



Madrid, 28 April 2026

ICDP 05/2026

**International Commission  
against the Death Penalty**

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Navanethem (Navi) Pillay

**Vice Presidents**

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Ibrahim Najjar

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**Founding Members**

Rodolfo Mattarollo

(1939-2014)

Asma Jilani Jahangir

(1952-2018)

Bill Richardson

(1947-2023)

Robert Badinter

(1928-2024)

Federico Mayor Zaragoza

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**Statement by the International Commission against the Death Penalty:  
Commissioner Lochbihler participates in a debate on death penalty abolition at the  
Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe**

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP or Commission), represented by Commissioner Barbara Lochbihler, addressed the debate on the report "*Towards the Universal Abolition of the Death Penalty in All Circumstances*", a resolution which was adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) on 22 April 2026 in Strasbourg. PACE General Rapporteur Gala Veldhoen presented the report followed by interventions by Commissioner Lochbihler and Antoinette Chahine, who faced the death penalty for five years in Lebanon.

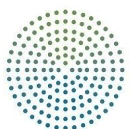
In her intervention, Commissioner Lochbihler underlined the continuing importance of parliamentary leadership in the global movement to end capital punishment by emphasizing that "Europe's abolitionist achievements — including PACE's historic decision to make abolition a condition of Council of Europe membership and the adoption of Protocol No. 13 to the European Convention on Human Rights abolishing the death penalty in all circumstances — were the result of determined political will and sustained legislative action."

Commissioner Lochbihler, while describing the global situation of the death penalty said that, "it presented a paradox in that while the majority of abolitionist countries has never been larger, the number of executions conducted by a minority of countries is rising." She emphasised the deeply discriminatory character of capital punishment in practice, noting its systematic use against ethnic and religious minorities, women human rights defenders, political opponents and other marginalised groups, and the persistent reliance on coerced confessions and unfair trials. Commissioner Lochbihler expressed particular alarm at the adoption of a discriminatory law passed by the Israeli Knesset on 30 March.

She called on PACE members to use the full range of parliamentary tools to advance abolition: legislating for reform, supporting accession to the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR, engaging in peer advocacy with counterparts in retentionist countries, and ensuring that no parliamentarian anywhere faces a politically motivated death sentence.

The ICDP delegates – Commissioner Lochbihler and Co-Executive Director Asunta Vivó Cavaller – also held meetings in Strasbourg with key stakeholders at the PACE Secretariat, the Council of Europe, including Director General of Human Rights Mr Gianluca Esposito, senior diplomats including Ambassadors of Spain, Portugal (who are Member States of ICDP's Support Group) and Iceland, the EU delegation and civil society organization.

ICDP expresses its appreciation to PACE for hosting this important, timely debate and for its longstanding leadership on abolition. The Commission looks forward to continued collaboration with the Parliamentary Assembly and the Council of Europe institutions, Governments and Parliaments in the shared fight to make our world free of the death penalty.



North-South Prize  
of the Council of Europe





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**Background**

The activities of ICDP which was established in 2010, are led by 28 high-level Commissioners from all regions of the world, under the presidency of Judge Navi Pillay, former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Commissioners include four former Presidents, six former Prime Ministers, ten Ministers, two U.S. Governors, ten Parliamentarians, six Judges, and seven senior UN officials — including three former UN High Commissioners for Human Rights. The work of ICDP is supported by a geographically diverse Support Group of 24 Member States who are committed to the abolition of the death penalty. Its Secretariat is based in Madrid and is responsible for the day-to-day work of the Commission.

The Commission promotes the abolition of capital punishment in law in States that observe a de facto moratorium on the use of the death penalty and promotes moratoriums on executions in States that retain capital punishment.

ICDP works with the United Nations and other international and regional organizations, governments and nongovernmental organizations to advocate for worldwide abolition of the death penalty.



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