
STATEMENT

Paris, 10 October 2024

<p>DECLARATION OF THE 2024 WORLD DAY AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY</p>

« The death penalty protects no one ».

On 10 October 2024, UIA-IROL joins the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty and abolitionist actors around the world in commemorating the 22nd World Day Against the Death Penalty. It reaffirms its absolute opposition to capital punishment, whatever the circumstances, in all States and at all times.

For the 22nd and 23rd World Days Against the Death Penalty, the Coalition has chosen the theme “Death Penalty and Safety”, to counter the misconception that the death penalty is a mean of ensuring safety in society.

In all its forms, capital punishment constitutes a violation of fundamental rights, including the right to life, the right to respect for human dignity and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In addition to the methods of execution constituting torture as such, the time spent on death row causes unbearable psychological and physical suffering, which only reinforces the inhumanity of this practice. Therefore, UIA-IROL affirms that the death penalty is inherently incompatible with fundamental human rights standards.

This year marks a significant turning point, with notable advances on the road to universal abolition of the death penalty. Many States have stopped using this cruel, inhuman and ineffective punishment, and we salute the efforts of those countries that have taken the step of abolishing capital punishment once and for all.

UIA-IROL particularly congratulates those States that have recently joined the cause, notably those that have ratified international and regional protocols favoring abolition and those that are moving in this direction. Despite this progress, a minority of countries persist in applying the death penalty, fuelling a cycle of institutionalized violence.

UIA-IROL recalls that capital punishment is an irreversible sanction, which fuels systematic disparities and discrimination in the application of the death penalty, disproportionately affecting people from marginalized or vulnerable groups.

UIA-IROL strongly denounces recent executions and death sentences in certain regions of the world, which are contrary to international human rights standards. It deplores in particular the lifting of the moratorium on the death penalty in the Democratic Republic of Congo last March, which marks a regression in human rights and a drastic setback for the abolitionist movement. UIA-IROL hopes that Congolese authorities will heed the international community's call to reinstate the moratorium and refrain from carrying out any executions.

The application of capital punishment, often linked to political considerations or the repression of opponents, must cease. UIA-IROL calls on all States that still maintain capital punishment to immediately establish a moratorium on executions, with a view to total abolition.

We invite lawyers, jurists and human rights defenders to continue their fight for the definitive abolition of this archaic practice. Together, we must plead for a more humane justice system, where justice is not confused with vengeance, and where every life is protected and respected. We call on the international community, States, civil society organizations and all defenders of human rights to redouble their efforts to eradicate this punishment.

UIA-IROL will continue to support all initiatives aimed at promoting the universal abolition of the death penalty and advancing human rights worldwide. The road to justice without the death penalty is the road to a fairer, more humane world.

To learn more about the 22nd World Day Against the Death Penalty “ see [here](#).

More about UIA-IROL

The Institute for the Rule of Law of the International Association of Lawyers (UIA-IROL) promotes the Rule of Law and supports and defends, in particular, (1) lawyers, judges and human rights defenders who are harassed, threatened and/or persecuted in the exercise of their professions, (2) the independence of the legal and judicial professions, and (3) the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, especially in defense of human rights.

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