

10 OCTOBER 2010

**8TH WORLD DAY
AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY**

**GRASSROOTS
MOBILISATION KIT**

Steering Committee members:

Amnesty International, Arab Coalition Against the Death Penalty, Collectif Unitaire National de Soutien à Mumia Abu-Jamal, Coalition nationale pour l'abolition de la peine de mort au Maroc, Community of Sant'Egidio, Death Penalty Focus, Culture pour la Paix et la Justice, Ensemble contre la peine de mort, International Federation of Human Rights Leagues, Fédération Syndicale Unitaire, International Federation of Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture, Lawyers For Human Rights International, Murder Victims' Families for Human Rights, National Association of Criminal Defence Lawyers, Paris Bar, Penal Reform International, Puerto Rico Bar Association, Taiwan Alliance to End the Death Penalty, Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, Tuscany Region.

Other members:

ACAT France, Advocates for Human Rights, American Friends Service Committee, Association for the Rights to Live, City of Andoain, Association Marocaine des Droits Humains, Bahrain Human Rights Society, Belarusian Helsinki Committee, City of Braine l'Alleud, Centre for Prisoner's Rights, Centre marocain des droits humains, Coalition nationale tunisienne contre la peine de mort, Collectif des Organisations des Jeunes Solidaires du Congo-Kinshasa, Comité des Observateurs des Droits de l'Homme, Comitato Paul Rougeau, Comité Syndical Francophone de l'Education et de la Formation, Conférence Internationale des Barreaux, Congolese Youth Movement, Conseil National pour les Libertés en Tunisie, CURE, Death Watch International, City of Dijon, Federation of Liberal Students, Forum Africain contre la Peine de Mort, Forum 90 Japan, Forum marocain pour la Vérité et la Justice, Foundation for Human Rights Initiative, Hands Off Cain, Hope & Justice, Human Rights Watch, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, HURILAWS, International Organization for Diplomatic Relations, Iranian Human Rights Activists Groups in EU and North America, Iraqi Alliance for the Prevention of the death penalty, Iraqi Center for Human Rights and Democracy Studies, Italian Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, Journey of Hope, KontraS, Law Student's Forum, Legal and Human Rights Centre, Lifespark, Ligue des Droits de l'Homme, Ligue ivoirienne des Droits de l'Homme, Lutte Pour la Justice, City of Matera, MEDEL, Mothers Against Death Penalty, Mouvement contre le Racisme et pour l'Amitié entre les Peuples, National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, National Lawyers Guild, Nigerian Humanist Movement, Observatoire marocain des prisons, Observatoire National des Prisons, Ordine Provinciale dei Medici-Chirurghi e degli odontoiatri di Firenze, Ordre des avocats du Barreau de Liège, Ordre des avocats des Hauts de Seine, Ordre des Barreaux francophones et germanophones de Belgique, Organisation marocaine des droits humains, Pacific Concerns Resource Centre, Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, Pax Christi Uvira asbl, People of Faith Against the Death Penalty, Puerto Rican Coalition against the Death Penalty, RADHOMA, City of Reggio Emilia, Rights and Democracy, ROTAB, Stop Child Executions, Union Chrétienne pour le Progrès et la Défense des Droits de l'Homme, Unis pour l'abolition de la peine de mort, US Human Rights Network, City of Venice, Victorian Criminal Justice Coalition, Women's Information Consultative Center, World Organisation against Torture.

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For more information:

www.worldcoalition.org

[1] PRESENTATION

- **The 8th World Day: 10 October 2010**

Every year, the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty (WCADP) calls for local initiatives worldwide. The events involve citizens and organisations supporting the abolition of capital punishment and comprise debates, concerts, press releases or any other action which would give the global abolition claim an international boost.

This Day is aimed at both political leaders and public opinion in countries where the death penalty has or has not yet been abolished: people have to remember the meaning of abolition and pass it down through the generations.

They must be aware that justice without the death penalty is possible.

- **The aims:**

Encourage and consolidate the political and general awareness of the movement against the death penalty internationally;

Put pressure on countries to stop executions and abolish the death penalty where it is still practiced;

Publicize the existence of the WCADP and its work;

Ensure international recognition of the 10th October as the World Day Against the Death Penalty.

[2] HISTORY

• The World Coalition Against the Death Penalty

The WCADP, an alliance of 108 NGOs, bar associations, local bodies and unions, was created in Rome on 13 May 2002. It was founded as a result of the commitment made by the signatories of the Final Declaration of the 1st World Congress Against the Death Penalty, which was organised by the French NGO Together Against the Death Penalty (ECPM) in Strasbourg in June 2001. The aim of the WCADP is to strengthen the international dimension of the fight against the death penalty. Its ultimate objective is to obtain the end of death sentences and executions in those countries where the death penalty is in force. In some countries, it is seeking to obtain a reduction in the use of capital punishment as a first step towards abolition.

The WCADP is striving to achieve these by lobbying international organisations and States, organising international events, and facilitating the creation and development of national and regional coalitions against the death penalty.

Since 2003, the WCADP has made the 10th of October the World Day Against the Death Penalty.

Since then, this event has been a growing success, contributing to strengthening ties in the world abolitionist network.

The 2009 World Day was marked by the launch of an education campaign: "Teaching Abolition". The World Coalition also called for an end to juvenile executions in the countries that still execute. On this occasion initiatives were carried out throughout the world. The petition against juvenile executions in Saudi Arabia, Iran, Sudan and Yemen collected over **100,000 signatures**.

In previous years local initiatives were launched across the world: the 2003 World Day was celebrated in 63 countries with 188 initiatives reaching more than 400 initiatives in 2006 and 2007.

Furthermore, every year has been marked by the launch of an appeal or a petition. In 2005 42,000 signatures were received and more than 100,000 in 2009.

Since 2005 a theme has been chosen to celebrate this event in order to attract attention and motivate initiatives across the world. The first theme chosen was abolition of the death penalty in Africa. In 2005 only 12 countries African nations had abolished the death penalty, 21 maintained it and 20 had not executed prisoners sentenced to death for more than ten years.

2006 was devoted to failures of justice: discrimination, execution of vulnerable groups, the execution of the innocents and unfair trials. All these examples of failures of the justice system were illustrated by individual cases, seeking to raise awareness among the population and therefore encourage signature of petitions and mobilisation. The following year 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 62nd session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Then, in 2008, it was Asia's turn, the continent which has the greatest number of executions in the world.

This year's World Day will be devoted to the United States. The aim is to strengthen the trend towards abolition in the United States but also worldwide.

[3] WORLD DAY 10/10/10:

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

• 10 reasons to end the death penalty:

1- No **State** should have the power to take a **citizen's** life.

2- It is **irrevocable**: no justice system is safe from judicial error and innocent people are likely to be sentenced to death.

3- It is **inefficient**: it has never been shown that the death penalty deters crimes more effectively than other punishments.

4- It is **unfair**: the death penalty is discriminatory and is often used disproportionately against the poor, the mentally ill, those from racial and ethnic minorities, and in some places in the world because of discrimination linked to sexual orientation or religion.

5- It does not offer justice to **murder victims' families**: the effects of murder cannot be erased by more killing, and the death system prolongs the suffering of victims' families

6- It creates **more victims: the death penalty inflicts pain on the families of those on death row**

7- It is **inhuman, cruel and degrading**: the dreadful conditions on death row inflict extreme psychological suffering and execution is a physical and mental assault, no matter what method is used

8- It 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 two votes at the United Nations General Assembly calling for the establishment of a universal moratorium on the use of the death penalty (resolutions 62/149 and 63/168 adopted on 18 December 2007 and 2008).

9- It does **not keep society safe**

10- It denies any **possibility of rehabilitation** to the condemned.

• Death penalty in the USA

In 2009, the United States of America had the fifth highest number of executions in the world, placing it in the company of China, Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

In the same year, 106 people were sentenced to death and 52 people were executed in the USA, bringing the total number of people executed since the reinstatement of capital punishment in 1976 to 1211, according to the Death Penalty Information Center.

The USA is one of the rare countries in the world where each state has its own criminal laws and criminal justice procedures, and may have its own death penalty. At present, there are 15 abolitionist states and 35 retentionist states, but 10 of those states have not carried out any executions in the last 10 years. Only 11 states carried out executions in 2009. Alabama, Oklahoma, Ohio, Texas and Virginia were the top executioners. Texas alone executed 24 people, accounting for 46 percent of the executions in the USA in 2009.

In recent years, abolitionist measures have been spreading throughout the USA. According to Amnesty International, death sentences in the USA reached a high in 1994 but have dropped over 60 percent in the past decade to a low of 106 in 2009. In 2009, New Mexico became the 15th state to legislatively abolish the death penalty, closely following New Jersey in 2008, and New York, which judicially ended the death penalty in 2008. Executions have declined as well over the past decade, from a high of 98 in 1999.

[3] WORLD DAY 10/10/10:

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- **The failure of a judicial system that condemns innocent people to death**

Since executions resumed in 1977, 139 people have been released from death rows in the USA on grounds of innocence, including nine in 2009. Factors contributing to the conviction of innocent people in USA capital trials are: unreliable eyewitness evidence, police or prosecutorial error or misconduct, inadequate legal representation, unreliable expert evidence, and false confessions. Miscarriages of justice in emblematic cases sensitize public opinion. One such case was that of Anthony Porter, who came within 48 hours of execution in Illinois in 1998 after 17 years on death row. His execution was temporarily stayed, during which time a group of students investigated his case and proved his innocence. He was later released. The Governor of Illinois in 2003 declared a moratorium on executions and commuted the death sentences of all those on the state's death row.

- **Miscarriages of justice as a result of discrimination**

The USA population is 68 percent white, 12 percent black, 15 percent Hispanic and 5 percent other ethnic minorities. However, 42 percent of the death row prisoners are black, compared to 44 percent white according to the Death Penalty Information Center, illustrating the disproportionate use of the death penalty on minorities.

Over the past three decades, sociologists have repeatedly observed that defendants are sentenced to death much more often when convicted of a murder committed against a white victim.

Economic status also plays an influential role in determining who is sentenced to death. Most death row inmates come from poor backgrounds and cannot afford high legal expenses. Neither income nor race is a legitimate factor in the application of the law.

- **There are better ways to make us safe**

Although state expenses related to the death penalty are different in each state, they are very high throughout the USA. On average, each state will pay one million dollars more for a death penalty trial than for a non death penalty trial because the trial procedure is different. In California, the largest state, a

State Commission recently found that the cost of the inefficient death penalty, with a delay of over 22 years between sentence and execution, is \$125 million per year over and above the cost of permanent imprisonment. It is even more reprehensible that these expenses could be used for other purposes such as more effective law enforcement measures.

In March 2010, a Fox News article on the cost of capital punishment stated that "Every time a killer is sentenced to die, a school is closed. That is the broad assessment of a growing number of studies taking a cold, hard look at how much the death penalty costs in the 35 states that still have it."

A 2009 report by the Death Penalty Information Center showed that the nation's police chiefs rank the death penalty last in their priorities for effective crime reduction, that they do not believe the death penalty acts as a deterrent to murder, and they rate it as one of most inefficient uses of taxpayer dollars in fighting crime. As well, a growing number of murder victims' families say that money spent on the death penalty would be better used to increase victim's services and meet their needs in the aftermath of a homicide.

- **A trend towards abolition**

There has been some progress in recent years in the USA. Two recent decisions by the US Supreme Court narrowed the scope of the constitutional death penalty – in 2002 the Court prohibited the execution of people who have 'mental retardation', and in 2005 it prohibited the use of the death penalty against offenders who were under 18 years old at the time of the crime. In 2009, progress was made with a decrease in the number of death sentences in previous years. The number of executions is also decreasing. The increase in the number of exonerations continues to highlight fundamental flaws in the system. In addition to the 15 states which have now abolished the death penalty in law, a further 11 states have made legislative proposals to abolish capital punishment. This further demonstrates that this trend is being established in a country where states determine their own legislation on the issue of the death penalty.

This positive trend towards abolition would not be possible without the development of the abolitionist network that is growing day by day in the USA, reflecting the gradual change of civil society towards the abolition of the death penalty.

[4] THE WORLD DAY: TAKE ACTIONS!

The main objective of the World Day is to provoke and stimulate local initiatives in a large number of countries, as many as possible, particularly in the countries where the death penalty is still in force.

• 10 things you can do to end the death penalty:

- 1- **Prepare** an event in your city on October 10, 2010
- 2- **Join the events** prepared for the abolition of the death penalty worldwide
- 3- **Send** messages of support to abolitionists in the USA
- 4- **Take part** in our worldwide art project against the death penalty
- 5- **Teach abolition** to your friends and relatives
- 6- **Create a poster** on the theme "Death is not justice". This year, the World Coalition is associated with "Poster for Tomorrow", an international poster competition which will reward the best 100 posters (selected by the jury) by including them in the "Death is not justice" exhibitions, held in 100 cities around the world. For more information visit the website: www.posterfortomorrow.org
- 7- **Write** to a prisoner on death row
- 8- **Join** an abolitionist organization
- 9- **Mobilize** the media to raise awareness on the issue of the death penalty
- 10- **Participate** in the "Cities Against the Death Penalty / Cities for Life" on November 30, 2010

• Material for the 8th World Day

For the 2010 World Day, the WCADP has produced some materials; they are all available on its website:

<http://www.worldcoalition.org/worldday>

Poster of the World Day

For organisers of events, copies of the poster are available at no cost from the Executive Secretariat of the WCADP (contact: aplacais@abolition.fr).

Information Leaflet

This information leaflet on the 2010 World Day includes the World Coalitions' demands to the USA. It

also provides information on the death penalty in USA. For organisers of events, copies are available at no cost from the Executive Secretariat of the WCADP (contact: aplacais@abolition.fr).

Facts and figures on the death penalty

Up-to-date information on the application of death penalty around the world in 2008.

USA Factsheet

Detailed Information about the death penalty in the USA

Map of the death penalty in the USA

Map of US states classified as abolitionist, abolitionist in practice or retentionist, with execution numbers for 2009.

Banner

A web banner announcing the World Day Against the Death Penalty can be downloaded for display on your website.

Pedagogical Guide

This manual offers several activities in anticipation of the celebrations on 10 October. It is aimed particularly at teachers of students aged 14 to 18, wherever they are in the world, but can also be used by anyone willing to organise an event for the World Day.

- Organisers of events, order copies of the guide from the Executive Secretariat of the WCADP (contact: aplacais@abolition.fr).
- Use it to organise event, make your own documents and inform the public about the reality of the death penalty in a recreational way.

Capital Punishment Curriculum for Law Schools and experts

This course is intended to introduce a comparative study of the death penalty in abolitionist versus retentionist countries, based on the prohibition of this punishment in international conventions. It is designed primarily for use in US law schools, with emphasis on US law, but should prove instructive in other contexts.

- Use it with a well-informed public to deepen the debate.

[4] THE WORLD DAY: TAKE ACTIONS!

• Call for initiatives, some suggestions for 2010:

On 10 October 2010, take action against the death penalty:

Wherever you are: in Africa, America, Asia, Oceania or Europe

Whoever you are: NGO, teacher, lawyer, local representative, member of parliament, artist, reporter, religious leader, citizen

Whatever your plans are: Debates, concerts, press conferences, demonstrations, petitions, educational and cultural activities.

- Take action to say "No" to the death penalty;
- Join the hundreds of initiatives worldwide;
- Spread the call to end juvenile executions.

• 10 examples of actions taken in 10 different countries in 2010:

Africa and the Middle East

• **Morocco:** To celebrate the World Day, the Moroccan Coalition Against the Death Penalty organised a press conference on 7 October 2009 to announce the protest memorandum addressed to the Prime Minister, the Justice Minister, the President of the Chamber of Representatives and the President of the Chamber of Councillors. A delegation from the organisation then met the Prime Minister's Head of Cabinet to plead for abolition. All this action was symbolised by a sit-in in front of Parliament in Casablanca.

• **Togo:** Awareness raising tour in schools.

In three schools in Lomé members of the Forum Africain contre la peine de mort discussed with students the importance of universal abolition of the death penalty. They also distributed leaflets they had prepared to students in classrooms.

• **Burkina Faso:** The Burkina Faso section of Amnesty International organised several events in various towns in the country for the World Day. At the SIAO university centre a film followed by a debate with students was held, bringing together more than forty students. In Bobo-Dioulasso a debate was held with teachers and young people. Also launched a book "Towards Abolition of the Death Penalty in Uganda" which attracted media interest.

North America, South America and the Caribbean

• **United States:** The Los Angeles County Coalition for Death Penalty Alternatives training of activists to help

halt death sentences in the county of Los Angeles. Training sessions included close work with communities, lobbying local officials and training in communication and media.

• **Puerto Rico:** Conference on the death penalty organized by the Puerto Rican Bar: this activity involved five short presentations on various subjects connected to the death penalty. After each presentation a troubadour (traditional Puerto Rican singer) improvised a song summing up the issues raised.

Asia-Pacific

• **Asia region:** the Asia Pacific Youth Network circulated on Facebook the petition to end the execution of juveniles and the Quiz on the death penalty.

• **Taiwan:** For four days and at the initiative of the Taiwan Alliance to End the Death Penalty (TAEDP), workshops on the theme for the World Day, "Teaching abolition", were held. The manual created by the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty was widely used during these workshops. The event was covered by the media, particularly after the press conference which was held on 10 October 2009.

Europe

• **Belgique:** The Parti Centre Démocrate Humaniste organised a highly symbolic act: delivery of funeral crowns. Several MPs, including Georges Dallemagne, delivered on Saturday 10 October a funeral crown to the Chinese and American embassies as a protest against the death penalty which is still applied in those two nations. A bouquet of flowers was also delivered to the embassy of Burundi to congratulate the country for formally abolishing the death penalty on 22 April 2009.

• **France:** ECPM (Together against the death penalty) in partnership with LDH, Amnesty International France, ACAT, FIDH and Collectif Mumia Abu Jamal organised at Place de la Sorbonne in Paris a demonstration against the death penalty. It was marked by a debating duel between two defense attorneys on abolitionist arguments and the reading of statements from juveniles sentenced to death.

• **Luxembourg:** ACAT and Amnesty International organised, within the framework of a night visit to the History Museum of the city of Luxembourg, an exhibition in connection with the theme of the death penalty. The dancer and choreographer Dania Antinori and the percussionist Simon Stierle accompanied videos related to the theme of the death penalty.

[5] ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

• Reports on the Death Penalty in the USA

- Report on the death penalty in the USA: "The Death Penalty in 2009: Year End Report"; published by the Death Penalty Information Center in 2009 available in English on their website:
<http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/documents/2009YearEndReport.pdf>
- Report on the cost of the Death Penalty in the USA: "Smart on Crime: Reconsidering the Death Penalty in a Time of Economic Crisis" published by the Death Penalty Information Center in October 2009; available in their website :
<http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/documents/CostsRptFinal.pdf>
- Report on the Death Penalty in the State of Texas: "Texas Death Penalty Developments in 2009" published by the Texas Coalition Against the Death Penalty in 2009; available in English on their website :
<http://tcadp.org/uploads/documents/2009annualreport.pdf>
- Report on the Death Penalty in California published in March 2010 by the American Civil Liberty Union de of Northern California "Death in Decline '09"; available on the ACLU's website:
www.aclunc.org/deathpenalty.

• Websites

General information on death penalty

- World Coalition Against the Death Penalty
www.worldcoalition.org
- Amnesty International, death penalty page
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/death-penalty>
- Death penalty website of the FIDH
<http://www.fidh.org/spip.php?rubrique650>
- Hands Off Cain information website:
<http://www.handsoffcain.info/>

Please refer to the Coalition members' website and get in touch with them using the contact details you will find at the end of this document.

• Filmography

Documentary films

- **In Prison My Whole Life** (2007)
British movie directed by Marc Evans (film 93 minutes)
This documentary immerses us in the heart of the American prison system by addressing the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, a black journalist convicted of killing a police officer, who is still on death row. The story is told by a young British man (William Francom) who was born on the day of Mumia's arrest.
- **Made in the USA** (2001) *OV (French)*
French documentary film by Solveig Anspach and Cindy Babski. (1h45)
Made in the USA relates the execution, on March, 1 2000, of Odell Barnes, sentenced to death in Texas, for the murder of one of his mother's friend.
- **Le Dernier repas** (2002) : *OV (English) with French subtitles*
Canadian documentary film by Julien Elie (75 minutes)
Visit within the nightmarish atmosphere of Huntsville town which has the highest rate of executions in the United States. This movie tells the story of Farley Matchett, a former death row inmate executed on September, 12 2006, through his grand mother's eyes.
- **999 060** (2006 - 30 minutes) : *OV (English) with French subtitles*
Interview of Farley Matchett.

Movies

- **Night Train** (2007)
Chinese movie by Diao Yi Nan
Night train tells the story of Wu Hongyan, a woman in charge of the execution of death row prisoners in Western China.
- **Redemption: The Stan Tookie Williams story** (2004)
American movie by Jamie Foxx
Redemption tells the story of Stan "Tookie" Williams, founder of the Crips (an L.A. street gang). Story follows his fall into gang-banging, his prison term, and his work writing children's novels encouraging peace and anti-violence resolutions which earned him multiple Nobel Peace Prize nominations.
Tookie was executed by lethal injection at San Quentin State Prison, California.

[5] ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

- **The life of David Gale** (2003)

American movie by Alan Parker

Dr. David Gale, an advocate for eliminating the death penalty, is falsely accused of rape and murder. Once convicted, he ends up on death row in Texas himself, telling his story to a reporter.

- **The Green Mile** (2000)

American movie by Frank Darabont

Death Row guards at a penitentiary, in the 1930's, have a moral dilemma with their job when they discover one of their prisoners, a convicted murderer, has a special gift.

- **Dead Man Walking** (1995)

American movie by Tim Robbins

A caring nun receives a desperate letter from a death row inmate trying to find help to avoid execution for murder.

Filmography on the ECPM website:

<http://www.abolition.fr/ecpm/french/filmographie.php?&topic=54>

- **Radio**

You can listen to various victims and abolitionists' testimonies on ECPM website (www.abolition.fr).

They are also available in their original language.

Don't hesitate to get in touch with your local radio stations, they can broadcast them!

Abolitionists' testimonies

- **China:** Teng Biao: « **Nowadays, 99% of Chinese people are pro-death penalty.** »

- **Morocco:** Nouzha Skally: "**There are no obstacles on the way to abolition** »

Victims' testimonies

- **Antoinette Chahine – Lebanon:** Antoinette Chahine was a young student in Beyrouth when she was arrested in June 1994.

- **Renny Cushing – United States:** Founding member and Executive Director of Murder Victims' Families for Human Rights, an international organisation founded by victims' families who are against the death penalty.

- **Joaquin Jose Martinez – Spain :** Joaquin José Martinez, a Spanish national, was living in the United States when he was arrested in 1996 and accused of double murder. He has been exonerated and released.

- **Sakae Menda – Japan :** Sakae Menda was arrested in 1949 for a double murder he never committed. After 34 years on death row, he was found innocent. He became the first death row inmate to be released in Japan.

- **Edmary Mpagi – Uganda :** Edmary Mpagi is a former death row prisoner. He was convicted of the murder of a man who was discovered alive 18 years later.

Check the website for the full list

<http://www.abolition.fr/ecpm/french/article.php?art=508&suje=193&topic=54>

[6] JOIN THE COALITION

Only organisations can join the World Coalition

In accordance with article 5 of the WCADP bylaws, the Coalition welcomes organisations who are sharing the aim of the universal abolition of the death penalty.

To join us, you may fill in the application form and send it to the Executive Secretariat of the World Coalition.

You will find this form online:

http://www.worldcoalition.org/modules/liaise/index.php?form_id=2&sel_lang=english

Every member of the Coalition must pay an annual subscription fee of 150 euros, in accordance with article 4 of the Charter.

[7] CONTACTS DETAILS

Executif Secretariat

ECPM

3 rue Paul Vaillant Couturier
92320 Châtillon, France
contact@worldcoalition.org

Members

Australia

Victorian Criminal Justice Coalition

Peter Norden
pnorden@unimelb.edu.au

Belarus

Belarusian Helsinki Committee

Dzmitr Markusheuski
office@belhelcom.org
www.belhelcom.org

Belgium

Fédération des Etudiants Libéraux (FEL)

Arnaud Van Praet
arnaud@etudiantsliberaux.be
info@etudiantsliberaux.be
<http://etudiantsliberaux.blogspot.com>

Hope & Justice

Annyck Guillard
annyckguillard@hotmail.com
www.hopeandjustice.com

Ordre des avocats du Barreau de Liège

Patrick Henry
batonnierdeliege@avocat.be

Ordre des Barreaux Francophones et Germanophones de Belgique (OFBG)

Christine de Ville de Goyet
cdeville.secrngen@avocats.be

Ville de Braine-l'Alleud

Vincent Scourneau
cftj_europe@yahoo.fr
Myriam Stubbe
cftj_europe@yahoo.fr
www.braine-lalleud.be/

Burundi

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

Daniel Mutambala Mazinda
ucpdho@yahoo.fr

Unis contre la peine de mort

Léonidas Habarugira
ishimwess@yahoo.fr

Cameroon

Droits et Paix

Nestor TOKO MONKAM
droitsetpaix@yahoo.fr

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
reseau@dd-rd.ca
<http://www.dd-rd.net/>

Stop Child Executions

Nazanin Afshin-Jam
info@nazanin.ca

Democratic Republic of Congo

Culture pour la Paix et la Justice

Liévin Ngondji
cpj_ong@yahoo.fr

Fiji Islands

Pacific Concerns Resource Center

Tupou Vere
pcrc.secretariat@gmail.com
tupou.pcrc@gmail.com

France

ACAT France

Bernadette Forhan
bernadette.forhan@club-internet.fr
Cécile Marcel
cecile.marcel@acatfrance.fr
www.acat.asso.fr

Amnesty International France

Didier Beaudet
compeinedemort@amnesty.fr
didier.beaudet@orange.fr
www.amnesty.asso.fr

Barreau de Paris

Anne Souléliac
asouleliac@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

Fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme

Antoine Bernard

abernard@fidh.org

Florence Bellivier

florence.bellivier@wanadoo.fr

www.fidh.org

Fédération Syndicale Unitaire SNUipp

Francis Barbe

francis.barbe@snuipp.fr

www.snuipp.fr

FIACAT

Marie-Jo Cocher

fiacat@fiacat.org

Guillaume Colin

g.colin@fiacat.org

www.fiacat.org

Comité Syndical Francophone de l'Education et de la Formation

Roger Ferrari

csfef@snes.edu

Conférence Internationale des Barreaux

Mario Stasi

mstasi@stasiparis.com

Richard Sédillot

sedillot@aol.com

www.cib.asso.fr

Ligue des Droits de l'Homme

Pavlina Novotny

pavlina.novotny@ldh-france.org

www.ldh-france.org

Lutte pour la Justice

Colette Berthès

BrthsCl@aol.com

www.lpj-france.net

Magistrats européens pour la démocratie et les libertés (MEDEL)

Eric Alt

eric.alt@noos.fr

http://www.medelnet.org

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

Renée Le Mignot

international@mrp.fr - www.mrap.asso.fr

Ordre des avocats des Hauts de Seine

Philippe-Henri Dutheil

batonnier@barreau92.com

http://www.barreau92.com

Ville de Dijon

Philippe Sartori

psartori@ville-dijon.fr

www.dijon.fr

RAIDH

Fabrice Ferrier

raidh@raidh.org

www.raidh.org

Germany**Alive**

Petra Herrmann

info@alive-gegen-todesstrafe.de

www.todesstrafe.usa.de

Guinea**Les mêmes droits pour tous (MDT)**

Foromo Frédéric Loua

mdtguinee@yahoo.fr

India**Lawyers For Human Rights International**

Navkiran Singh

nkslawfirm@yahoo.co.in

www.lfhri.org

Law Student's Forum

Nadeem Qadri

lawstudentsforumjk@yahoo.co.in

Indonesia**KontraS (Commission for the Dissapeared and Victims of Violence)**

Papang Hidayat

thungpapang@yahoo.com

www.kontras.org

Iran**Association for the Right to Live**

Emmadeddin Baghi

emadbaghi2003@yahoo.com

ebaghi@gmail.com

Iraq**Iraqi Center for Human Rights and Democracy Studies**

Mohammed Abdullah Radhi

ichrs.iraq@gmail.com

Iraqi Alliance for the Prevention of the Death Penalty

Nassr Abbood

naserabood@yahoo.com

www.al-rafidain.org

Italy

Comunità di Sant'Egidio

Mario Marazziti m.marazziti@gmail.com;
m.marazziti@fastwebnet.it
www.santegidio.org

Regione Toscana - Italia

Angelo Passaleva
angelopassaleva@tiscali.it
www.regione.toscana.it

Città di Reggio Emilia

Chiara Piacentini
Chiara.Piacentini@municipio.re.it
www.municipio.re.it/retecivica/urp/home.nsf

Città di Reggio Emilia

Barbara Donnici
Barbara.Donnici@municipio.re.it
www.municipio.re.it/retecivica/urp/home.nsf

Città di Venezia

Andrea Del Mercato
international.relations@comune.venezia.it
www.comune.venezia.it

Coalizione italiana contro la pena di morte

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

Comitato Paul Rougeau

Grazia Guaschino
guygre@libero.it

Hands off Cain

Elisabetta Zamparutti
e.zamparutti@radicali.it
www.handsoffcain.info

Magistrats européens pour la démocratie et les libertés (MEDEL)

Vito Monetti
vitomonetti@libero.it
http://www.medelnet.org/pages/89_1.html

Matera (Ville de)

comune@comune.mt.it
www.comune.matera.it

Ordine Provinciale dei Medici-Chirurghi e degli Odontoiatri di Firenze

Antonio Panti
direzione@ordine-medici-firenze.it

Ivory Coast

Ligue Ivoirienne des Droits de l'Homme

Patrick N'Gouan Konin
lidho@aviso.ci

Japan

Center for Prisoner's Rights (CPR)

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

Forum 90

Yoshihiro Yasuda
jyonsan@symphony.plala.or.jp

Jordan

Arab Coalition Against the Death Penalty

Nizam Assaf
achrs@achrs.org
www.achrs.org

Arab Coalition Against the Death Penalty

Valentina Pomatto
ir@achrs.org
v.pomatto@achrs.org

Malte

International Organization for Diplomatic Relations

Mara Catello
diplomatic@iodr.org
www.iodr.org

Morocco

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

Abdellah Mouseddad
amouseddad@yahoo.fr

Association Marocaine des Droits Humains (AMDH)

Ben Abdesselam Abdel-Ilah
lilahbena@yahoo.fr

Centre marocain des droits de l'Homme

Mohammed Ennouhi
youssefennouhi@yahoo.fr
cmdh@cmdh.org
www.cmdh.org

Forum Marocain pour la Vérité et la Justice

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

Organisation Marocaine des Droits Humains

Mostafa Znaidi
m.znaidi@gmail.com
znaidi44@gmail.com
contact@omdh.org
www.omdh.org

Observatoire Marocain des Prisons

Abderrahim Jamai
a.jamai@menara.ma

Mauritius

Mauritanian Coalition Against Death Penalty

El Hacene Mahmoud Mbareck

Abdah67@yahoo.fr

www.adhm.mr

Niger

ROTAB

Ali Idrissa

pcqvpniger@yahoo.fr

SYNAFEN, Syndicat national des agents de la formation et de l'éducation du Niger

Almoustapha Moussa

synafen@yahoo.fr

Action pour une Education de qualité

Boubacar Inoussa

inoussa.boubacar@yahoo.fr

Nigeria

HURILAWS

Ja'afaru Adamu

a.jaafaru@hurilaws.org

hurilaws@hurilaws.org

<http://www.hurilaws.org>

Nigerian Humanist Movement

Léo Igwe

humanistleo@hotmail.com

Norway

Iran Human Rights

Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam

Iranhr2007@gmail.com

www.iranhr.net

Palestine (Territoires autonomes)

Palestinian Center for Human Rights

Raji Al-Sourani

pchr@pchrgaza.org

<http://pchrgaza.ps>

Pakistan

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan

Kamran Arif

Kamranarif.advocate@gmail.com

www.hcrp-web.org

Porto Rico

Puerto Rican Coalition Against Death Penalty

Carmelo Campos Cruz

carmelocampos@yahoo.com

Puerto Rico Bar Association

Juan Matos-De Juan

matosdejuan@gmail.com

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

Fernandez Murhola

cojeski_rdcngo@yahoo.com

cojeski.rdc@societecivile.cd

www.cojeski.org

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

N'Sii Luanda Shandwe

nsiiluanda_codho@yahoo.fr;

codho_kinshasa@yahoo.fr

Congolese Youth Movement

Robert Wangachumo

congyouth@yahoo.fr

Pax Christi Uvira

Jean-Jacques de Christ Nganya

paxchristiuvira@yahoo.fr

www.paxchristi.net

RADHOMA/ RD Congo

Baudouin Kipaka Basilimu

radhoma_congo@yahoo.fr

Royaume de Bahrein

Bahrain Human Rights Society

Abdulla Alderazi

bhrs@bhrs.com

Royaume Uni

Death Watch International

Simon Shepherd

info@deathwatchinternational.org

www.deathwatchinternational.org

Amnesty International Secrétariat International

Chiara Sangiorgio

CSangiorgio@amnesty.org

www.amnesty.org

Penal Reform International (PRI)

Jackie Macalesher

jmacalesher@penalreform.org

www.penalreform.org

Rwanda

Observatoire National des Prisons

Christian Buzigwa

grafkivu@yahoo.fr

Spain

Ciudad de Andoain

Jonel turrioz

idazadm.andoain@udal.gipuzkoa.net

Suisse

Ordre des Avocats de Genève

Jean-François Ducrest
secretariat@odageneve.ch
www.odageneve.ch

Lifespark

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

Organisation Mondiale Contre la Torture (OMCT)

Alexandra Kossin ak@omct.org
www.omct.org

International Commission of Jurists

Jan Borgen jan.borgen@icj.org
www.icj.org

Taiwan

Taiwan Alliance to End the Death Penalty (TAEDP)

Hsinyi Lin
hsinyi1975@gmail.com
taedp.tw@gmail.com
taedpwcadp@googlegroups.com
www.taedp.org.tw
www.peopo.org/taedp

Tanzanie

Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC)

Helen Kijo-Bisimba lhrc@humanrights.or.tz

Togo

Forum Africain Contre la Peine de Mort

Ganyo Gbeti
ganyo_sam@yahoo.fr
facpm@aol.com
www.desmainsunies.com/FACPM/FACPM.htm

Tunisie

Coalition Nationale tunisienne contre la peine de mort

Mohamed Habib Marsit
atunisia@sections.amnesty.org

Conseil National pour les Libertés en Tunisie

Sihem Bensedrine
contact@cnlt98.org
sbensedrine@yahoo.com
www.cnltunisie.org

Uganda

Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI)

Livingstone Sewanyana
fhri@starcom.co.ug
fhri@spacenet.co.ug
www.fhri.or.ug

Ukrania

Women's Information Consultative Center

Olena Suslova
wicc@empedu.org.ua
http://www.empedu.org.ua

United States

Death Penalty Focus

Elizabeth Zitrin
ezitrin@deathpenalty.org
www.deathpenalty.org
www.californiamoratorium.org

Murder Victims' Families for Human Rights (MVFHR)

Renny Cushing
rrcushing@earthlink.net
www.murdervictimsfamilies.org

National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (NACDL)

Sandra Babcock
s-babcock@law.northwestern.edu
Speedy Rice
speedyrice@jcsrlaw.net
www.nacdl.org

Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty

David Atwood
dpatwood@igc.org
www.tcadp.org

Advocates for Human Rights

Rosalyn Park
rpark@advrights.org
www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org

American Friends Service Committee

Joyce Miller
JMiller@afsc.org
www.afsc.org

CURE

Claudia Whitman
claudia@ndran.org; claudia@celldoor.com
www.curenational.org

Human Rights Watch

David Fathi
David.Fathi@hrw.org
www.hrw.org

Journey of Hope... From Violence to Healing

Bill Pelke
bpelke@yahoo.com
bill@journeyofhope.org
www.journeyofhope.org

**National Coalition to Abolish Death Penalty
(NACDP)**

Sean Wallace
info@ncadp.org
www.ncadp.org

People of Faith Against the Death Penalty

Stephan Dear
sdear@pfadp.org
www.pfadp.org

Stop Child Executions

David Etebari
info@stopchildexecutions.com
detebari@gmail.com
www.stopchildexecutions.com

US Human Rights Network

Ajamu Baraka
abaraka@ushrnetwork.org

National Lawyers Guild (NLG)

Heidi Boghosian
director@nlg.org
Robert R. Bryan
RobertRBryan@gmail.com
www.nlg.org

National Lawyers Guild (NLG)

www.nlg.org

Campaign to end Death Penalty

Patricia Foley
patconnect@gmail.com
www.nodethpenalty.org

Michigan Committee Against Capital Punishment

Eugene Wangeril
com@core.com

Uzbekistan

Mothers Against Death Penalty

Tamara Chunikova
tamara4848@mail.ru

For more information:

www.worldcoalition.org