

**African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights**  
**81st Ordinary Session (17 October to 06 November, 2024)**

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**Item 5 of the agenda**

**Progress report by the Chairman of the Working Group on the Death Penalty**

**Delivered World Coalition against the Death Penalty**

**Observer number: 507**

**Thank you, Honorable Chairperson,**

It is my pleasure today to deliver a joint oral statement on behalf of FIACAT, Ensemble Contre la Peine de Mort and the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty.

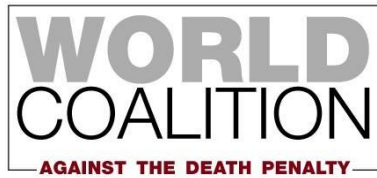
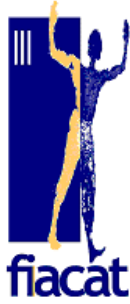
As of October 2024, 27 member states of the African Union have abolished the death penalty in law, and 15 observe a moratorium on executions in practice. In the past two years we have seen an acceleration of death penalty abolition with Sierra Leone, Central Africa, Equatorial Guinea and Zambia abolishing in 2022 and Ghana in 2023. We call on all countries observing moratoriums to be followed by full abolition in law.

Our organizations congratulate the Pan-African Parliament on the Resolution on Abolition of the Death Penalty in Africa, adopted on July 5, 2024, which called for the full abolition of the death penalty on the African continent, and pledged support for the adoption of the draft additional Protocol to the Charter on the Abolition of the Death Penalty in Africa at the African Union.

We congratulate Côte d'Ivoire on its accession to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, in May 2024.

We call on the States who have executed over the past year, namely Egypt and Somalia, to implement urgent and official moratoriums on all executions. We however want to highlight the sharp decrease in the number of African Union states that have carried out executions in the past year, from 5 in 2022 to 2 in 2023.

We condemn the decision by the Ugandan Constitutional Court to uphold the most radical and discriminatory provisions of the 2023 Anti-Homosexuality Act in May 2024, including the use of death penalty in cases of "aggravated homosexuality." This law violates international and regional norms that limit the application of the death penalty to the most serious crimes.



We further condemn the lifting the moratorium on executions that had been in place since 2003 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the repression of civil society and abolitionist human rights defenders that has occurred following this decision.

**Honorable Chairperson,**

For the first of a two-year cycle, on 10 October 2024, the World Day Against the Death Penalty was dedicated to shedding light on the false belief that capital punishment safeguards individuals and communities. This year's theme highlighted how the death penalty, rather than ensuring safety, perpetuates violence, disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable.

In a nuanced and complete understanding of the application of capital punishment from General Comment No.3 on the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the right to life, and Article 5 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' rights, which calls for an end to torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment, the death penalty is inherently incompatible with the prohibition of torture.

Thank you for your attention.