Date: 26 February to 1 March 2019  
Location: Brussels (Belgium)  
Duration: 4 days  
Number of participants: 1,500 per day  
Reach of the event: an average of 115 countries represented at previous congresses

The 7th World Congress in Brussels has been preceded by the 3rd Regional Congress Against the Death Penalty which took place on 9 and 10 April 2018 in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire.

Organiser: ECPM (Together against the death penalty)  
www.ecpm.org

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The World Coalition Against the Death Penalty, composed of more than 150 NGOs, bar associations, local authorities and trade unions, was founded in Rome on 13 May 2002. Its foundation is the result of the commitment made by the signatories of the Final Declaration of the First World Congress against the Death Penalty, organised by the French association ECPM (Ensemble contre la peine de mort) in June 2001 in Strasbourg. The World Coalition aims to strengthen the international dimension of the fight against the death penalty. Its ultimate objective is to achieve the universal abolition of the death penalty. To this end, it supports the work of its member organisations and coordinates international advocacy for abolition. The Coalition also designated 10 October as the World Day against the Death Penalty. It is a partner of the World Congress against the Death Penalty, which takes place every three years.

With the support of the members of the Core Group: informal network bringing together 12 diplomatic services (Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Benin, France, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Norway, Rwanda, Spain and Switzerland) to mobilise political actors.

Encourage the involvement in the international anti-death penalty movement: private sector, sports, etc.  
Put in place a global strategy to move the last retentionist countries towards abolition  
Accompany Africa towards abolition: could Africa be the next abolitionist continent?  
Counter populist movements, make progress in raising awareness about abolition and make younger generations actors of change.  
Break the isolation of civil society, which works on a daily basis to abolish the death penalty in retentionist or moratorium countries by promoting networking.  
Raise awareness among the Belgian population and teach young people, from Belgium and beyond, about abolition of the death penalty.

Abolitionist civil society, coalitions of actors against the death penalty and their member organisations working for fundamental rights.  
The 150 members of the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty.  
National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs).  
Professional parliamentary, legal and academic networks against the death penalty.  
The Member States of the Core Group.  
Teachers, students and pupils.  
Citizens.  
The media.

To mobilise as many people as possible: Brussels’ central position will allow a strong mobilisation (minimum of 1,500 people/day) and will make it possible to optimise networking in terms of quantity and diversity (NGOs, lawyers, parliamentarians, researchers, etc.).

Because of its important political representation: the Belgian capital has numerous political representatives. It is therefore attractive and provides an opportunity for high-level advocacy.

Brussels is the capital of Europe: it therefore possesses all the assets to be positioned as the spearhead of the abolitionist movement.
**WORLD CONGRESS AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY**

1,356 people from 121 different countries
- 19 ministers
- The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
- The EU Special Representative for Human Rights
- 51 ambassadors
- 3 representatives from the African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights
- 50 parliamentarians

In total, the 6th Congress welcomed 221 representatives from 66 different countries.

**THEY CONFIRMED THEIR PRESENCE AT THE 7TH WORLD CONGRESS**

**HONORARY PRESIDENT OF ECPM**
- ROBERT BADINTER, former Minister of Justice of the Republic of France who abolished the death penalty in France in 1981, former President of the Constitutional Council

**POLITICAL FIGURES**
- FEDERICA MOGHERINI, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Vice-president of the European Commission
- ANTONIO TAJANI, President of the European Parliament
- SOYATA MAIGA, President of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights
- DIDIER REYNDERS, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Kingdom of Belgium
- CHEICK SAKO, Minister of State, Minister of Justice of the Republic of Guinea
- BESSOLE RENÉ BAGORO, Minister of Justice, Human Rights and Civic Promotion of Burkina Faso
- MOHAMMED AUJJAR, Minister of Justice of the Kingdom of Morocco
- ABUBACARR M. TAMBADOU, Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions
- AGNÈS CALLAMARD, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, United Nations
- FIONNUALA NÍ AOLÁIN, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, United Nations
- MARYANN NJAU-KIMANI, Chair of the Kenya Task Force looking at the parameters of abolition
- RAIF BADAWI, judge, laureate of the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize

**UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS**
- AGNÉS CALLAMARD, Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, United Nations
- MICHEL FORST, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, United Nations
- ANAÍS MARIN, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus, United Nations
- FIONNUALA NI AOLÁIN, Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, United Nations
- SOYATA MAIGA, President of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights

**OTHER MEMBERS OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS**
- RÉMY NGOY LUMBU, Commissioner and member of the Working Group on the Death Penalty of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights
- MAYA SAHÉLI-FADEL, Commissioner and member of the Working Group on the Death Penalty of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights

**SAKHAROV AND NOBEL PEACE PRIZES LAUREATES**
- ENSAF HAIDAR, wife of Saudi blogger RAIF BADAWI, laureate of the 2015 Sakharov Prize
- JAMEL M’SALLEM, judge, laureate of the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize

**THEMES OF THE DEBATES**

**27 February 2019**
- Plenary session: Business and the death penalty
  27 February 2019, 3 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. – European Parliament hemicycle
  Can business become a new ally in the abolitionist movement? To encourage this collaboration, representatives from the private sector will demonstrate the various ways in which they are committed to combating capital punishment. This plenary session will also be an opportunity to consider the inclusion of abolition on the agenda of the business and human rights movements.

**28 February 2019**
- Plenary session: Abolition strategies: challenges and opportunities in Sub-Saharan Africa
  28 February 2019, 9.30 a.m. to 11 a.m. – Egmont Palace, Europe room
  A number of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have abolished the death penalty over the last few years. What challenges need to be overcome and strategies put in place to make Sub-Saharan Africa completely abolitionist?

- Roundtable: Reducing the scope of the death penalty
  28 February 2019, 11.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. – Egmont Palace, Europe room
  The death penalty continues to be applied for all kinds of offences despite a clear international legal framework. This session will explore strategic ways to reduce the scope of the death penalty with a view to its total abolition.

- Workshop: Death row prisoners and their families: understanding their needs, learning about their projects and initiatives to better support them
  28 February 2019, 11.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. – Egmont Palace, Arenberg room
  Individuals who have been acquitted and families members of people who have been executed or sentenced to death will share their needs and their projects with us. This will be followed by a discussion about the kinds of concrete support the abolitionist movement could provide.

**DRAFT PROGRAMME**

**Tuesday, 26 February 2019**
- Side events (Egmont Palace)
- Networks meetings (Egmont Palace)

**Wednesday, 27 February 2019**
- AM: Official opening ceremony (European Parliament)
- PM: Plenary 1 (European Parliament)
- Evening: Cocktail networking with the civil society (Egmont Palace)

**Thursday, 28 February 2019**
- All Day: Debates (Egmont Palace)
- Cultural evening: Testimonies of survivors of the death penalty (Bozar)
- Friday, 1st March 2019
- AM: Debates (Egmont Palace)
- PM: Closing ceremony (Bozar), followed by the World March for the abolition in the streets of Brussels.
• Roundtable: How to prevent a resurgence of the death penalty?
28 February 2019 – 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. – Egmont Palace, Europe room
What drives countries to reintroduce the death penalty and resume sentences or executions? Identifying potential action which could prevent such a resurgence.

• Workshop: Abolition generation: young people join the movement!
28 February 2019 – 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. – Egmont Palace, Arenberg room
This workshop aims to give the floor to young people, encouraging them to take a stand against the death penalty and define how they would contribute to the abolitionist movement.

• Training session: Keys for preparing a funding proposal
28 February 2019 – 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. – Egmont Palace, Orange room
Through exercises, participants will learn to identify backers and obtain keys to prepare funding applications.

1 March 2019

• Roundtable: The discriminatory application of the death penalty towards women
1 March 2019 – 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. – Egmont Palace, Europe room
An introduction to the discriminatory nature of the death penalty in the case of women and to propose concrete ways to integrate this issue into the advocacy of abolitionists.

• Workshop: New technologies and the death penalty
1 March 2019 – 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. – Egmont Palace, Arenberg room
This session will provide an overview of the possibilities offered by new technologies, whether to convey a message or support the work of anti-death penalty organisations.

• Training session: UN advocacy; using the UPR and Treaty Bodies to advocate for abolition
1 March 2019 – 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. – Egmont Palace, Orange room
How do the UN Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and Treaty Bodies operate? How can they be used effectively within the framework of advocating for abolition?

• Roundtable: Foreigners sentenced to death in the fight against terrorism
1 March 2019 – 11.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. – Egmont Palace, Europe room
Information about death sentences applied to foreigners within the framework of combating terrorism is incomplete. In this context, how to engage countries on the situation of their citizens sentenced or facing the death penalty overseas?

• Workshop: New strategies for abolition
1 March 2019 – 11.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. – Egmont Palace, Arenberg room
This interactive workshop will propose new strategies, taking into account the new trends and risks affecting the abolitionist movement.

• Training session: Advocating for abolition with community and religious leaders
1 March 2019 – 11.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. – EGMONT Palace, Orange room
What arguments should be used to mobilise community and religious leaders in support of abolition? How should this dialogue be used when advocating for abolition?
Our Congress brings together people who have lived through political imprisonment, bring to bear the weight of their testimonies, and are committed to the abolition of the death penalty. We tell you the story of our witnesses.

### AMONG OUR WITNESSES

- **Pete Ouko, Ex-convicted to death, Kenya**
  Sentenced to death for murder in 2001, at the age of 31, Pete Ouko, then father of two young children, has always claimed his innocence. Detained for nearly 18 years in a cell with 13 other prisoners, he now testifies of the difficulty of surviving while waiting for his execution. He was pardoned and released on 26 October 2007 and is now a graduate in law at the University of London. He is involved in defending the rights of prisoners in Africa through the Youth Safety Awareness Initiative, of which he is the founder and director.

- **Arthur Judah Angel, Ex-convicted to death, Nigeria**
  Arthur Judah Angel, who was sentenced to death in Nigeria for murder in 1986 at the age of 21, has always denied that he had committed the crimes for which he was accused. This artist, incarcerated in Enugu prison (Nigeria), lived in particularly difficult conditions: he had to face a cancelled execution date at the last minute and witnessed 58 executions organised on the same day. He was finally released in 2000 after 16 years in prison, almost 10 of which were on death row.

- **Ndume Olatushani, Ex-convicted to death, United States**
  Ndume spent 28 years in prison, including 20 on death row in the United States, for a crime he did not commit. Saved by the discovery of drawing and painting, supported throughout his detention by his relatives and abolitionist organisations, he continues today to be strongly devoted alongside young people against the death penalty.

- **Sabine Atlaoui, Spouse of the death row prisoner Serge Atlaoui - France**
  Sabine Atlaoui is the wife of Serge Atlaoui. This French citizen was arrested in Indonesia in 2005 in an acrylic factory that turned out to be a cover in an ecstasy production case. Sentenced to the death penalty on appeal in 2007, despite his protests of innocence, Serge is still on Indonesian death row. Sabine is fighting to save her husband and is involved in the universal struggle for the abolition of the death penalty.

- **Antoinette Chahine, Ex-convicted to death, member of the French National Order of Merit - Lebanon**
  Antoinette was arrested in 1994 and sentenced to death in 1997 for the murder of a priest. The real reason for her imprisonment proved to be the fact that her brother belonged to a Christian militia which was banned in Lebanon. Antoinette was tortured in prison. She was finally released in 1999 following international campaigns. Since then, Antoinette Chahine has been campaigning for human rights and abolition of the death penalty.

- **Geneviève Donadini, Sitting juror at the Ranucci trial - France**
  In 1976 the trial of Christian Ranucci for the murder of a little girl was held in the court of Aix-en-Provence in France. At the end of the trial, the accused was sentenced to death and then guillotined on July 28th of the same year. Among the 12 jurors sitting was Geneviève Donadini, a young mother at the time of the events. 40 years later, Mrs. Donadini wrote «Le procès Ranucci. Témoignage d’un juré d’assise» (The Ranucci trial. Testimony of a sitting juror), published by Harmattan. This book recounts, without betraying the secret of the deliberation, this traumatic experience.

- **Ahmed Haou, Ex-convicted to death - Morocco**
  A former death row prisoner in Morocco, he was sentenced on the 30th of July, 1984 for an offence against national security and after having protested against Hassan’s regime at a peaceful demonstration. Due to the pressure exerted by international organisations, he was finally pardoned in 1999. He currently works for the National Council for Human Rights in Morocco and shares his life experiences in Morocco and abroad.

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**ECPM Presentation**

ECPM (Together Against the Death Penalty) is an organisation working for a particular cause: universal abolition of the death penalty under all circumstances.

**Advocacy with the Highest Authorities**

ECPM is the first NGO devoted to the struggle against the death penalty to have obtained ECOSOC status which guarantees it a presence and the possibility of advocating at the very heart of the UN system.

ECPM created the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty in 2002 which today has more than 150 members – NGOs, bar associations, local bodies, unions – from across the world.

ECPM leads advocacy and public mobilisation campaigns with political decision-makers (European Union, African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights, governments, etc.)

**Uniting Abolitionists from Across the World**

ECPM is the founder and organiser of the World Congresses Against the Death Penalty. These events bring together more than 1,300 people representing the world abolitionist movement: Ministers, parliamentarians, diplomats, activists, civil society organisations, researchers and journalists come together every three years to strengthen their ties and draw up strategies for the future.

**Education and Awareness of Abolition**

ECPM works in schools to encourage young people to support the issue through drawing competitions, introductions to journalism and free class visits – with the participation of specialists, individuals previously sentenced to death or the families of prisoners sentenced to death. More than 10,000 middle and high school pupils have been involved since October 2009.

ECPM raises awareness among the public concerning minorities and vulnerable groups by participating in the Gay Pride, the Fête de la Humanité, Cities for Life, the World Day Against the Death Penalty, World Human Rights Day, etc.

**Strengthening the Capacities of Local Actors and Taking Action With Them**

ECPM fights against the isolation of activists wherever the death penalty remains by supporting the formation of national and regional coalitions against the death penalty (Morocco, Tunisia, Central Africa, Asia, etc.), as well as the creation of networks of abolitionist parliamentarians and lawyers.

ECPM encourages efficiency among its local partners by organising training sessions and advocating at all political levels for their work to be supported.

**Proximity to Prisoners Sentenced to Death**

ECPM carries out and publishes judicial investigations into death row (in Morocco, Tunisia and the United States). Our publication “Investigation into Death Row in the DRC” received the French Republic’s top Human Rights Prize.

ECPM supports the victims of the death penalty, prisoners and their families such as Serge Atlaoui and Hank Skinner.

ECPM supports correspondence with prisoners sentenced to death.

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144 countries and territories have abolished the death penalty either in law or in practice in 2018. Abolition is part of a universal trend. And yet, some regions still strongly resist the advance of abolitionist thinking and continue to apply the death penalty in a significant way. This is the case in Asia, the Arab world and the United States, the only democracy among the ten leading countries in terms of the number of annual executions. The world number of executions in 2017 is estimated at 993. This figure is well below the reality, given that China has made data on executions, estimated to be several thousand per year, a State secret (source: Amnesty International, 2017). The African continent is moving towards abolition: 4/5 of the 55 African countries are abolitionist in law or under moratorium.

The 31 countries in the world with a moratorium represent important levers to be activated, as their move into the abolitionist camp could create a snowball effect.

This progress also hides other realities: that of the citizens of the 54 countries which still use the death penalty and which represent approximately 60% of the world population living under the yoke of a justice system which kills, that of the more than 20,000 prisoners sentenced to death who await execution in conditions of detention which are often well below what is required by international standards.

In countries which have abolished the death penalty in law, pro-death penalty movements regularly challenge abolition. The risk of a resumption of executions in countries which have not executed anyone for several years is ever present.

Furthermore, in most of the countries where support for the death penalty is still high, capital punishment is passed (after unfair trials, often based on confessions obtained under torture) in a discriminatory manner for non-violent crimes which do not meet the criteria of “the most serious crimes” such as financial crimes, witchcraft, apostasy and drug-related offences, sexual relations between consenting adults – against juveniles at the time of the events.

Numerous State actors, as well as the European Union, agree on the idea that the death penalty constitutes a manifest violation of the right to life as set down in Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In that respect, they share the conviction that the fight for its abolition is a struggle for the most fundamental human right and respect for human dignity, particularly that of the absolute prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; its dissuasive effect has never been proven.
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