



PRESS RELEASE

The importance of raising awareness among ambassadors to the African Union on the draft African Protocol on abolition of the death penalty

Addis Ababa, 28 March 2019 – The International Federation of ACAT, (FIACAT), the World Coalition against the Death Penalty (WCADP), the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) and the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) held an awareness-raising workshop for members of the Group of Francophone Ambassadors (GAF) to the African Union on the draft African Protocol on abolition of the death penalty.

In a few years, Africa has become the most dynamic continent in terms of progress towards abolition of the death penalty. Today, of the 55 African Union member States, 21 have abolished the death penalty. Many African States have voted in favour of United Nations resolutions calling for a universal moratorium on executions and some have even co-sponsored them. This trend in Africa is particularly apparent in the francophone area, as 18 of the 21 African abolitionist countries are francophone.

However, the coming years are key for the adoption of an additional Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on abolition of the death penalty in Africa. In April 2015, the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) adopted this draft Protocol, which was then submitted to the African Union. The draft Protocol has still not been considered by the African Union institutions.

For this reason, to support the continuing forward progress of the abolitionist struggle in Africa, the ACHPR, OIF, FIACAT and WCADP organised an awareness-raising workshop for members of the Group of Francophone Ambassadors (GAF) to the African Union on the draft African Protocol on abolition of the death penalty, on Thursday 28 March 2019 in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia).

Following fruitful exchanges of views, the adoption of a regional legal instrument for Africa, providing for abolition of the death penalty, seems more necessary than ever.

Bearing in mind that once the Protocol is adopted it will only bind the States that wish to ratify it, the FIACAT encourages the Permanent Representatives to the African Union to promote and support the draft additional Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on abolition of the death penalty in Africa.

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