



## Ratification Kit

# Papua New Guinea

### **Why is it important for Papua New Guinea to accede to the United Nations Protocol to abolish the death penalty?**

Papua New Guinea abolished the death penalty in January 2022. Before that, Papua New Guinea was an abolitionist country in practice and the last execution took place in 1954.

Ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights is extremely important, both nationally and locally, because it is the only text with worldwide reach aiming to abolish the death penalty.

Acceding to the Protocol is a very symbolic act, reflecting the universal trend towards abolition of capital punishment, considered to be cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. **It is essential that the world's abolitionist countries, in law or in practice, ratify this Protocol.**

### **What are the international commitments already taken by Papua New Guinea to accede to the Protocol?**

Papua New Guinea voted no for **six UN General Assembly resolutions for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty** in 2007, 2010, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2020 and abstained in 2008, 2012 and 2022.

Papua New Guinea participated in the third cycle of the **Universal Periodic Review** of the **Human Rights Council** in 2021, before it abolished the death penalty in law. Papua New Guinea noted 13 recommendations aiming at the ratification of the Protocol.

The **Human Rights Council** would inevitably commend Papua New Guinea if it ratified the Protocol before its next review in 2026.

### **What are the steps to be taken as regards internal law?**

According to Article 7.3 of the Protocol, it “shall be open to accession by any State that has ratified the Covenant or acceded to it.”

**Papua New Guinea ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 2008** and it is therefore competent to accede to this Protocol.

Among the obligations incumbent upon Papua New Guinea following accession to the Protocol are the **prohibition of executions** and **withdrawal of the death penalty from internal criminal law**.

### **What are the legal obstacles to accession?**

There is **no legal obstacle** as Papua New Guinea is an abolitionist country and as the last execution took place in 1954.

We therefore encourage Papua New Guinea to accede to the Protocol as soon as possible.

### **How can accession to the Protocol be applied?**

The Protocol shall come into force three months after the instruments of accession have been deposited with the UN Secretary General (Article 8.2 of the Protocol).

According to Article 3 of the Protocol, Papua New Guinea must submit reports to the Human Rights Committee covering the measures it has adopted to give effect to the Protocol.

*For more information, contact the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty and visit its website: <https://worldcoalition.org/campagne/just-one-more-step-ratifying-international-and-regional-protocols/>*