



## **Joint Statement of the FIACAT, the Advocates for Human Rights, ECPM and UIA**

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

*23 February 2021*

Thank you, Ms. President,

The FIACAT, the Advocates for Human Rights, ECPM and UIA, all member organisations of the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty, welcome this High-level panel and its very important topic.

The deterrence theory asserts that people refrain from committing any crimes punishable by death out of fear of execution. Our joint written statement submitted by the Advocates for Human Rights reviews the extensive research on this theory and demonstrates that it is not grounded in solid evidence.

Research suggesting some deterrent effect is flawed in at least two respects. First, even in jurisdictions carrying out executions, noncapital sanctions tend to be the most common criminal penalties. Second, studies fail to analyse potential criminals' perceptions of the risk of execution and their behavioural response. Moreover, there is no consensus on the methodology to study the deterrent effect because too many other factors can influence the results.

The death penalty often distracts from needed systemic reforms in crime prevention, policing, investigations, and prosecutions that will contribute to strengthen the one factor that research shows deters crime: certainty of apprehension.

Retentionist States facing terrorist threats often raise these false claims. In this regard, we commend Chad for resisting this distraction and for abolishing the death penalty on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020. We would like to take the opportunity of having his Excellency, Mr. Djimet Arabi, Chadian Minister of Justice, on this panel to ask what he would recommend to other retentionist States facing similar threats.

Finally, we encourage members of the Council to take the opportunity of this panel to raise awareness of the fact that there is no proof that the death penalty deters crime and encourage the improvement of law enforcement practices in compliance with international human rights standards. We also call upon all Member States to abolish the death penalty.

I thank you for your attention.