

4th REGIONAL CONGRESS ON THE DEATH PENALTY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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AMMAN-JORDAN

Organised by



In partnership with



Speech by Aminata Niakaté, President of ECPM, at the 4th Regional Congress on the Death Penalty in the Middle East



Aminata Niakaté (Photo : Rajiv Raman)

Dear excellencies,
Dear abolitionist friends,
Dear all in your ranks and qualities
"Asalam Alaykoum"

It is an honor and my great pleasure to stand here
In front of you all in this country with such great history and culture.

I'm delighted because, for the first time in our 20-year history, we are organizing, with our partners Penal Reform International and Adaleh, Center for Human Rights Studies, an event on the death penalty in the Middle East.

ECPM - Ensemble contre la peine de mort

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(Together against the death penalty) is a non-governmental organization and the leading global association fighting for the universal abolition of the death penalty.

And every three years, we are hosting the biggest abolitionist event in the world: the World Congress Against the Death Penalty. The Last edition was in Belin 7 months ago.

We also founded the World coalition against death penalty. ECPM aim to make the abolition of capital punishment a global achievement and we have been working on north African countries and middle east countries for over fifteen years.

And even if Middle East is a very (let's say) challenging territory There is also a lot of hope in this region. There is a growing number of states members of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation that have become abolitionists within the

Out of the OIC's 57 member states, 20 have abolished the death penalty (for all crimes or ordinary crimes), 12 have established a moratorium Out of the 20 states that have abolished the death penalty, 14 are Muslim majority countries and that is 70% of them. These figures dispel the preconceived idea that the death penalty is intimately linked to Muslim countries and that abolition is therefore impossible.

There is a global trend toward abolition of the capital punishment. and the Middle East is truly part of this global dynamic : There have been no executions in Jordan for over 6 years and countries such as Lebanon have not carried out any executions in recent years, paving the way for abolition.

And this congress here in Amman is a unique opportunity to reunite all actors working for the abolition of the death penalty such as : activists, lawyers, political leaders, diplomats, members of parliament and also former death row prisoners or victims' families.

And You are actually over 200 participants, lawyers, judges, journalists, NGOs, academics wanting to make a change on the specific topic of the death penalty, wanting to exchange good practices and to take collective action together.

This 4th régional Congress on the death penalty allow us to focus on the situation of the death penalty in the various countries of the Middle East, to identify the main issues, to explore strategies for positive change and raise public awareness.

I would like to thank the co-sponsors of this event : the European Commission, France, the Kingdom of Norway and Switzerland. And of course our local partners : Penal Reform International and Adaleh Center for Human Rights studies.

The fourth regional congress on the death penalty wouldn't be a reality without their help and support.

I also would like to thank the incredible team of ECPM led by Raphaël Chenuil-Hazan, our Executive Director and Sarah Hajjar, Coordinator of the 4th regional congress

They have done (and they are still doing) an amazing job to make this congress a meaningful event.

I'd like to thank ECPM bord members, Richard Sedillot and Edmond Fréty who are here with us today.

I am honored to declare this 4th ECPM regional congress open!
ECPM will always stands by your side to build together the next steps towards abolition.

Chokran !