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UN: Vote shows steady support for ending the death penalty

Global support for abolishing the death penalty is rising, Amnesty International said after the UN General Assembly (UNGA) voted overwhelmingly in favour of a moratorium on the use of the death penalty.

It is the fourth such resolution to be passed by the plenary session of the UNGA since 2007.

111 states voted for the resolution— an increase of two from the last vote in 2010.

“Today’s vote reaffirmed the clear worldwide trend of moving away from the use of the death penalty. There are now 140 countries worldwide that are abolitionist in law or practice,” said Jose Luis Diaz, Amnesty International’s representative at the United Nations in New York. .

“Although the UNGA vote is not legally binding, it does express the will of the international community and is a strong signal from the world body.

“The death penalty is the ultimate form of cruel and inhuman punishment – we oppose its use in all circumstances.”

New votes in favour included Central African Republic, Chad, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Tunisia. As a further positive sign, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia moved from opposition to abstention. Regrettably, Bahrain, Dominica and Oman changed their abstention to a vote against the resolution, while Maldives, Namibia and Sri Lanka went from a vote in favour to an abstention.

The final tally was 111 in favour, 41 against with 34 abstentions.