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I

Introduction

Public demand from different sectors of transnational civil society, and the need to convince a small fraction of believers in capital punishment has forced a variety of Institutions to make abolition of death penalty a landmark goal in human rights protection. Following suit, the President of the Spanish Government and of the European Union made a commitment to prioritize the fight against this type of inhuman penalty during its mandate. One of the main achievements has been the maiden ceremony establishing an international meeting that helped to set up and design the strategies and lines of research to be followed by REPECAP (acronym for Academic Network against Capital Punishment) which had lieu in Madrid from 9 to 11 December 2009 mindfully of the commemoration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10th, in a sober event co hosted on one part by the Centre of Political and Constitutional Studies of Madrid, dependent of the Presidency of the Spanish Government, and on the other hand, by the Institute of European and International Criminal Law of the University of Castilla – La Mancha located in Ciudad Real, Spain with the participation in it of the world's leading experts in the field and Institutes and University's departments with notorious representation from the five continents, being this declaration testimony of its signing, work resumed with the assistance of delegates to the 4th World Congress against Death Penalty which took place at Geneva, Switzerland, at the end of February.

One of the objectives at medium range is to achieve in countries that have not yet made a commitment of adoption of the moratorium issued by the by the General Assembly ¹ to do so before 2015, at the time of the revision of the results of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, following the idea exposed in the project *Fighting Impunity and Promoting International Justice* of wowing together the issue of death penalty in the wider human rights ambit of the Millennium goals; furthermore in the European context, the OSCE issued in 2009 a resolution with the same intent, all of them trying to convey that overarching other basic rights, the right to life is an inalienable attribute of human beings and forms the supreme value in the hierarchy of human rights, latter being depending on the former.

¹ Res. 63/108 Moratorium of the Use of Death Penalty, citing its previous resolution 62/149

Therefore, it is of the utmost importance, in the short and medium-term, to develop an intense work of academically nature both of study and disclosure of the problems of the abolition of the death penalty in the international scenario, to complement and help the work of the diplomatic action and non-governmental organizations. To this effect it is proposed to keep REPECAP as an ever - growing scientific world network comprising academic law scholars, human rights centers, institutions of public law and Ngos, with expertise and skill in the problems of death penalty and interests in the field of international criminal justice, as well as young researchers who have been dealing with these topics or wish to get involved with the subject, regardless of nationality or locations. The first endeavor comes to fruition with the list enclosed in this document and simultaneously with the print of a book, first of a collection, purporting to offer a close up study of pros and odds to achieve Death penalty abolition permanently along the World, this volume comprising some of the most relevant interventions that took place at the inaugural session.

II

Objectives of the network

1- Coordination of efforts for the further development of the investigation work teams on the various thematic areas concerning the problem of abolition whose scientific clarification would be useful for international action of diplomacy and NGOs; in particular regarding the following lines of research:

- 1.1. International instruments on human rights and death penalty;
- 1.2. Alternatives to the death penalty: sentences of life imprisonment and long-term;
- 1.3. Experiences of moratorium or abolition and evolution of violent crime;
- 1.4. Bogus Situations of abolition of the death penalty and extrajudicial executions;
- 1.5. Conditions and limits of the international legal cooperation;
- 1.6. Religions and the death penalty;
- 1.7. The debate in the various regions of the world;
- 1.8. Diplomacy and international policy in the fight against the death penalty;
- 1.9. The NGOs on human rights and the abolition of the death penalty;
- 1.10. Sexual Minorities and the death penalty;
- 1.11. Gender and the death penalty;
- 1.12. Racial Origin and the death penalty;
- 1.13. Minors, incapable and the death penalty;

1.14. Public Opinion and the death penalty;

2- Sideline measures along the initiatives to be taken by the part of the Spanish Presidency and an activity of scrutiny and follow-up of the European Union implementation in the field throughout the renewed mechanisms in the Lisbon Treaty as well as the involvement of its member countries or any other State linked to the quest for the abolition.

3- Editing several books and materials in several languages, relating to the fight against capital punishment, which includes historical works, reference notes, scientific articles, all of them deemed the most adequate to the objectives of the network. It is, essentially, to develop digital editions likely to be printed on paper in each country, to this end the availability of a web blog called *academicsforabolition.net*, is bound to compile the academics materials as thoroughly as possible thought-out its division in *news, events, materials*, et al. Finally, the blog flow nowadays is to be feedback by NGOs, namely, the Portal of the *World Coalition against the Death Penalty*, thus being paramount for the purpose of publicity and transparency for public awareness.

III

Bodies of government of the network

Constituted by the academics founders and institutes and University Departments indicated below, the bodies of government of the network are the Scientific Advisory Board and the Organizing Committee. Both will encourage the Development of the scientific work and respond to suggestions and proposals made by the institutes and members of the network.

The composition of the bodies of government will be expanded, as needed to accomplish their mission.

a) Scientific Advisory Board

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Director of Max Planck Institute in Freiburg Br. (Section of Criminology) Germany

Luis ARROYO ZAPATERO

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President of the Istituto Superiore Internazionale di Scienze Criminali (ISISC) of the United Nations and the Institute of Human Rights of the University of DePaul of Chicago.

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Sergio GARCÍA RAMÍREZ

Former Judge of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

Peter HODGKINSON

Director of the Center for Capital Punishment Studies United Kingdom

Anabela MIRANDA RODRIGUES

Director of the Judicial School of Portugal.

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c) Section of founding members

Under the category falls: the founding members of the Scientific Advisory Board, the members of the organization Committee and the Presidents of the Scientific Societies, plus those listed below:

Ignacio BERDUGO GÓMEZ DE LA TORRE

University of Salamanca, Spain.

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Marc Groenhuijsen

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V

Networks and Declarations

- Manifesto of Bologna of the Italian teachers of Criminal Law. An initiative of the Faculty of Law in Bologna.
- Manifesto of the Law Faculties of the World. Initiative Bologna-UNAM Mexico-Istanbul, Sao Paulo, Kyoto, UAM Madrid.