addition, the rhythm of the executions has accelerated over the recent years. "2008 has been a record year, with more executions this year than in any other of the last fifteen years. We are witnessing a real step backwards" added Dan Van Raemdonck, Vice-President of FIDH. Thirteen persons have been executed since the beginning of the year, and 102 are currently on death row. There has not been a single retrial of a death penalty case since 1986, and no convicted prisoner has been pardoned since 1975.

"We are also worried about the reforms concerning the criminal procedure, which will take effect before the end of the year. Those reforms may strengthen the inequality between the prosecution and the defense, which would lead to a rise of the number of death sentences" declared Jia-Zhen Wu, board member of the Taiwanese Association for Human Rights, who participated in FIDH mission.

FIDH calls the Japanese government and lawmakers to adopt, as soon as possible, a moratorium on the death penalty, as a first step towards abolition. In the meantime, FIDH requests Japan, in particular, to reduce the number of crimes punishable by death, reform the custody system, and guarantee a greater equality between the prosecution and the defense.

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## [ Liège Bar Press Release

« La peine de mort signe le triomphe de la vengeance sur la justice et viole le premier droit de tout être humain, le droit de vivre. La peine capitale n'a jamais dissuadé le crime. Elle constitue un acte de torture et l'ultime traitement, inhumain et dégradant. Une société qui recourt à la peine de mort encourage symboliquement la violence. Toutes les sociétés, respectueuses de la dignité de leurs membres doivent s'efforcer d'abolir la peine capitale » (déclaration des participants au premier congrès mondial contre la peine de mort de Strasbourg, France, 9 octobre 2001).

La peine de mort est l'ultime symbole de l'indignité.

Au moment où le barreau de Liège entreprend une réflexion approfondie sur le thème « Droit et Dignité », et à la veille du 10 octobre 2008, journée mondiale contre la peine de mort, il lui a paru indispensable de s'associer à l'ensemble des initiatives qui sont prises, de par le monde, en vue d'obtenir un moratoire universel sur les exécutions et, à terme, une abolition universelle de la peine de mort.

En sa séance du 7 octobre 2008, le conseil de l'Ordre des avocats du barreau de Liège a dès lors décidé d'adhérer à la coalition mondiale contre la peine de mort et de se joindre aux appels lancés par cette coalition pour que cesse les exécutions dans le monde.

Le thème de la journée mondiale contre la peine de mort du 10 octobre 2008 est « ouvrons les yeux sur l'Asie ».

Le barreau de Liège s'associe aux membres de la coalition pour souligner que, en 2007, au moins 660 exécutions capitales ont été recensées sur le continent asiatique. Selon une récente étude de Franklin Zimring et David Johanson, 85 à 95 % des exécutions capitales dans le monde ont lieu en Asie.

Il appelle les organisations internationales des avocats et les barreaux du monde entier à se joindre à la coalition mondiale contre la peine de mort.

Il invite tous les membres du barreau de Liège à s'inscrire dans cette dynamique abolitionniste, qui se développe dans le monde entier, et qui tend à rendre contraignant le 2<sup>e</sup> protocole facultatif se rapportant au pacte international relatif aux droits civils et politiques, visant à abolir la peine de mort, et adopté en 1989 par l'assemblée générale de l'ONU, actuellement ratifié par 66 États du monde.

L'avocat est là, présent, à côté d'un homme, pour l'aider à se tenir debout.

Pour le barreau de Liège,  
Patrick HENRY,  
Le bâtonnier.

## [ Reporters Without Borders Press Release

**“World Day Against Death Penalty: urgent need for abolition also concerns journalists”**

On the eve of the 6<sup>th</sup> World Day Against the Death Penalty tomorrow, Reporters Without Borders would like to highlight the fact that this archaic form of punishment, whose continuing use is a political and human rights outrage, is still being used against journalists and those who defend free speech.

“It would be inappropriate, when talking about the death penalty, to suggest that its use in some cases is more appalling than in others,” the press freedom organisation said. “But we want to highlight one of its pernicious aspects, which directly concerns journalists and free expression, with the aim of responding once and for all to those who still hesitate to support calls for the abolition of this irreversible punishment on the grounds that it is only used against the most horrible criminals.” The most emblematic case today is in a country which, paradoxically, is under the surveillance of powerful parliamentary democracies - Afghanistan. Sayed Perwiz Kambakhsh, a young journalist and student, and contributor to the magazine Jahan-e Naw (“New World”), languishes in a Kabul prison cell awaiting the outcome of the interminable appeal proceedings against his conviction on a blasphemy charge. Despite demonstrations by many fellow Afghan journalists and writers, this young man is still under the sentence of death that was issued by a court in the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif in January 2008, at the end of a summary trial behind closed doors at which he was not defended by a lawyer.

In just one week's time, on 17 October, he will begin his second year in detention, which in itself is an appalling punishment for someone whose only crime was to have downloaded and kept articles about the role of women in Muslim society. A medical report confirms that he has been tortured while in detention. A similar case in Iran last year highlighted how the death penalty can be a terrifying tool for silencing dissenting voices. Adnan Hassanpour, a 26-year-old journalist in Iranian Kurdistan who wrote for the now banned weekly Asou and various foreign news media, was arrested on 25 January 2007 and imprisoned in Mahabad (Kurdistan).

After sentencing him to death twice for “subversive activities against national security,” the Iranian courts finally decided in September of this year that he could not be regarded as a “mohareb” (enemy of God) and transferred his case to a civil court in Kurdistan. This impassioned young advocate of Kurdish cultural rights is now being held in Sanandaj. He has already gone on hunger strike twice in protest against his prison conditions.

The charge of being “mohareb,” a very vaguely defined capital crime, is often used in Iran as a weapon for threatening those who might be tempted to defy the government of the day. The blogger Mojtaba Saminejad, for example, was accused in 2005 of insulting the prophets before finally being acquitted.

Iranians who campaign for the abolition of the death penalty are also liable to the target of systematic repression. The authorities have for years been venting their anger on journalist and abolitionist Emadoldin Baghi, who has often been jailed. He was last arrested on 14 October 2007 after being charged with “propaganda against the regime” and publishing secret government documents “obtained with the help of detainees held for violating the security of special establishments.”

He had just founded Guardians of the Right to Life, the first organisation to be formed in Iran with the specific aim of campaigning against the death penalty. The winner of the French republic's human rights prize in 2005, Baghi served a three-year prison sentence from 2000 to 2003 after writing a book about a 1998 wave of murders of intellectuals and journalists, and a column for the daily Neshat defending a modern view of Islam and its relationship to the death penalty.

But the Iranian government is not giving any ground. In fact, the parliament passed an extremely harsh bill on its first reading in July that is intended to "reinforce penalties for crimes against society's moral security." If definitively adopted, this law would be unique in the world, making the "creation of blogs and websites that promote corruption, prostitution or apostasy" punishable by hanging or by "amputation of the right hand and left foot."

Our concerns are not limited to the Muslim world. The Ethiopian authorities jailed the leaders of the main opposition party on charges of high treason and genocide in November 2005 after a wave of rioting and bloodshed was triggered by the announcement that Prime Minister Meles Zenawi's party had won the parliamentary elections.

Around 20 pro-opposition newspaper publishers and editors were also jailed on the same charges. They were all eventually acquitted or pardoned in 2007, but before that, some of them were sentenced to death for what was regarded as an ethnically-motivated coup attempt.

The case of radio journalist and Black Panther Party member Mumia Abu-Jamal in the United States serves as a reminder that capital punishment still has not been abolished in the world's biggest economy.

Sentenced to death in 1982 for the fatal shooting of a policeman, Daniel Faulkner - which he denies doing - Abu-Jamal has spent 26 years on death row. A Philadelphia federal appeal court commuted the sentence in March of this year to life imprisonment. The prosecution could still appeal.

*Reporters Without Borders defends imprisoned journalists and press freedom throughout the world. It has nine national sections (Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland). It has representatives in Bangkok, London, New York, Tokyo and Washington. And it has more than 120 correspondents worldwide.*

## [ Arab Coalitions Against the Death Penalty Press Release

### World Day Against the Death Penalty: Joint Statement From Arab Coalitions

By the *Amman Centre for Human Rights Studies*  
16 .10.2008

The world will celebrate on the 10th of October 2008 the World Day Against the Death Penalty which was a crowning of the struggle and efforts of human rights activists and civil action, whether individually or collectively, in the quest to abrogate the death penalty from the local and international legislation and to replace it, whenever deemed necessary, with other appropriate penalties in which the crime warrants a form of penalty.

Attention was paid to the World Day Against the Death Penalty as part of an initiative that seeks to remind the international community, particularly in the Arab region, with the need to review the use of the death penalty because it constitutes the climax of infringement on human rights as it violates the right of Man to life and pronounces that a mistake, whenever made, should not be remedied by a more violent mistake. On the contrary, the State should lay down the foundations of healthy relations with its own citizens primarily based on the rejection of all forms of guided and systematic violence, all the more so because the implementation of the death penalty is applied against politicians and party leaders who differ in their views with the ruling authorities. Civil efforts have succeeded in abrogating the death penalties in 137 countries, according to a report published by Amnesty International in 2007. This is prompting us to request the Arab governments to seek to amend the national code of criminal legislation for the purpose of abrogating this penalty. Arab governments are requested to ratify the second voluntary protocol appended to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights pertaining to the abrogation of the death penalty. They are also requested to ratify the Articles of Association of the International Criminal Court together with introducing a fair criminal policy based on guaranteeing the rights of prisoners to have a fair trial. Such a fair trial should be based on a law that is in harmony with the covenants and conventions supporting human rights.

In this context, the elite of the civil society, including jurists, writers, and journalists, are requested to play a more effective role and make further efforts to abrogate the death penalty from the local legislation by holding seminars, lectures and workshops to spread awareness of the danger of the deliberate use of the death penalty and the negative impact which this penalty could leave on the local communities.

Stopping the codification and implementation of the death penalty in the Arab countries is a basic demand which the Arab jurist organizations are seeking to achieve, not only for the sake of defending human rights, but also for the restoration of the humanity of the State. Arab countries should also draft a new charter that spells out the relationship between the State and its citizens so as to guarantee the ability of the State to hold out and to progress in a society where Man has become its main and decisive element.

The Coalitions Against the Death Penalty appeals to the judiciary branch of government in the Arab countries to follow the steps of the Lebanese judiciary. The Lebanese Court of Cassation decided to abrogate the death penalty and to substitute it for another penalty. It also decided to revoke all the death sentences issued by the criminal courts.

1- The Arab Coalition Against the Death Penalty

- 2- The Egyptian Coalition against the Death Penalty.
- 3- The Tunisian National Coalition against Death Penalty.
- 4- The Moroccan Coalition against Death Penalty.
- 5- The Palestinian Coalition against the Death Penalty.
- 6- The Yamani Coalition against the Death Penalty.
- 7- The Jordanian Coalition against the Death Penalty.
- 8- The Lebanon's Campaign against the Death Penalty.
- 9- The Mauritanian Coalition against the Death Penalty.
- 10- The Preparatory Committee of the Iraqi Coalition against the Death Penalty.
- 11- Bahrain Human Rights Society.
- 12- The Committees for the Defense of Democracy Freedoms and Human Rights in Syria.
- 13- Umbrella for Kuwaiti Action.
- 14- Algerian League for Defending Human Rights.

## [ World Coalition Against the Death Penalty Press Release

### Asia: it's time to end executions

On 10 October 2008, for the Sixth World Day Against the Death Penalty, the World Coalition calls on all citizens to take action to end executions in Asia.

This continent alone represents 60% of the world's population. 95% of this population lives in a country with the death penalty. According to Amnesty International, 27 countries have already abolished the death penalty in law or in practice while 14 countries continue to carry out executions in worrying conditions. In many cases, trials are unfair, the death penalty is used for a wide range of crimes, including non-violent ones (drug trafficking, embezzlement), and the lack of transparency characterizes the legal system in many countries.

The UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary and Arbitrary Executions, Philip Alston, reminds that "countries that have maintained the death penalty are not prohibited by international law from making that choice, but they have a clear obligation to disclose the details of their application of the penalty". In Japan for example, executions of death sentences are carried out in secret. People on death row are notified of their executions only a few hours before they take place and their families are not informed.

Some changes are signs of hope for a death penalty-free Asia. Over the last few years, the total numbers of death sentences and executions have decreased in Asia. Periods of moratorium (i.e. the temporary suspension of executions) are longer and more frequent. Alongside these improvements, there are more and more organized Asian activists in favor of the abolition of the death penalty.

After it had concentrated its efforts on China on the occasion of the Olympic Games, the World Coalition has selected six particular countries to focus on. The WCADP denounces the lack of transparency in Japan, unfair trials in Pakistan, the high number of offences punishable by death in Vietnam. It encourages the introduction of a moratorium in India and Taiwan and calls for abolition in South Korea. The World Coalition will address the petitions signed during the World Day to the governments of Japan, Pakistan, Vietnam, India, Taiwan, and South Korea.

Hundreds of initiatives and actions (debates, press conferences, demonstrations petitions) will take place in many countries around October 10th to oppose the use of this inhuman, cruel and degrading punishment.

Asian abolitionists are taking action against death sentences, against executions, in favor of moratoria on executions, in favor of the abolition. It's time to support them.

## PRESS REVIEW

The press review is classified by continent and by country. It is a non exhaustive list as it only compiles articles that the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty was informed of.

### [ Asia Pacific

#### Australia

*Brisbane Times*: "Death penalty an affront to our humanity" – 10/10/2008

#### China

*Observe China*: "世界废除死刑日" 之际中国执行死刑案不完全统计 - 15/10/2008

#### India

*Express India*: "Commute death penalty into life imprisonment: Pak rights group" – 07/10/2008

*Zee News*: "Commute death penalty into life imprisonment: Pak rights group" – 07/10/2008

*The Times of India*: "Join a walk against death penalty" – 10/10/2008

*The Hindu*: "Amnesty: Declare moratorium on death penalty" – 11/10/2008

*Junior Vikatan*: "நவீக்டுமார் எம்.எல்.ஏ." – 08/10/2008

*The New Indian Express Group*: "United against capital punishment" – 11/10/2008

#### Japan

*Japan Times*: "42 death-row inmates are seeking retrials" – 06/10/2008

*Japan Times*: "Rarely heard voices of death-row inmates get public airing" – 11/10/2008

*Japan Today*: "Amnesty protests death penalty use worldwide" – 11/10/2008

*Japan Today*: "Group reports rarely heard voices of death row inmates" – 12/11/2008

*Mainichi Daily News*: "Nearly 20 % of Japan's death-row inmates don't have visitors" – 11/10/2008

*IPS News*: "Death Penalty: Activists Reveal Japan's Death Row to the World" – 10/10/2008

*Yomiuri Shimbun*, "Unmasking Capital Punishment / Chaplains play key role in death-row inmates' lives" – 15/10/2008

#### Kyrgyzstan

*Central Asian News Services*: "European and World Day against Death Penalty marked on 10 October 2008" – 10/10/2008

#### Mongolia

*C-1 TV*: Interviews peine de mort – 10/10/2008

*UBS TV*: Interviews peine de mort – 10/10/2008

*Mongolian National Broadcasting*: Interviews peine de mort – 10/10/2008

#### Pakistan

*Pakistan Daily Times*: "Open Your Eyes: World Day Against the Death Penalty" – 10/10/2008

*Pakistan Daily Times*: "Following in footsteps of other nations: Rights groups want end to death penalty" – 11/10/2008

*Pakistan Daily Times*: "HRCP urges govt to abolish death penalty" – 11/10/2008

*The Post*: "HRCP seeks immediate moratorium on executions" – 11/10/2008

*IPS News*: "Death Penalty-Pakistan: Reason For Hope on World Day" – 10/10/2008

*The Nation*: "India must set up moratorium on executions: Amnesty" – 10/10/2008

*Kashmir Media Service*: "Amnesty urges India to abolish death penalty" – 13/10/2008

*Dawn TV*: Interview de Sam Zarifi, directeur des programmes Asie au Secrétariat international d'Amnesty international – 10/10/2008

#### Taiwan

*Taipei Times*: "Anti-death penalty group holds Double Ten show" – 11/10/2008

*Taipei Times*: "Alliance announces talks on ending death penalty" – 19/10/2008

*Taiwan News*: "EU calls for universal abolition of death penalty" – 10/10/2008

*Taiwan News*: "An international conference on abolishing death penalty will take place in Taiwan" – 23/10/2008

*The China Post*: "Moratorium on death penalty to be discussed" – 10/10/2008

#### Thailand

*Bangkok Post*: Article de Mrg BREEN, President de la *Union For Civil Liberty* (UCL) – 10/10/2008

### [ Africa

#### Benin

*Le Matin*: Reprise du communiqué de presse de la Coalition Béninoise pour la Cour Pénale Internationale – 10/10/2008

*Private channel*: Interview télévisée – 10/10/2008

*Radio national*: Lecture du communiqué de presse de la Coalition Béninoise pour la Cour Pénale Internationale – 10/10/2008

#### Democratique Republic of Congo

*radio Star de Bukavu*: Interview radio – 10/10/2008

#### Ghana

*Radio Lomé*: Interview du directeur d'Amnesty International Ghana – 10/10/2008

*La chaine nationale* – 10/10/2008

*Radio nostalgie* – 10/10/2008

#### Nigeria

*African Independent Television*: Émission "KAKAAKI The African Voice" – 10/10/2008

#### Togo

*E47 TV*: Émission "initiative citoyenne" – 10/10/2008

#### Uganda

*African Press Agency News*: "EU urges Uganda to abolish death penalty" – 11/10/2008

*New Vision* – 10/10/2008

*Radio Vision Voice 94.8 fm*: Émission de 30 minutes – 10/10/2008

### [ Arab World

#### Lebanon

*The Daily Star*: "A challenge for Lebanon: abolishing the death penalty" – 10/11/2008

*The Daily Star*: "Najjar presents draft law to abolish death penalty" – 10/11/2008

*Annahar* – 10/10/2008

*Al-akhbar* – 10/10/2008

#### Morocco

*Al Bayane*: "Sit-in symbolique à rabat à l'occasion de la journée mondiale contre la peine de mort" – 09/10/2008

*Al Bayane*: "Non à l'atteinte au droit de la vie, non à la peine de mort" – 10/10/2008

*Al Awsat* – 10/10/2008  
*Assabah* – 10/10/2008  
*Le Soir Weekend*: "Mohamed VI abolira -t-il la peine de mort? » – 10/10/2008  
*Libération*: "Halte à la peine de mort" – 10/10/2008  
*Al Jazeera* – 08/10/2008  
*TVE* – 08/10/2008  
*BBC* – 08/10/2008  
*Al Hurra* – 08/10/2008  
*Medi1 Sat* – 08/10/2008

## Tunisia

*Attariq Aljadid*  
*Alwhda*  
*Almostakbel*  
*Alchaab*  
*Kalima*  
*Alhiwar*: Émission de television – 01/11/2008

## [ Europe

### France

*AFP*: "Peine de mort: La FIDH reproche au Japon d'aller à contre-courant" – 09/10/2008  
*AFP*: "Lawyer demands release for Afghan reporter on death row" – 10/10/2008  
*AFP*: "Amnesty urges India, S.Korea and Taiwan to end executions" – 10/10/2008  
*Le Monde*: "Appel commun pour M. Troy Davis et tous les autres..." – 08/10/2008  
*Le Monde*: "Peine de mort: La FIDH reproche au Japon d'aller à contre-courant" – 09/10/2008  
*La Croix*: "Le Japon entretient la loi du silence sur la peine de mort" – 09/10/2008  
*La Croix*: "L'ACAT demande un moratoire à Taiwan" – 09/10/2008  
*Le Figaro*: "Peine de mort: la FIDH accuse le Japon" – 09/10/2008  
*L'Humanité*: "Le Conseil de l'Europe et l'Union européenne marqueront la Journée européenne contre la peine de mort du 10 octobre en organisant de 11 heures à 12 h 30 dans le bâtiment Agora du Conseil de l'Europe" – 09/10/2008  
*L'Humanité*: "Festival de cinéma Hors-Ecran" – 10/10/2008  
*Midi Libre*: "Amnesty: Combattre la peine de mort" – 08/10/2008  
*Virgin Radio Rhône*: "La 6<sup>e</sup> journée mondiale contre la peine de mort" – 10/10/2008  
*Le Progrès de Lyon* – 10/10/2008  
*Libération Lyon* – 11/10/2008  
*Lyon TV* – 12/10/2008  
*NRJ* – 13/10/2008  
*RFI*: "Peine de mort: le constat encourageant d'Amnesty International" – 10/10/2008  
*Radio Son de l'Espoir*: "Flash Asie" – 14/10/2008  
*Radio Fréquence Protestante*: Interview de l'ACAT – 10/10/2008  
*Radio BLV*: "Reportage et "baroscope" – 10/10/2008

### Germany

*Deutsche Welle*: "Human rights group Amnesty International meanwhile urged EU officials to take India to task over the question of the death penalty and the alleged persecution of religious minorities" – 09/10/2008

*Deutsche Welle*: Article en Indonésien – 10/10/2008  
*Der Westen*: "Ein Tag gegen die Todesstrafe: Der 10. Oktober" – 10/10/2008  
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## Italy

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## Luxemburg

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## Switzerland

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## United Kingdom

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## Ukraine

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## [ North, South America and the Caribbean

### Argentina

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### Canada

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## MEMBERS OF THE WORLD COALITION

List of the 83 members as of 15 January 2009 in alphabetical order.

### [ Executive Secretariat

#### ECPM

197-199 avenue Pierre Brossolette

92120 Montrouge, France

General: [contact@abolition.fr](mailto:contact@abolition.fr)

Coordinator: Guillaume Parent – [gparent@abolition.fr](mailto:gparent@abolition.fr)

Program and Admin Officer: Aurélie Plaçais – [aplacais@abolition.fr](mailto:aplacais@abolition.fr)

Journalist and Webmaster: Thomas Hubert – [thubert@worldcoalition.org](mailto:thubert@worldcoalition.org)

### [ Members of the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty

#### Austria

• **International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF)**

Maria Luisa Bascur – [bascur@ihf-hr.org](mailto:bascur@ihf-hr.org)

<http://www.ihf-hr.org/>

#### Belgium

• **Ville de Braine-l'Alleud**

Vincent Scourneau, Bourmestre

[info@braine-lalleud.be](mailto:info@braine-lalleud.be) ; [myriam@cftj.org](mailto:myriam@cftj.org)

[www.braine-lalleud.be/](http://www.braine-lalleud.be/)

• **Fédération des Étudiants Libéraux (FEL)**

[arnaud@etudiantsliberaux.be](mailto:arnaud@etudiantsliberaux.be)

<http://etudiantsliberaux.blogspot.com/>

• **Ordre des Barreaux Francophones et Germanophones de Belgique (OBFG)**

André Risopoulos, Administrateur – [andre.risopoulos@avocats34.be](mailto:andre.risopoulos@avocats34.be)

• **Ordre des avocats du Barreau de Liège**

Patrick Henry – [batonnierdeliege@avocat.be](mailto:batonnierdeliege@avocat.be)

• **Hope & Justice**

Annick Guillard – [annyckguillard@hotmail.com](mailto:annyckguillard@hotmail.com)

#### Burundi

• **Union Chrétienne pour le Progrès et la Défense des Droits de l'Homme**

Daniel Mutambala Mazinda – [ucpdho@yahoo.fr](mailto:ucpdho@yahoo.fr)

• **Unis pour l'abolition de la peine de mort**

Léonidas Habarugira – [ishimwess@yahoo.fr](mailto:ishimwess@yahoo.fr)

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## Canada

### • Iranian Human Rights Activists Groups in EU and North America

Hossein Mahoutiha – hmahoutiha@videotron.ca

www.hriran.org

### • Rights and Democracy / Droits et Démocratie

Lloyd Lipsett – Llipsett@dd-rd.ca

www.ichrdd.ca

## Democratic Republic of Congo

### • Comité des Observateurs des Droits de l'Homme (CODHO)

N'Sii Luanda Shandwe – nsiluanda\_codho@yahoo.fr – codho\_kinshasa@yahoo.fr

### • Culture pour la Paix et la Justice

Liévin Ngondji – cpj\_ong@yahoo.fr

### • Collectif des Organisations des Jeunes Solidaires du Congo-Kinshasa (COJESKI-RDC)

cojeski\_rdcongo@yahoo.com – cojeski.rdc@societecivile.cd

www.cojeski.org

### • Congolese Youth Movement

Robert Wangachumo – congoyouth@yahoo.fr

### • Pax Christi Uvira asbl

Jean-Jacques De Christ Nganya, Secrétaire Exécutif – paxchristiuvira@yahoo.fr

http://www.paxchristi.net

## France

### • Barreau de Paris

Anne Souléliac – asouleliac@avocatparis.org

Elise Tillet – etilletdagousset@avocatparis.org

www.avocatparis.org/

### • Collectif Unitaire National de Soutien à Mumia Abu-Jamal

Jacky Hortaut – cgt-clidf@wanadoo.fr

Claude Guillaumaud-Pujol – claude.guillaumaud@free.fr

www.mumiabujamal.net

### • Conférence Internationale des Barreaux (CIB)

Mario Stasi – mstasi@stasiparis.com

Richard Sédillot – sedillot@aol.com

http://www.cib.asso.fr/

### • International Federation of Human Rights Leagues (FIDH)

Florence Bellivier – florence.bellivier@wanadoo.fr

www.fidh.or

### • Fédération Internationale de l'Action des Chrétiens pour l'abolition de la Torture (FIACAT)

Marie-Jo Cocher, Secrétaire exécutive – fiacat@fiacat.org

www.fiacat.org

### • Fédération Syndicale unitaire (FSU)

Francis Barbe francis.barbe@snuipp.fr

www.fsu-fr.org/

### • ACAT France

Bernadette Forhan – bernadette.forhan@club-internet.fr

Cécile Marcel – cecile.marcel@acatfrance.fr

www.acatfrance.fr

### • Comité Syndical Francophone de l'Education et de la Formation

Roger Ferrari – csfef@snes.edu

### • Ligue des Droits de l'Homme (LDH)

Marie-Agnès Combesque – macomb@free.fr

www.ldh-france.org/

### • Lutte pour la Justice

Colette Berthès – BrthsCl@aol.com

www.lpj-france.net/

### • Mouvement contre le Racisme et pour l'Amitié entre les Peuples (MRAP)

Renée Le Mignot – renemrap@club-internet.fr

www.mrap.asso.fr

### • Ville de Dijon

Jane Bernard, Directrice des Relations Internationales – jsbernard@ville-dijon.fr

http://www.dijon.fr/

## India

### • Law Student's Forum

Nadeem Qadri – lawstudentsforumjk@yahoo.co.in

## Indonesia

### • KONTRAS - Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence

Papang Hidayat – thungpapang@yahoo.com

## Iraq

### • Iraqui Center for Human Rights and Democracy Studies

Mohammed Radhi – ichrs.iraq@gmail.com

## Iran

### • Association for the Right to Live

Emadeddin Baghi – emadbaghi2003@yahoo.com – ebaghi@gmail.com

## Italy

### • Regione Toscana

Angelo Passaleva – angelopassaleva@tiscali.it

www.regione.toscana.it

### • Comunità di Sant'Egidio

Mario Marazziti – m.marazziti@fastwebnet.it

Stefania Tallei – s.tallei@santegidio.org

www.santegidio.org/it/pdm/index.htm

### • Coalizione italiana contro la pena di morte

Arianna Ballotta, President – arianna@linknet.it

Michela Mancini, Vice-president – michela@piazavirtuale.net

Alessandra Ruberti – aleruberti66@yahoo.it  
www.coalit.org/

• **Comitato Paul Rougeau**

Giuseppe Lodoli – prougeau@tiscali.it  
Grazia Guaschino – guygre@libero.it

• **City of Matera**

Comune@comune.mt.it  
www.comune.matera.it/

• **Ordine Provinciale dei Medici-Chirurghi e degli odontoiatri di Firenze**

Dr Antonio Panti – direzione@ordine-medici-fiorenze.it  
http://85.35.144.226/start.asp

• **City of Reggio Emilia**

Barbara Donnici, International relations – Barbara.Donnici@municipio.re.it  
Chiara Piacentini – Chiara.Piacentini@municipio.re.it  
www.municipio.re.it/retecivica/urp/home.nsf

• **City of Venice**

Andrea Del Mercato, Director – international.relations@comune.venezia.it  
www.comune.venezia.it/

Ivory Coast

• **Ligue Ivoirienne des Droits de l'Homme (LIDHO)**

lidho@aviso.ci

Japan

• **Center for Prisoners' Rights (CPR)**

Maiko Tagusari – m-tg@mwa.biglobe.ne.jp

• **Forum 90 (Japon)**

Yoshihiro Yasuda – jyonasan@symphony.plala.or.jp

Jordan

• **Arab Coalition Against the Death Penalty (Amman)**

Dr. Nizam Assaf – achrs@achrs.org  
Tahar Boumedra – tboumedra@penalreform.org

Kingdom of Bahrein

• **Bahrain Human Rights Society**

Abdulla Alderazi, Deputy General Secretary – bhrrs@bhrrs.org

Malta

• **International Organization for Diplomatic Relations**

Mara Catello – diplomatic@iodr.org

Morocco

• **Coalition nationale pour l'abolition de la peine de mort au Maroc**

Mostafa Znaidi – m.znaidi@gmail.com – mostafaznaidi@gmail.com – contact@omdh.org  
Abdellah Mouseddad – amouseddad@yahoo.fr  
Ben Abdesselam Abdel-Ilah – lilahbena@yahoo.fr

• **Observatoire Marocain des Prisons (OMP)**

Jawad Skalli, Directeur exécutif – omdp@menara.ma  
Abderrahim Jamai, Secrétaire Général – a.jamai@menara.ma  
Abdellah Mouseddad – amouseddad@yahoo.fr

• **Organisation marocaine des droits humains (OMDH)**

Mostafa Znaidi – m.znaidi@gmail.com – mostafaznaidi@gmail.com – contact@omdh.org  
http://www.omdh.org/

• **Association marocaine des droits humains (AMDH)**

Ben Abdesselam Abdel-Ilah – lilahbena@yahoo.fr

• **Centre Marocain des Droits de l'homme**

Mohammed Ennouhi, 1<sup>er</sup> vice-président – youssefennouhi@yahoo.fr – cmdh@cmdh.org  
www.cmdh.org

• **Forum Marocain pour la Vérité et Justice**

Driss Oumhand – fmvj@menara.ma – drissoumhand@yahoo.fr

Niger

• **ROTAB**

Ali Idrissa – pcqvpniger@yahoo.fr

Nigeria

• **Nigerian Humanist Movement**

Leo Igwe – humanistleo@hotmail.com

Pakistan

• **Human Rights Commission of Pakistan**

Kamran Arif – Kamranarif.advocate@gmail.com  
www.hcrp-web.org

Palestinian Authority

• **Palestinian Centre for Human Rights**

Raji Al Sourani, Director – pchr@pchrgaza.org  
http://www.pchrgaza.ps/

Puerto Rico

• **Puerto Rican Coalition against the Death Penalty**

Carmelo Campos Cruz – carmelocampos@yahoo.com  
Osvaldo Burgos – obp1969@hotmail.com

Spain

• **City of Andoain**

Jone Iturrioz – idazadm.andoain@udal.gipuzkoa.net

Switzerland

• **Lifespark**

Evelyne Giordani – contactus@lifespark.org  
www.lifespark.org

• **Organisation Mondiale contre la Torture (OMCT)**  
Anne-Laurence Lacroix – all@omct.org – omct@omct.org  
Laetitia Sedou – ls@euro.omct.org – omct@omct.org

#### Taiwan

• **Taiwan Alliance to End the Death Penalty (TAEDP)**  
Lin Hsin-Yi, Executive Director – hsinyi@deathpenalty.org.tw – taedp@deathpenalty.org.tw  
www.deathpenalty.org.tw

#### Tanzania

• **Legal and Human Rights Centre**  
Helen Kijo-Bisimba – lhrc@humanrights.or.tz

#### Togo

• **Forum africain contre la peine de mort**  
Ganyo Gbeti – Ganyo\_sam@yahoo.fr

#### Tunisia

• **Conseil National pour les Libertés en Tunisie**  
Sihem Bensedrine, porte parole – contact@cniltunisie.org  
sbensedrine@yahoo.com  
www.cniltunisie.org  
• **Coalition nationale tunisienne contre la peine de mort**  
Mohamed Habib Marsit – atunisia@section.amnesty.org

#### Uganda

• **Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI)**  
Livingstone Sewanyana – fhri@starcom.co.ug – fhri@spacenet.co.ug  
www.fhri.or.ug

#### United Kingdom

• **Amnesty International International Secretariat (AI)**  
Piers Bannister – pbannist@amnesty.org  
Asunta Cavalle – r acavalle@amnesty.org  
www.amnesty.org  
• **Penal Reform International (PRI)**  
Mary Murphy, Policy Director – mmurphy@penalreform.org  
www.penalreform.org  
• **Death Watch International**  
Simon Shepherd – info@deathwatchinternational.org  
www.deathwatchinternational.org

#### United States of America

• **Death Penalty Focus**  
Lance Lindsey – lance@deathpenalty.org  
Speedy Rice – Speedyrice@jcsrlaw.net

Nancy Oliveira – oliveira.n@sbcglobal.net  
Elizabeth Zitrin – eaz@ZitrinLaw.com

www.deathpenalty.org www.californiamoratorium.org

• **Murder Victims' Families for Human Rights (MVFHR)**  
Renny Cushing, Executive Director – rrcushing@earthlink.net  
www.murdervictimsfamilies.org

• **National Association of Criminal Defence Lawyers (NACDL)**  
Sandra Babcock – s-babcock@law.northwestern.edu  
Terrica Redfield – tredfield@schr.org  
Speedy Rice – Speedyrice@jcsrlaw.net  
www.nacdl.org

• **National Lawyers Guild (NLG)**  
Heidi Boghosian – director@nlg.org  
Robert R. Bryan – RobertRBryan@aol.com  
www.nlg.org

• **American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)**  
Tonya Mc Clary – tmccclary@afsc.org  
www.afsc.org

• **CURE**  
Claudia Whitman – claudia@celldoor.com  
www.curenational.org/

• **Journey of Hope... From Violence to Healing**  
Bill Pelke, President – bpelke@yahoo.com – bill@journeyofhope.org  
www.journeyofhope.org

• **National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (NCADP)**  
Sean Wallace – info@ncadp.org  
www.nacdp.org

• **People of Faith Against the Death Penalty**  
Stephen Dear, Executive Director – sdear@pfadp.org  
www.pfadp.org

• **Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (TCADP)**  
Rick Halperin – rhalperi@mail.smu.edu  
David Atwood – dpatwood@igc.org  
www.tcadp.org/

• **Stop Child Executions**  
Daniel Etebari – detebari@gmail.com

• **Human Rights Watch**  
Jean-Marie Fardeau – Jm.fardeau@hrw.org  
David Fahti – hrwdc@hrw.org  
http://www.hrw.org/

#### Uzbekistan

• **Mothers Against the Death Penalty**  
Tamara Chikunova – tamara4848@mail.ru

## [ Notes ]

- 1 The *Qisas* and *Diyya* Ordinance (1990) allows to pay "blood money" to relatives of the victim in lieu of execution: under Islamic law, the punishment can either be in the form of *qisas* (equal or similar punishment for the crime committed) or *diyya* (compensation payable to the victim's legal heirs).
- 2 <http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/>
- 3 FRANKLIN E. ZIMRING AND DAVID T. JOHNSON (2008) "Law, society, and capital punishment in Asia" in *Punishment & Society* 10; 103
- 4 TAEPD, translation from Traditional Chinese by Joyce CHANG.
- 5 Statement of dissociation: the State Parties show their opposition to the resolution by signing this text.
- 6 <http://www.worldcoalition.org/modules/xpetitions/index.php?id=4>
- 7 <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=18204093501&ref=ts>
- 8 Ethiopia voted in favour but after the vote, in an explanation of vote, Ethiopia stated that they had made a mistake and had intended to vote against the resolution.