Give a dog a bad name and hang him! The death penalty is not used to protect society from repeat offender monsters who rape children. Death row is mainly filled with people whose lives were worthless in the eyes of their judges because of their poverty, through discrimination or for political reasons. In reality, capital punishment is a tool of coercion used by people in power who mistrust those for whom they are responsible.

Opposing the death penalty means saying no to State murder, no to torture. It means retaining our humanity and our dignity in the face of barbarity! Finally, it means preserving the very foundation of our liberty and democracy: refusing to give States the right to kill those they should be looking after.

20,000 people were languishing on death row and more than 1,600 were executed in 2015*. These figures do not include death sentences in North Korea and China about which we do not have sufficient information. However, it is estimated that 5,000 people are executed every year in the People’s Republic of China alone.

* According to figures from Amnesty International.
**THE DEATH PENALTY IS CRUEL, INHUMAN AND DEGRADING**

A punishment which rules out any hope is, in reality, torture. Prisoners sentenced to death live in constant fear of being killed and this perpetual terror often lasts 20 or 30 years. In a number of countries, they are often kept in isolation throughout that time, live in conditions of extreme deprivation and are tortured.

In 2016, the execution date for Tommy Arthur, sentenced to death in Alabama, was postponed at the last minute for the 7th time in 15 years. He has therefore spent his last night on earth 7 times, has said goodbye to his family 7 times and has experienced the terror of his imminent execution 7 times.

**THE DEATH PENALTY VIOLATES THE RIGHT TO LIFE**

The death penalty violates the right to life, as set down in Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Do we need to be reminded? Life is not something you earn.

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

**THE DEATH PENALTY IS NOT A DETERRENT AND IT DOES NOT MAKE SOCIETY SAFER (QUITE THE OPPOSITE).**

When a State judges that life is not sacred, it spreads that idea among its inhabitants. Thus, violence leads to violence. In the end, countries which use the death penalty have higher crime rates than abolitionist countries.

Texas executes more people than any other American state and yet its crime rate has increased by 400% since it reintroduced the death penalty on 2 July 1976. According to the Global Peace Index*, only two countries in the world (Japan (93) and Singapore (20)) are among the 20 safest countries in the world. All the others have abolished the death penalty.

*http://www.visionofhumanity.org/#/page/indexed/global-peace-index

**THE DEATH PENALTY IS NOT FAIR**

It is about vengeance which perpetuates the cycle of violence and suffering whereas, on the contrary, justice aims to put the situation right. Use of the death penalty therefore weakens the very concept of justice in the countries which practice it.

On 15 April 2014 in Iran, Somereh Alimeja moved the entire world when she took off the rope from around the neck of her son’s murderer: “The murderer was crying”, she recalled. “He asked for forgiveness. I slapped him and that calmed me down. I said: I punish you for the misfortune you have brought me.” Then she took the rope from around the prisoner’s neck, thereby signifying her forgiveness.

**THE DEATH PENALTY IS USED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE VIOLENT STRUGGLE AGAINST DRUG TRAFFICKING**

70 % of executions across the world. And yet, this method has proved to be inefficient, as the UN finally admitted after years of an aggressive War on Drugs. All these executions most often involve tiny amounts of drugs.

Chijioke Stephen Obioah, a 38-year-old Nigerian, was executed in 2016 by the Singapore justice system for the possession of 2.6kg of cannabis. The banks of Singapore, on the other hand, known for being the hub of the world’s dirty drug money, do not lament any executions.

Chijioke Stephen Obioah, a 38-year-old Nigerian, was executed in 2016 by the Singapore justice system for the possession of 2.6kg of cannabis.