



Côte d'Ivoire,
On the way to securing the abolition of the death penalty

Abidjan, Paris, on 07 June 2023

On Tuesday 6 June 2023, the Ivorian Senate voted in favour of a bill authorising the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (OP2-ICCPR). This vote comes just a few weeks after the National Assembly also voted unanimously in favour of the bill.

Côte d'Ivoire has a long tradition of abolition: although death sentences have been handed down, it has never carried out executions since independence. The death penalty was abolished from the Ivorian legislative arsenal by the 2000 Constitution. Then, in 2015, life imprisonment replaced the death penalty in the Penal Code.

Over the years, the Ivorian authorities have demonstrated a commitment to abolition, as reflected in the 2016 Constitution, which states: "The right to life is inviolable. No one has the right to take the life of another. The death penalty is abolished."

"The death penalty is not justice, it's revenge. The role of a State is not to take revenge on its citizens, but to help them live in dignity."

Paul Angaman, FIACAT's President

However, despite repeated commitments to the United Nations and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Côte d'Ivoire had still not taken steps to ratify the only international treaty banning the death penalty, the OP2-ICPPD. This has now been done, with the adoption by the Ivorian parliament of a bill authorising ratification of this UN treaty.

Action des Chrétiens pour l'Abolition de la Torture de Côte d'Ivoire (ACAT CI), the Ligue ivoirienne des droits de l'Homme (LIDHO) and the International Federation of ACATs (FIACAT), members of the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty who have been campaigning for years for this ratification, would like to congratulate the Ivorian Government and Parliament on this historic abolitionist commitment.

Our organisations will be even happier to see the definitive and irreversible abolition of the death penalty in Côte d'Ivoire, once the Ivorian authorities have:

- promulgate this law within the constitutional deadline;
- and deposit the instruments of ratification with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

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