



Index: IOR 40/1132/2015

4 March 2015

UN Human Rights Council  
Twenty-Eighth Session  
2 – 27 March 2015

***Biennial high-level panel discussion on the question of the death penalty***

**Theme:** Regional efforts aiming at the abolition of the death penalty and the challenges faced in that regard

Mr. President,

Amnesty International acknowledges the importance of various inter-governmental initiatives taken to advance the abolition of the death penalty at the regional level.

We welcome the contribution of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to the abolition of the death penalty and the Commission's interventions, pending full abolition, to ensure that States comply with relevant international human rights law and standards in all death penalty cases. Amnesty International shares the concerns expressed in various occasions <sup>1</sup> by the Commission about the disregard of precautionary measures issued by the Commission or provisional measures issued by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

Ms. Robinson, what role can OAS States play to promote full respect of those precautionary measures? Is there a role for the Human Rights Council in that regard?

While an increasing number of countries are abolishing the death penalty, countries of the English-speaking Caribbean <sup>2</sup> continue to support its retention. While executions are rare, there have been attempts to carry out executions during the past decade and to the point of some death row prisoners having their death warrants read. Even though legal appeals prevented the executions from going ahead, the impact of these experiences on both the prisoners and their families are profound.

Countries continue to present the death penalty as a solution to violent crime, despite lack of convincing evidence in this regard. Rather, authorities should effectively address the root causes of crime and overhaul ailing, inadequate criminal justice systems.

Ms. Kayitesi

Amnesty International welcomes the consistent calls by African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights on all states in Africa that are yet to abolish the death penalty to establish a moratorium on executions with a view to abolition. We also welcome the Commission's interventions in death penalty cases and its work towards the adoption of an Additional Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the abolition of the death penalty. In this regard, we would like to ask you, Ms. Kayitesi, how does the Commission intend to promote the draft Protocol in the African Union?

Ms. Hossain, Mr Bedjaoui,

The application of the death penalty to crimes that are not "most serious", such as drug-related offences, and violations of fair trial guarantees are recurring concerns in the Asia and MENA regions. What steps could regional organisations, such as ASEAN and the Arab League, take to ensure that international safeguards are respected in States that are yet to abolish the death penalty? Do you think that the sharing of good practices and expertise by organisations and actors from other regions could help ASEAN and the Arab League to play such a role?

---

<sup>1</sup> See for example, IACHR Urges States to Abolish Death Penalty or Impose a Moratorium on its Application and [https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media\\_center/PReleases/2013/074.asp](https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2013/074.asp) and Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, "Human Rights Situation and the Death Penalty in the Americas", 27 March 2014, available at <http://hrbrief.org/2014/03/human-rights-situation-and-the-death-penalty-in-the-americas/>, last accessed on 5 March 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago

Finally,

Mr. Lambrinidis does the EU have data collection and monitoring systems to ascertain the number of EU nationals facing the death penalty in other countries? What assistance is provided to them and their families?