

第5回死刑に関する
地域会合
東アジア大会
REGIONAL CONGRESS
ON THE DEATH PENALTY
IN EAST ASIA

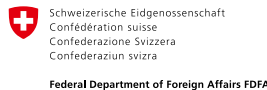
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TOKYO JAPAN

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第5回死刑に関する 地域会合 東アジア大会 REGIONAL CONGRESS ON THE DEATH PENALTY IN EAST ASIA

CONGRESS
PROCEEDINGS
2025年11月7日から9日
立正大学/品川キャンパス
東京(日本)
7-9 NOVEMBER 2025
RISSHO UNIVERSITY / SHINAGAWA
TOKYO, JAPAN





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THE REGIONAL CONGRESS IN NUMBERS

Total participants: at least 300 participants
 8 target countries represented: China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan
 3 days

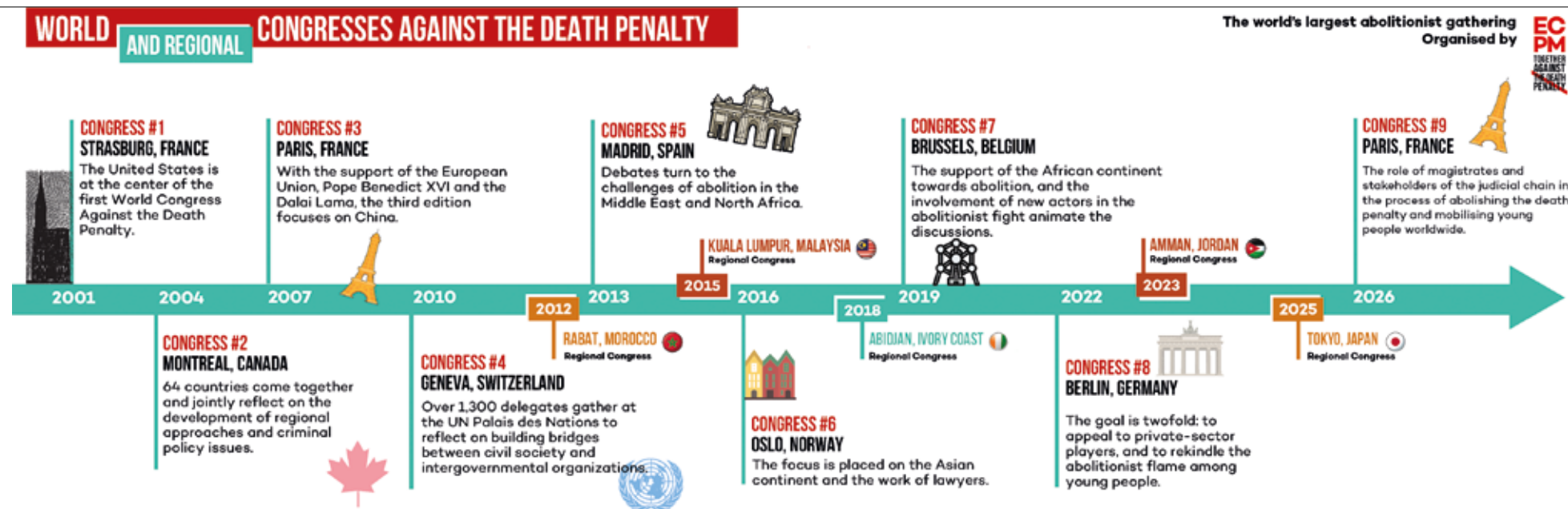
50 contributors
 1 Plenary session
 4 Roundtables
 5 Workshops
 2 Side events
 4 core partner organisations
 9 Academic Committee members

More than 40 articles in international press¹
 63,694 impressions of ECPM content on social media

THE REGIONAL CONGRESSES: MAJOR STEPS BEFORE THE WORLD CONGRESSES

Each World Congress is preceded by a Regional Congress and provides for an opportunity to address the issue of the death penalty and its abolition at the local level. Despite a global trend towards universal abolition, some geographical areas, such as East Asia, remain a challenge, including East Asia.

In November 2025, the ECPM team and its partners, the Center for Prisoners' Rights (CPR), the Japan Federation of Bar Associations (JFBA), and the Anti-Death Penalty Asia Network (ADPAN) have focused their efforts in Tokyo, Japan, from 7 to 9 November 2025, at Rissho University. The aim is to bring together civil society actors, members of the diplomatic corps, the press and magistrates to build dialogue and a common strategy towards abolition. The 5th Regional Congress will also serve as a key milestone ahead of the 9th World Congress Against the Death Penalty, to be held in Paris, France, from 30 June to 3 July 2026.



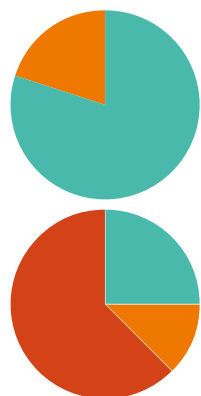
¹ See the press review in the Annex.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

While the trend towards abolishing of the death penalty is fairly consistent in some parts of the globe – particularly in Africa, with, in average, 1 abolition per year for the past 5 years–Asia still remains the continent with the highest rate of executions worldwide.

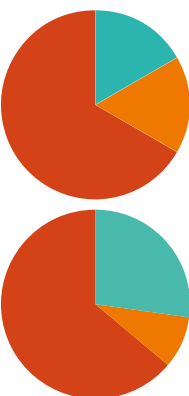
Central Asia

■ Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
■ Tajikistan



East Asia

■ Mongolia
■ South Korea
■ China, Japan, North Korea, Taiwan



North Asia

■ Russia



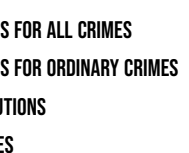
South Asia

■ Nepal, Bhutan
■ Sri Lanka
■ Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan



Southeast Asia

■ Cambodia, Philippines, Timor-Leste
■ Laos
■ Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam



West Asia/ Middle East

■ Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Türkiye
■ Israel
■ Lebanon
■ Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, Yemen



■ ABOLITIONIST STATES AND TERRITORIES FOR ALL CRIMES
■ ABOLITIONIST STATES AND TERRITORIES FOR ORDINARY CRIMES
■ STATES WITHA MORATORIUM ON EXECUTIONS
■ RETENTIONIST STATES AND TERRITORIES

JAPAN AND EAST ASIA: BETWEEN RETENTION AND SIGNS OF CHANGE

Until now, Japan retains and enforces the death penalty. Executions are carried out in secrecy, with prisoners notified only a few hours beforehand. Despite public opinion still largely in favour of capital punishment, recent emblematic cases, such as the acquittal of Iwao Hakamata in 2024 after 46 years on death row, have opened new debates about the risks of wrongful convictions and the human cost of executions. Hakamata's sister, Hideko, attended the Congress.

While the trend towards abolishing the death penalty is fairly consistent in some parts of the globe – particularly in Africa, with, in average, 1 abolition per year for the past 5 years – **Asia still remains the continent with the highest rate of executions worldwide.** As of January 1, 2025, 14 countries in Asia had abolished the death penalty for all crimes, 1 for ordinary crimes, 6 were under a moratorium on executions, and 28 were retentionist.

In contrast, **positive steps occurred:** Mongolia abolished the death penalty in 2015, Malaysia ended the mandatory death penalty in 2023, and in Taiwan, a recent constitutional review opened debate on its safeguards.

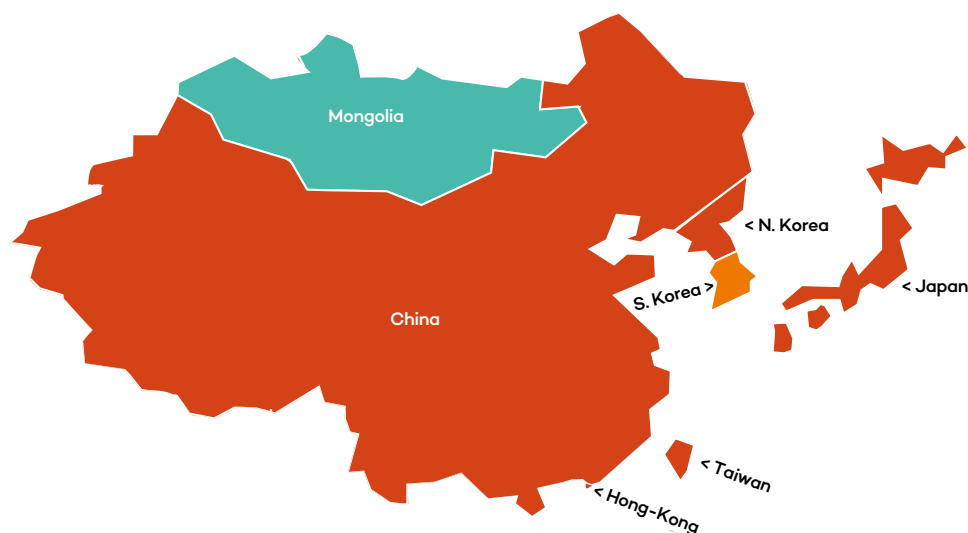
Despite these positive steps forward, the situation regarding the death penalty remains very complex in certain states. This is particularly true in China and North Korea, where access to official information on sentences and executions is difficult. Both countries carried out executions in 2024. Finally, in January 2025, Taiwan carried out its first execution in five years, while Japan resumed executions in June, the first in three years.

DEATH PENALTY IN EAST ASIA: REGIONAL OVERVIEW

While global trends indicate a steady move toward abolition, East Asia remains characterised by the predominance of retentionist States.

TARGETED COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

- China, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, North Korea, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan.



1 ABOLITIONIST STATES FOR ALL CRIME

1 STATES WITH A MORATORIUM ON EXECUTIONS

6 RETENTIONIST STATES



CHINA

China retains the death penalty and remains the world's largest executing State. Execution statistics are classified as state secrets, and the scope of capital offences remains extensive.

DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA (DPRK)

The DPRK retains capital punishment within a system characterised by total opacity. No public data or verifiable information on sentencing practices, executions, or procedural safeguards is available.

JAPAN

Japan maintains capital punishment by hanging. Executions are carried out with limited transparency, and access to information remains highly restricted. The exoneration of Iwao Hakamada after 46 years on death row has renewed public and judicial debate on capital punishment.

SINGAPORE

Singapore retains capital punishment, including mandatory death sentences for certain categories of offences, particularly related to drug trafficking. Procedural avenues for appeal and review remain limited.

MALAYSIA

Malaysia has abolished the mandatory death penalty and introduced judicial discretion. Capital punishment remains in law, while further reforms and commutations are ongoing.

MONGOLIA

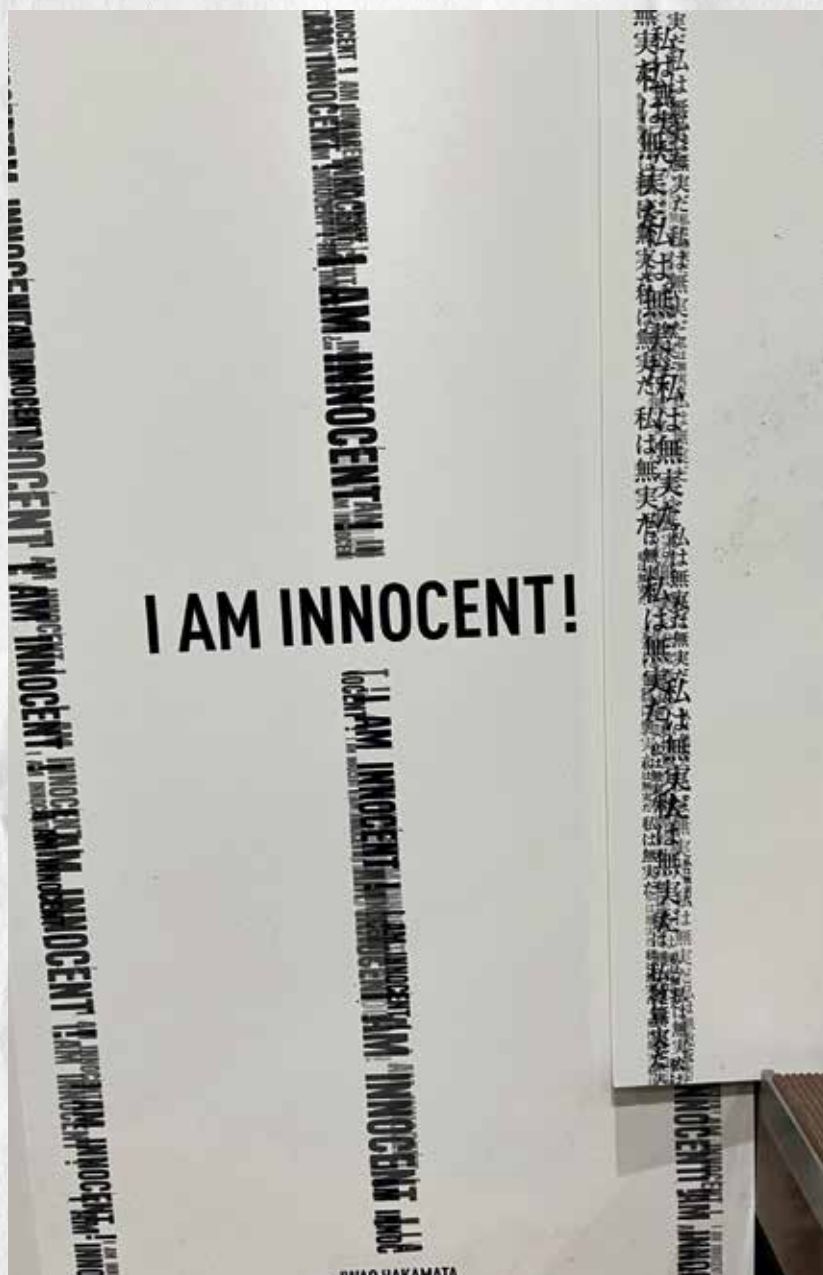
Mongolia has abolished the death penalty for all crimes following constitutional and legislative reforms, representing the most significant abolitionist transition in the region.

SOUTH KOREA

South Korea maintains a de facto moratorium, with no executions carried out since 1997. Legislative and judicial discussions on abolition continue.

TAIWAN

Taiwan retains the death penalty in law for the most serious crimes. Executions resumed in January 2025 after a five-year hiatus, despite recent constitutional restrictions.



The "Hakamata's Letters" installation, composed of fragments of Iwao Hakamata's letters from death row.



Hideko Hakamata, Iwao Hakamata's sister, with the journalist Karyn Nishimura-Poupée at the "Hakamata's Letters" installation

OPENING CEREMONY 7 NOVEMBER 2025

The Opening Ceremony of the 5th Regional Congress on the Death Penalty brought together legal professionals, academics, civil society actors, diplomats, and institutional partners at Rissho University (Tokyo). The ceremony was led by Daisuke Sato, Senior Writer and Member of the Editorial Board at Kyodo News, Japan.

4:30 PM \ 6:00 PM OPENING SESSION LOTUS HALL

Welcome Speech

- Yukinobu Kitamura, President of Rissho University

Musical Opening

- Performance by the Rissho University Wind Orchestra

Opening Remarks from the Organizer

- Aminata Niakate, President of ECPM

Panel of Partners

- Yoshikazu Suzuki, Vice-President of the JFBA
- Yuichi Kaido, President of CPR
- Toshi Kazama, Member of the ADPAN Executive Committee

Special Message from His Holiness the Dalai Lama

- Read by Dr. Tsewang Gyalpo Arya, Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Japan and East Asia

Panel of Sponsor States

- H.E. Isabelle Rome, French Ambassador for Human Rights
- David Braun, Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Switzerland in Japan
- Thomas Gnocchi, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union in Japan

Special Tribute to Pannir Selvam Pranthaman, executed in Singapore on October 8, 2025

The Role of Parliamentarians in the Abolition of the Death Penalty in Japan

- Mizuho Fukushima, Member of the House of Councillors

Challenges and Prospects for the Abolition of the Death Penalty in the Asian Context

- Professor Chang-Rok Soh, Chair of the United Nations Human Rights Committee

Voice of the Death Penalty

- Special Testimony of Hideko Hakamata, Sister of Iwao Hakamata (who spent 46 years on death row in Japan)

SELECTED QUOTATIONS FROM SPEAKERS

“In Asia, including Japan, the death penalty remains in force, and in several countries, executions continue to be carried out with alarming frequency”.

Yukinobu Kitamura – *President of Rissho University-Tokyo, Japan*

“There is a global trend toward abolition, and the East Asian region must be part of this global movement. There is, in fact, reason for hope here”.

Aminata Niakate – *President, Ensemble Contre la Peine de Mort (ECPM)*

“In June, the first execution in almost three years took place. It was a big disappointment, and we made a declaration condemning what happened. We continue to work on retrial possibilities”.

Yoshikazu Suzuki – *Vice-President, Japan Federation of Bar Associations (JFBA), Japan*

“There is a growing movement for retrial. The retrial system should allow for open discussion about the conditions of the death penalty.”

Yuichi Kaido – *President, Center for Prisoners' Rights (CPR), Japan*

“The global trend to abolish the death penalty is reaching Asia”.

Toshi Kazama – *Executive Committee Member, ADPAN*

“Although some might believe that harsh methods may sometimes be necessary for discipline and protection, the underlying motive should always be for the greater good, not retribution.”

*Special Message from His Holiness the Dalai Lama
Delivered by Dr. Tsewang Gyalpo Arya, Tibet*

“France remains fully committed to the abolition of the death penalty, continuing the work initiated by Robert Badinter.”

Isabelle Rome – *Ambassador for Human Rights, France*

“Without the right to live, there is no place for other human rights.”

David Braun – *Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Switzerland*

“Different tools can be used to advocate against the death penalty”.

Thomas Gnocchi – *Deputy Head, Delegation of the European Union to Japan*

“Every person sentenced to death is someone’s brother, someone’s sister, someone’s child.”

Angelia Barnabas – *sister of Pannir Selvam Pranthaman, Malaysia*

“I hope that the bill for retrial at the Parliament will move forward in cases of wrongful prosecution.”

Mizuho Fukushima – *Member of the House of Councillors and Head of the Social Democratic Party, Japan*

“Today, I stand firmly as an abolitionist. My journey proves that change is possible. If someone like me, once a strong supporter of capital punishment, can change, others can too”.

Professor Chang-Rok Soh – *Chair, United Nations Human Rights Committee, South Korea*

“He lived in fear of death for so many years. When his next-door inmate was executed, we were all discouraged. I could not even ask him. He lived in a world of paranoia.”

Hideko Hakamata – *sister of Iwao Hakamata, who spent 46 years on death row, Japan*

IWAO HAKAMATA, 46 YEARS ON DEATH ROW



Hideko Hakamata, Iwao Hakamata's sister, speaking during the opening session.

The public debate in Japan was shaken up in 2024 when Iwao Hakamata, the longest-serving death row prisoner in the world, under sentence of death since 1968, was declared innocent 56 years after his conviction.

Arrested in 1966 over the murder of a family of four in Shizuoka, Hakamata was convicted and sentenced to death in 1968, on the basis of a confession made to the police during an interrogation, which he later retracted.

After decades of fighting to maintain his innocence and demand a retrial, Hakamata and his supporters were finally heard in 2014 when the Shizuoka District Court released him after they found there was reason to believe evidence against him had been falsified. After 46 years on death row, and another decade of litigation, Iwao Hakamata was formally acquitted in 2024.

Four decades on death row weighed heavily on Hakamata, who became mentally ill. During this period, he wrote a large number of letters to his family, sharing his fears and anxiety: “My heart sometimes grows cold beyond description out of unending fear of the unknown-execution.”

In the wake of the media coverage of Hakamata’s case, some actors are advocating to seize the opportunity to deepen the debate with a view to abolishing the death penalty. Furthermore, similar cases like those of Michitoshi Kuma (executed on the basis of a doubtful conviction) or Nobuo Oda (now the longest-serving death row prisoner) can also spark a discussion on the place of the death penalty in the Japanese legal system.

**POEM BY PANNIR SELVAM PRANTHAMAN, EXECUTED IN SINGAPORE
ON 8 OCTOBER 2025, READ BY HIS SISTER ANGELIA BARNABAS**



Angelina Barnabas,
sister of Pannir
Selvam Pranthaman

The Gray Sea of Justice

THE GRAY SEA OF JUSTICE,
BILLOWS VIOLENTLY WITH BLOOMED.
WAVES OF INJUSTICE TIDES IN THE DARK TIDE,
OF AN ASSASSIN IN BLACK ROBE,
OFFERING SOLACE OF HOPE,
IN TOWN OF TIGHT ROPE.

BLINDED CHUCKING FINE,
VALUE OF LIVES STRUCK TO GROUND.
PILES UP CORPSES, LOVED ONE TEAR DROPPED
ARE CAPITAL FOR SOCIAL STATUS.

HOW COULD YOU FEEL SOMETHING
HOW CAN SENSES CAN'T FATHOM?
IF YOU TRY TO EXPLAIN,
DOES IT SOUND SO INSANE?

GLIMPSES OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH,
GLIDES GRACEFULLY AT THE DARK SHIP.
LIKE THE VESSEL THAT SAILED ACROSS WATERS
WITHOUT LEAVING ITS TRACE.

AN INNER VOICE OF AN OPPRESSED HUMAN SPIRIT,
SHATTERED INTO FRAGMENTATION, AS IF IT JUST A DUST.
LIKE A SPECK UNDER AN OLD RUSTY FRAME,
AS IF IT WAS FORTHLESS WITH NO NAME.
WITH NO MEMORIES, NO FAMILIES,
NO LIBERTY, NO IDENTITY.

A DIGNITY OF A SOUL WAS BURIED ALIVE,
AS IF LIKE A LONE TOMBSTONE WITHOUT AN INSCRIPTION,
ON AN UNTENDED GRAVE. A LIVING SKELETON
SUFFOCATED FOR DECADES WITH DECAYED DREAMS.

A LONELIEST PRAYER OF A SOLITARY SOUL,
SPREADS ITS WING SEEKING REDEMPTION,
ABOVE THESE UNFATHOMING OCEAN. WONDERING
IF ITS WERE AN ACCUMULATION OF FALLEN TEARS,
OF MILLIONS UNCONSIDERED PRAYER?
MURMURING GRACE IS LIFTING UP ITS VOICE,
HOPING ITS VOICE TO BE HEARD
AT THE DISPERSE SHORE OF MERCY.

HOPING ITS INVISIBLE TEARS,
DOESN'T JUST DISSOLVED LIKE A GRIN OF SEX SAT.
TO KEEP FIGHT THE GRAVITY OF DEATH,
WITH ALL THE POSITIVITY THAT STILL LEFT.

STRUGGLING THAT ITS LIFE;
DOESN'T BE USED AS A MORAL CANVAS,
TO HIDE THE INEQUALITY OF THIS SOCIETY.
TO BE USED AS TRULY AGAIN TO BEAR
THE BURDEN OF FLAW IN THE LAW.
DOESN'T BE DEPRIVED ITS RIGHT TO LIFE,
WITH WOVEN THREADS OF LIES.
THE RECIPES OF THE WORLD, WERE IMMORTALIZE IN MY WORDS,
WRITTEN BY ONE THAT NEVER DIES.
IN MY BLOOD IN DISGUISE.

(30 NOV 2021)
GEBRYAN KOTHU, by
Pranthaman.



Participants during the opening session, calling for universal abolition of the death penalty

PLENARY SESSION: A CALL FOR TRANSPARENCY 8 NOVEMBER 2025

In several countries of East Asia, capital punishment remains deeply marked by secrecy. The lack of publicly accessible information on detention conditions, communication rights, and execution procedures continues to undermine due process guarantees and meaningful scrutiny.

Moderator

- **Hsin-Yi Lin**, Executive Director, Taiwan Alliance to End the Death Penalty (TAEDP), Taiwan

Speakers

- **Ethan Hee-Seok Shin**, Member, UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD), South Korea
- **Zhang Lei**, Lawyer, China
- **Nicola Macbean**, Executive Director, The Rights Practice, the UK
- **Maiko Tagusari**, Professor, Tokyo Keizai University; Co-founder, CrimelInfo, Japan

East Asia presents sharply contrasting death-penalty landscapes, including democratic yet retentionist systems such as Taiwan and Japan, a long-standing de facto moratorium in South Korea, and tightly closed and highly punitive systems such as China and North Korea. Despite these differences, the region shares a common feature: official information on executions and death-row detention remains scarce, withheld or inaccessible, limiting public understanding and constraining the ability of families, lawyers and civil society to act. Where reliable information is absent, public debate rests on assumptions rather than facts.

“The more people know and the more they understand, the more they accept the idea of abolishing.”

► CHINA: SILENCE, CONTROL AND THE LIMITS OF ACCESS

In China, the death-penalty system operates within an institutional framework marked by pervasive secrecy. Death-penalty statistics are classified as state secrets, and their disclosure may itself constitute a criminal offence, placing civil society monitoring, academic research and independent legal work under severe constraints while online information is frequently censored or

removed. Detention centres fall under police authority rather than prison administration and continue to be governed by regulations dating back to 1991.

These structural features shape the daily reality of people sentenced to death. Communication with families is severely limited, access to lawyers becomes increasingly restricted as cases progress, and people may spend years shackled while awaiting final review. Once an execution is approved, families are in many cases informed at the very last moment, often without any genuine opportunity for a final private meeting. The persons sentenced to death face a significant risk of organ removal following execution, raising serious doubts about the possibility of free and informed consent in such circumstances and exposing families to pressure and uncertainty. Families are generally not permitted to view the body after execution, with cremation presumed in most cases, further depriving them of transparency, closure and dignity. Such conditions, compounded by the absence of independent monitoring, expose persons sentenced to death to inhuman and degrading treatment while remaining largely invisible to the public.

► JAPAN: ISOLATION, SILENCE AND THE MANAGEMENT OF EXECUTION

Death-row detention in Japan is governed by strict isolation, tightly regulated communication and an almost complete absence of advance notice before executions. People under confirmed death sentences are held in solitary confinement, sometimes for years, with contact limited to family members and lawyers; any communication beyond this circle is permitted only in exceptional cases deemed beneficial to the prisoner's mental state. Secrecy culminates in the management of executions themselves. The persons sentenced to death are informed only shortly beforehand — reportedly as little as one hour before — while families are notified afterwards, following an announcement by the Minister of Justice. No external witnesses are allowed, and official execution records disclose almost nothing, omitting the timing, the presence of officials and any final words. This lack of accessible information also weakens legal safeguards: although the Criminal Procedure Code prohibits the execution of individuals deemed insane, no independent actor can verify whether assessments are conducted or under what conditions.

“Without information, facts and data, almost nothing can be changed or even challenged.”

THE KOREAN PENINSULA: BETWEEN LEGAL STAGNATION AND ABSOLUTE OPACITY

On the Korean Peninsula, transparency takes on two distinct yet interconnected forms. In South Korea, no executions have been carried out since 1997, but the moratorium remains unofficial and reversible. Fifty-seven men remain under sentence of death, some for decades, living in a state of prolonged uncertainty. Daily life on death row is shaped by solitary confinement, restricted contact and the persistent awareness that a political shift could reactivate executions at any moment. Research has documented the severe psychological toll of this prolonged limbo, with several persons sentenced to death having died by suicide since the moratorium began.

In North Korea, opacity reaches its most extreme expression. Fair-trial guarantees are virtually absent, and public executions remain a documented practice. Testimonies from escapees describe a system marked by forced labour, torture and severe deprivation, with firing-squad executions sometimes carried out before large crowds. In certain reported cases, heavy anti-aircraft weapons have been used, leaving no identifiable remains. Official data is unavailable, and even the scope of capital offences remains uncertain due to the existence of unpublished laws. In this context, documentation depends on interviews, satellite imagery and fragmentary accounts, making transparency both indispensable and nearly unattainable.

DISCUSSION

Transparency — or its absence — does not shape only detention conditions but also the political and legal dynamics surrounding the death penalty in East Asia. Where information is withheld or inaccessible, legislative debate and institutional oversight are weakened, even in contexts where support for abolition exists. At the international level, the limits of UN mechanisms in the absence of state cooperation highlighted the central role of documentation, formal submissions and sustained visibility in countering secrecy. The tension between the alleged deterrent effect of capital punishment and the secrecy surrounding its application further revealed opacity as a means of administrative control rather than uncertainty. Restricted access to information also affects advocacy, exposing grassroots initiatives to pressure while forcing mobilisation into decentralised, low-visibility forms, where maintaining visibility becomes both a risk and a necessity.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Across East Asia, secrecy is not incidental but structural.
- Lack of information undermines due process, public debate and accountability.
- Transparency is a central condition for any abolition process.
- Documentation is both indispensable and increasingly risky for civil society actors.



*Speakers of the plenary session - call for transparency:
Hsin-Yi Lin, Nicola MacBean, Maiko Tagusari, Ethan Hee-Seok Shin*



Teppei Ono, Nobuko Otsuki

ROUNDTABLE: ADVOCACY PATHWAYS TO ABOLITION: PROMOTING POLITICAL DIALOGUE 8 NOVEMBER 2025

What pathways to abolition have been tested across the region, and how might these experiences inform future reform efforts?

Moderator

- **Nobuko Otsuki**, Lawyer; Secretariat member of the Roundtable for Reflecting Upon the Death Penalty System of Japan, Japan

Speakers

- **Hideo Hiraoka**, Member of the House of Representatives; Former Minister of Justice; Acting Chair of the Parliamentary League for Considering the Future of Japan's Death Penalty System, Japan
- **Hiro Nakamoto**, Former President, Japan Federation of Bar Associations (JFBA), Japan
- **Ramkarpal Singh**, Member of Parliament; Former Deputy Minister for Law and Institutional Reform, Malaysia
- **Oyungerel Tsedevdamba**, Former Member of Parliament; Former Minister of Culture, Tourism and Sport, Mongolia

▶ JAPAN: PARLIAMENTARY AND PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT

In Japan, abolitionist advocacy has taken the form of national roundtable which brought together a broad range of actors — from politicians and legal professionals to religious groups and victims' associations — to examine the death penalty system from multiple perspectives. Its hearings addressed international trends, constitutional safeguards, the risk of miscarriages of justice, detention conditions, execution practices and possible alternatives to capital punishment. The roundtable concluded that, as an irreversible sanction, the death penalty remains inherently exposed to error and marked by serious practical shortcomings, including secrecy and the moral burden placed on those who implement it. While recognising the suffering of victims' families, it stressed that criminal justice cannot rest solely on retribution. It recommended the creation of a formal body within the Diet or government to review capital punishment, collect reliable data and suspend executions during a structured national debate. Within Parliament, several cross-party groups of lawmakers have sought to keep the issue on the agenda by organising hearings with international experts, foreign parliamentarians and former political leaders, examining how other countries have introduced moratoriums or abolished the death penalty. Yet political space for

legislative action remains limited. Public opinion polls show that support for capital punishment exceeds eighty per cent², earlier abolitionist initiatives have lost momentum, and fears of appearing "soft on crime" continue to weigh heavily. At the executive level, the personal responsibility of the Minister of Justice — required to sign each execution order — further concentrates the ethical and political tension surrounding the death penalty.

▶ MONGOLIA: POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND LEGAL REFORM

Mongolia's abolition process began with decisive executive action rather than public consensus. In 2009, the president stopped signing execution orders, effectively halting executions without formal announcement. When a moratorium was later declared before Parliament, it triggered an immediate and hostile backlash. Media outlets accused the presidency of weakness, political actors boycotted the parliamentary session, and opinion polls reported overwhelming public opposition to ending executions.

The debate shifted following a highly publicised case involving a Mongolian woman sentenced to death abroad, whose life was ultimately saved through diplomatic intervention. This episode helped reframe abolition as a form of protection rather than leniency, including for Mongolian citizens beyond national borders. Subsequent legal reforms, accession to international treaties and amendments to the Criminal Code led to the formal abolition of the death penalty in 2017. When later attempts were made to reintroduce it, opposition was broad and organised.

▶ MALAYSIA: REFORMING THE DEATH PENALTY FRAMEWORK

In Malaysia, reform followed a long-term pathway shaped by sustained advocacy from the legal profession, civil society and academic institutions, and carried forward by successive governments. Studies and public debates gradually reframed the death penalty as an issue of judicial fairness, highlighting cases in which judges were compelled to impose death sentences despite significant mitigating circumstances. Evidence suggested that public opinion was more nuanced than commonly assumed and could shift when confronted with the realities of mandatory sentencing.

² See "Roundtable: Deconstructing Public Support for the Death Penalty".

**“It was not an overnight step.
It took more than a decade to reach that.”**

A first turning point came with limited judicial discretion introduced for certain drug-related offences, followed by an official moratorium on executions in 2018. No executions have taken place since. In 2023, Parliament abolished the mandatory death penalty and life imprisonment for a wide range of offences, replacing them with long but finite prison terms, typically between thirty and forty years. For several non-lethal offences, the death penalty was removed entirely. A companion law granted the Federal Court temporary jurisdiction to review the sentences of more than a thousand individuals on death row or serving life terms. Within less than a year, the vast majority of cases were re-examined and sentences commuted, with only a small number of particularly grave murder cases retaining the death penalty. While capital punishment remains possible in law, executions remain suspended, and a dedicated task force is now examining whether this transitional framework should lead to full abolition.

DISCUSSION

Political authority is key in reframing public debate. Opinion polls often reflect limited information and can shift when political leadership provides clearer signals or introduces transitional measures such as moratoria. Political restraint thus functions both as a protective mechanism and as a catalyst, exposing the gap between legal possibility and political willingness.

These pathways remain fragile: moratoria and executive discretion are reversible, and progress depends on sustained engagement across institutions, including parliaments, courts and civil society.

KEY TAKE AWAYS

- Abolition rarely follows public opinion; it requires political leadership.
- Executive discretion can open paths that legislation alone cannot.
- Moratoria remain fragile.



Participants during the closing ceremony

JUDICIAL ERRORS AND THE DEATH PENALTY: A MESSAGE FROM OYUNGEREL TSEDEV DAMBA

Chairperson of the Civic Unity Participation Party of Mongolia,
former Minister of Culture, Tourism and Sports, former Member of
Parliament, Mongolia

Asia remains the most stubborn region to abolish the death penalty. It was sad to hear the death penalty statistics of our region and the cultural and public opinion walls that our fellow human rights activists and policy makers face in our region. However, I was impressed by the gathering in Tokyo that brought together speakers and activists with various backgrounds and the same passion to end the death penalty. During the Congress I was able to hear, read and empathise with a survivor's story. An innocent person could be wrongly executed even in Japan, a country that seemed to project an extremely developed judicial system compared to my country. In Mongolia, I just had to fight hard to stop the death penalty because I first-hand witnessed and helped save lives of four innocent persons while they were on the death row as a result of judicial errors and tortures in the pre-trial detention centre. Nothing seemed to be hard for me when I faced public outrage against the abolition of the death sentence, because I was fighting for the lives of the innocent, future political victims, and those who could not afford legal representation. I am thankful that the Regional Congress gave me the stage to share Mongolia's abolition story and I hope our story gave hope to some fighters of our region.

3 QUESTIONS TO TEPPEI ONO

Secretary general of the Center for Prisoners' Rights Japan

To what extent was holding the Regional Congress on the Death Penalty in Japan meaningful for the debate on the death penalty in the country?

Holding the Regional Congress on the Death Penalty in Japan was highly significant for the national debate. With around 300 participants from both Japan and abroad, it marked an unprecedented scale for such a specialised international conference in the country. This gathering provided Japanese citizens engaged in abolitionist movements with a rare opportunity to connect directly with global counterparts. The exchange of perspectives helped broaden the domestic discourse, introducing comparative insights from various jurisdictions. It also drew public attention to the issue, signalling that Japan is part of a wider international conversation on human rights. The congress strengthened solidarity among activists, giving them renewed momentum to challenge entrenched views. Moreover, its visibility underscored the importance of civil society in shaping policy debates. In this sense, the congress was not only symbolic but also practically meaningful in advancing dialogue on capital punishment in Japan.

What were the most important insights, perspectives, or resources from other countries of the region that you found especially helpful or inspiring?

One of the most inspiring insights from other countries was the active involvement of younger generations in the discussions. Many young participants from abroad spoke confidently and contributed fresh perspectives, which highlighted the importance of engaging youth in the abolitionist movement. Observing their energy and commitment made it clear that the death penalty debate cannot remain confined to older generations alone. At the Regional Congress, we organised a speech contest in English for Japanese high school and university students, and seeing the international youth participation reinforced the value of such initiatives³. It demonstrated that young voices can bring creativity, urgency, and moral clarity to the conversation. The experience encouraged us to recognise the need to build stronger platforms for Japanese students to express their views. By involving

³ See Side event "Passing the torch: My to abolish the death penalty".

them more directly, the movement can gain new momentum and broaden its social reach. Ultimately, the Congress showed that empowering youth is essential for sustaining and advancing the campaign against capital punishment.

How do you think the discussions at the Congress might shape or guide your future work on the death penalty?

The discussions at the Congress are likely to have a profound influence on my future work regarding the death penalty. The involvement of the Japan Federation of Bar Associations, the country's largest human rights NGO, as a supporter of the event signals a new stage in international collaboration. While they have long led domestic abolitionist efforts, their limited engagement with global movements has been a noticeable gap. The Congress appears to have encouraged them to recognise the importance of stronger ties with the international community. This shift will provide greater opportunities to align Japanese advocacy with global strategies and campaigns. It also means that future initiatives can benefit from comparative experiences and shared resources across borders. For my own work, this development offers a stronger foundation to build partnerships and amplify the reach of abolitionist arguments. Ultimately, the Congress has created momentum that will guide more internationally connected and strategically coordinated efforts against capital punishment in Japan.

WORKSHOP: SAFETY OF ABOLITION ADVOCATES
8 NOVEMBER 2025

Advocacy against the death penalty can entail serious personal risks. This workshop examined how abolition advocates across Asia experience intimidation and the strategies they use to protect themselves and sustain their work.

Facilitator

- **Daisuke Sato**, Senior Writer and Member of the Editorial Board, Kyodo News, Japan

Across Asia, abolition advocacy is increasingly shaped by exposure to intimidation. Even where public debate is formally permitted, engaging on the death penalty can provoke hostility and personal danger, affecting how and whether advocacy can be sustained over time. Threats arise from both state and non-state actors. In several contexts, abolition advocates face surveillance, judicial pressure, administrative sanctions and restrictions on movement, alongside bureaucratic harassment designed to exhaust or silence them. At the same time, societal hostility plays a significant role. Online abuse, coordinated hate campaigns, doxxing and explicit threats — including sexual and death threats — were described as common. In some cases, intimidation extended into physical space through vandalism of offices or personal property, reinforcing a climate of constant insecurity.

These pressures have cumulative effects. Prolonged exposure to threats takes a psychological toll, strains family life and often leads to professional consequences, including loss of employment or deteriorating working conditions. Self-censorship emerges as a protective response rather than a lack of commitment, and temporary withdrawal from public engagement is sometimes necessary to restore safety or protect relatives.

In response, protection increasingly relies on collective approaches. Information sharing within activist networks, coordinated reactions to online attacks and public expressions of solidarity help reduce individual vulnerability. Broad alliances — including with youth groups, artists, students and small businesses — create wider social buffers that make intimidation less effective and less isolating.

“We have power in numbers.”

Practical safeguards also form part of daily advocacy work. Risk assessments, digital-security practices, emergency legal support and, in extreme situations, temporary relocation mechanisms are used to manage immediate threats. Over the longer term, education initiatives, particularly among younger generations, alongside mental-health support and sustainable legal-defense resources, are essential to reducing hostility and strengthening resilience.



A participant taking part in one of the Congress workshops.

A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT FROM ELIZABETH SALMÓN

Professor of International Law at the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru and Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Cher Raphael Chenuil-Hazan, Executive director of ECPM,

I hope you're doing well.

I am writing to thank you for your kind invitation to participate in the 5th Regional Congress in Tokyo. As Special Rapporteur on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, I appreciated a lot the opportunity to share with participants the dire situation of human rights and the death penalty that North Koreans face in their country. Additionally, Congress provided a unique context for the region that will help my mandate and future reports. [...]

Finally, the organization of the Congress, including topics, speakers, and methodology, was remarkable and outstanding.

I know that these kinds of events consume a lot of energy, but you and your team should feel delighted about the present and future impact of the Congress.

ROUNDTABLE: BEYOND THE MOST SERIOUS CRIMES 8 NOVEMBER 2025

The death penalty is limited under international law to the “most serious crimes”. In practice, it is often applied far beyond this threshold, exposing the political and judicial logics that sustain it.

Moderator & speaker

- **Abdul Rashid Ismail**, Lawyer, Messrs. Rashid Zulkifli, Malaysia

Speakers

- **Zhang Lei**, Lawyer, China
- **Michelle Miao**, Associate Professor of law from the Faculty of Law, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong
- **Elizabeth Salmón**, Professor of International Law at the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru and Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Peru
- **Derek Wong**, Lawyer, Phoenix Law Corporation, Singapore

► MALAYSIA: RESENTENCING AND JUDICIAL RESTRAINT

In Malaysia, following the abolition of mandatory death sentences, the Federal Court was tasked with reviewing 936 final death sentences imposed under the former regime, many of them for drug-related offences. Through this resentencing process, courts were required to reassess whether offences that did not involve intentional killing could still justify the ultimate punishment. The outcomes revealed a clear shift: in the overwhelming majority of cases, death sentences were commuted to fixed-term imprisonment, resulting in a commutation rate of approximately ninety-five per cent. No death sentences for drug-related offences were upheld, marking a decisive departure from decades of mandatory capital punishment in this area.

At the same time, the process exposed persistent limitations. A small number of death sentences were retained for offences involving extreme violence or threats to national security, while other categories of persons sentenced to death remained excluded from the resentencing framework due to legislative anomalies. While judicial discretion consistently favoured restraint, the exercise also highlighted that judicial reform alone cannot resolve the broader moral and political questions surrounding capital punishment.

► CHINA: JUDICIAL NARROWING WITHOUT LEGAL ABOLITION

While the death penalty in China remains available in law for a wide range of offences — including drug-related crimes — its application has been increasingly shaped by internal judicial mechanisms, particularly since the restoration in 2007 of mandatory review by the Supreme People's Court. This reform introduced additional layers of scrutiny, contributing to a significant reduction in executions without altering the formal list of capital offences.

Empirical research presented during the roundtable showed how courts have gradually redefined what constitutes a “most serious crime” in practice. In murder cases, reconciliation between offenders and victims' families has frequently resulted in suspended death sentences rather than immediate execution. In drug-related cases, judicial interpretation increasingly distinguishes between organisers and low-level couriers, leading to a greater use of life imprisonment or suspended sentences. While these practices have reduced executions, the absence of transparent criteria and persistent regional disparities continue to produce uneven outcomes.

► DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA: EXPANSION BEYOND INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea illustrated the most pronounced departure from the international “most serious crimes” standard. Recent legal developments have significantly expanded the scope of the death penalty, extending capital punishment from a limited set of political crimes to approximately thirty offences covering political, economic, social and expression-related conduct. Laws adopted since 2020 have introduced the death penalty for acts such as accessing or disseminating foreign media, including watching foreign television programmes or using non-approved language.

“I am convinced that the death penalty could be a good topic to raise awareness about the whole situation [of DPRK]. Because if you live in a country where you cannot access some information, some music, some series or dramas or whatever, it means something. It means something really, really difficult. So I think that the death penalty could be a good starting point maybe to talk about this and to raise awareness about the whole situation. This is why I am here”.

Elizabeth Salmón, Special Rapporteur

on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

This expansion has been accompanied by the absence of basic procedural safeguards. Public executions continue to be reported for offences unrelated to intentional killing, including drug-related conduct and acts linked to freedom of expression, with women forcibly repatriated after trafficking highlighted among the most vulnerable. While the DPRK's acceptance of two recommendations during the 2024 Universal Periodic Review to restrict capital punishment marked an unprecedented step, implementation would require a profound reversal of current practice.

▶ SINGAPORE: MANDATORY CAPITAL PUNISHMENT AND DETERRENCE NARRATIVES

In Singapore, the death penalty continues to be applied primarily for drug trafficking, which accounts for the majority of executions, despite international norms limiting its use to crimes involving intentional killing. Capital cases rely heavily on statutory presumptions, particularly in drug prosecutions, significantly lowering the threshold for conviction. Recent procedural reforms have further narrowed avenues for legal challenge, requiring condemned individuals to demonstrate a reasonable prospect of success before post-appeal claims can be heard. Alongside increasingly opaque administrative practices surrounding executions, these measures have restricted judicial scrutiny at the final stages.

In this context, the death penalty functions not only as a punitive sanction but also as a symbolic policy, reinforcing deterrence narratives and state authority despite the absence of clear evidence of its effectiveness in reducing drug-related harm.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Drug-related offences are important drivers of executions in the region.
- Expansions of capital offences reflect political control, not criminal necessity.
- Reductions in executions driven by judicial practice remain fragile in the absence of legal reform.

HEARING THE VOICES OF THE DEATH PENALTY: MESSAGE FROM KIYOUNG KIM

Former Justice at the Constitutional Court, South Korea
(2018-2024)

I was grateful for the opportunity to participate in the Tokyo Regional Congress on the Death Penalty and to share my reflections as a former judge. Presenting my own perspective on capital punishment in such an open and respectful forum was both meaningful and encouraging.

Most of all, listening to the stories of families affected by the death penalty left a deep impression on me. They reminded me that capital punishment impacts not only those sentenced to death, but also their families, often for decades, in ways that are difficult to repair. Their voices added a human depth to discussions that are too often confined to legal doctrine or abstract policy debates.

I was also grateful for the opportunity to meet so many dedicated individuals working, in different countries and contexts, toward the abolition of the death penalty. The diversity of experiences and perspectives shared at the Congress was truly inspiring.

I sincerely hope that a similar regional event can one day be held in Seoul, so that these important conversations can continue and expand in East Asia.



Speakers at the roundtable "Beyond the Most Serious Crimes"

WORKSHOP: PROFILE OF PEOPLE SENTENCED TO DEATH: INEQUITIES BEHIND DEATH SENTENCES 8 NOVEMBER 2025

The death penalty does not fall evenly. Across the region, it disproportionately targets those already marginalised by poverty, discrimination and social exclusion.

Moderator

- Ngeow ChowYing, Deputy Convenor, ADPAN

The workshop examined the social and economic patterns shaping who ends up sentenced to death across the region. It focused on the trajectories that lead individuals into capital punishment systems, showing how structural inequality often precedes criminal prosecution.

Across jurisdictions, similar profiles emerged. Poverty, limited access to education, migration status, racial or ethnic discrimination, gender-based violence and mental health vulnerabilities were identified as intersecting factors. These elements rarely operate in isolation; they accumulate over time, increasing exposure to prosecution, weakening access to defence and amplifying the harshest outcomes of the criminal justice system. Understanding these patterns is essential to moving the debate beyond the gravity of crimes toward the lived realities of those condemned.

Case-based discussions gave concrete form to these dynamics. Situations involving foreign nationals unable to understand court proceedings, women marked by lifelong exposure to violence and economic dependence, and individuals with intellectual disabilities caught in rigid drug enforcement regimes illustrated how language barriers, debt, inadequate legal representation and social stigma shape outcomes from arrest to sentencing.

Clear priorities for action emerged. Access to qualified legal representation and interpretation services was identified as a basic safeguard, alongside stronger consular support for foreign nationals. Participants emphasised the need for sentencing practices that recognise intersectional discrimination, as well as training for judges and lawyers on structural vulnerability. Public education, systematic

data collection and increased support for abolition organisations were seen as necessary to expose patterns that remain largely invisible.

Throughout the exchanges, solidarity emerged as a central theme. Cooperation between NGOs, researchers, students and affected communities was presented as indispensable—not only for advocacy, but for ensuring that people on death row are recognised first and foremost as human beings, rather than reduced to the crimes attributed to them.

**“We often only see the crime,
not the person.”**



Participants at the workshop “Profile of People Sentenced to Death: Inequities Behind Death Sentences

ROUNDTABLE: DECONSTRUCTING PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE DEATH PENALTY 9 NOVEMBER 2025

Public opinion is often cited to justify the retention of the death penalty. Yet closer examination shows that survey results are far less clear-cut, and often tell a different story about public attitudes and political responsibility.

Moderator

- **Kar-Yen Leong**, Associate professor in Cognitive Sciences, National Chung Cheng University, Taiwan

Speakers

- **Wing Cheong Chan**, Professor of Law, Yong Pung How School of Law, Singapore Management University, Singapore
- **Thaatchayini Kananatu**, Senior Lecturer in Global Studies at the School of Arts and Social Sciences, Monash University Malaysia
- **Mai Sato**, Professor and Director, Institute for Crime & Justice Policy Research, School of Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Birkbeck, University of London

▶ JAPAN: A SYSTEM BUILT ON INERTIA

In Japan, the death penalty remains formally justified by high levels of public support, repeatedly cited through regular government surveys. These surveys frame the issue in binary terms, offering respondents a choice between abolition and the view that the death penalty is “unavoidable”, a formulation that has consistently produced high retentionist figures. At the same time, the system itself is marked by deep secrecy, including limited information on death row conditions and execution practices, reinforcing distance between the public and the reality of capital punishment.

Closer analysis of survey data, however, reveals a more complex picture. While abstract support appears high, the proportion of respondents firmly committed to retaining the death penalty is significantly lower. Parallel academic surveys and follow-up questions suggest that many respondents would accept abolition if political leadership were shown, and that concerns about miscarriages of justice have become a central driver of abolitionist sentiment⁴. Public

⁴ Andriano Martins, The Death Penalty in Japan: Wrongful Convictions and Public Opinion, ECPM, septembre 2025 : Ajouter ici l'url de l'article d'Andriano Martins une fois qu'il sera sur le site : https://www.ecpm.org/app/uploads/2026/03/ARTICLE_Adriano_Opinion-publique-PdM-Japon_ENG.pdf

disengagement, rather than strong popular demand, emerged as a defining feature of the Japanese context.

▶ MALAYSIA: PUNITIVE LEGACIES AND SHIFTING ATTITUDES

In Malaysia, public opinion on the death penalty has been shaped by decades of punitive drug policies and “war on drugs” rhetoric. Survey data initially suggest majority support for capital punishment, particularly for drug-related offences. Yet scenario-based questions consistently show a sharp decline in support when respondents are presented with concrete cases and mitigating circumstances.

These findings highlight the gap between abstract endorsement and real-world sentencing preferences. Participants stressed that survey design plays a decisive role in shaping outcomes, noting that simplified questions often obscure the social, economic and racial backgrounds of those sentenced to death. The discussion also underlined how political context influences survey results, with shifts in public debate coinciding with broader reform efforts, including the abolition of the mandatory death penalty and growing attention to structural injustice.

▶ SINGAPORE: THE POLITICS OF DETERRENCE AND A NARROW LEGAL NARRATIVE

In Singapore, public support for the death penalty is closely tied to official narratives of deterrence, particularly in relation to drug trafficking. Government and academic surveys alike show high abstract support, reinforced by strong public trust in institutions and confidence in the criminal justice system.

However, academic studies using case vignettes reveal a familiar pattern: support drops significantly when respondents are asked to decide on punishment in specific scenarios involving vulnerability, coercion or marginal involvement. Participants also questioned the framing of key survey questions, including undefined references to “most serious crimes” or “substantial” quantities of drugs, which allow respondents to project extreme cases rather than the realities seen in courtrooms. Media reporting, focused on headline figures, was identified as further reinforcing simplified narratives.

“For politicians, speaking about the death penalty is not a vote winner. It takes moral courage to take a stance.”

DISCUSSION

Victims’ families are frequently invoked to justify retention, yet are rarely consulted in nuanced ways. Their experiences and needs are often instrumentalised within survey questions or public narratives, rather than addressed through meaningful support, participation or access to justice. This selective use of victims’ voices reinforces simplified views of punishment and obscures the broader social and human consequences of capital punishment.

Culture was also raised as a central but often misused reference. What is presented as “culture” often reflects long-standing state narratives, selective historical memory and the absence of open debate.

More broadly, the exchanges underscored that public opinion is not a fixed constraint, but a political resource shaped by information, framing and leadership. Opinion polls were described less as neutral reflections of social will than as tools that can legitimise inaction, allowing governments to defer responsibility. Political choice — rather than public demand alone — remains central to sustaining or challenging the death penalty.

“The death penalty is not a cultural issue — it is always a political decision.

I think in any country you could quote different aspects of culture to argue for or against the death penalty.”

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Public support is shaped by framing, information and political context.
- Survey design and framing actively shape responses.
- Victims’ voices are often instrumentalised instead of being meaningfully engaged.
- The persistence of the death penalty reflects political inertia more than popular demand.



Mai Sato, Professor and Director, Institute for Crime & Justice Policy Research, School of Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Birkbeck, University of London



Thaatchayini Kananatu, Senior Lecturer in Global Studies at the School of Arts and Social Sciences, Monash University Malaysia



Speakers at the roundtable: Deconstructing public support for the death penalty

**SIDE EVENT: PASSING THE TORCH:
MY WAY TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY IN JAPAN**
9 NOVEMBER 2025

Public opinion is often cited to justify the retention of the death penalty. Yet closer examination shows that survey results are far less clear-cut, and often tell a different story about public attitudes and political responsibility.

- **David Brewster**, Senior Lecturer, Kanazawa College of Art
- **Aminata Niakaté**, President of ECPM
- **Teppei Ono**, Secretary General of CPR
- **Kana Sasakura**, Professor of Law at Konan University, Kobe, Japan

A nationwide youth speech competition was organised in Japan to encourage young people to engage critically with the issue of capital punishment. Open to participants under the age of 30 from across the country, the competition invited them to reflect on concrete pathways toward abolition.

Following a national call for contributions and a selection process, the final round brought together six finalists from different regions of Japan. Each participant delivered a five-minute speech, offering personal, legal or ethical perspectives on how abolition could be achieved. The themes addressed included political leadership, wrongful convictions, public opinion, transparency, victims' rights and alternatives to capital punishment. The speeches revealed a capacity to engage with abolition in concrete, informed and forward-looking ways.

The winner of the competition, Sorane Saikhama, a 23-year-old law student from Okinawa, was invited to participate in the World Congress Against the Death Penalty, to be held in Paris in June 2026.



3 QUESTIONS TO SORANE SAKIHAMA

Winner of the Speech Competition

Could you introduce yourself?

My name is Sorane Sakihama (崎浜空音), a 23-year-old 4th-year student in the Faculty of Law at Keio University. Next year, I plan to enter law school, as my dream is to become a human rights lawyer. I was born and raised in Okinawa, a southeastern island of Japan that hosts 70 percent of all U.S. military bases in the country. Currently, I am working on issues of human rights violations related to the presence of these U.S. military bases in Okinawa.

Why did you choose to enter the speech contest on the death penalty?

I have a strong interest in all human rights issues, both in Japan and globally. I advocate for causes like Free Palestine and My Body My Choice. As I mentioned in my speech, I sincerely believe that the death penalty is fundamentally a violation of human rights. I saw a flyer for this contest online, and the theme, “My Way to Abolish the Death Penalty,” immediately attracted me. While many people are aware that the death penalty itself constitutes a human rights violation, I felt that fewer people were discussing how the existence of the death penalty also leads to secondary human rights issues (for instance, the issues I raised in my speech regarding extradition treaties and the SOFA). Therefore, I felt this contest was the perfect venue for me. It is vital to approach the abolition of the death penalty from various perspectives so that activists working on different human rights issues can unite and collaborate.

What did you learn or gain from this experience?

Through this event, I had the opportunity to meet many people engaged in the abolition of the death penalty. Given that many people in Japan support the death penalty, I was particularly impressed and heartened to connect with young individuals who are determined to change this situation. Beyond the youth, I also met adults and many people from different countries.

There was a valuable opportunity to speak with young people from other Asian countries, and we had a fruitful discussion. Many countries in Asia share the experience that the majority of the population is in favour of the death penalty. However, I strongly

believe that building solidarity and maintaining this network can make a real difference. I am eager to learn from the experiences of other nations.



Aminata Niakaté, President of ECPM, with Sorane Sakihama, winner of the “My Way to Abolish the Death Penalty in Japan” Under-30 Speech Competition

WORKSHOP: LEGAL REPRESENTATION IN CAPITAL CASES 9 NOVEMBER 2025

In capital cases, the quality of legal representation can determine whether a sentence is imposed, upheld or overturned. What concrete standards and safeguards are needed to ensure effective legal representation, from the moment of arrest to the final stages of the process?

Facilitator

- Khaizan Sharizad (Sherrie) Binti Ab Razak, Lawyer, Malaysia

The workshop focused on the structural weaknesses that continue to undermine defence work, showing how gaps in legal assistance often reflect broader inequalities within criminal justice systems. Across jurisdictions, recurring obstacles appear at the earliest stages. Limited or delayed access to clients during pre-trial detention, restrictions on legal visits and weak safeguards against coercion or torture significantly impair lawyers' ability to build an effective defence before narratives of guilt take hold. These challenges are compounded by persistent imbalances between prosecution and defence, including restricted access to evidence, limited disclosure and weak exclusionary rules that allow coerced confessions to remain central to capital cases.

**“I cannot represent my client
if I cannot visit them.”**

Specialised and multidisciplinary defence remains limited. Capital cases frequently involve mental health issues, intellectual disabilities, trauma and language barriers, yet training and institutional support for integrating experts such as psychologists, interpreters or mitigation specialists remain inconsistent. At the same time, the human cost of this work is substantial: prolonged exposure to death row cases generates high levels of stress and burnout among lawyers, often in isolation and without adequate support.

Clemency and pardon mechanisms function as final safeguards, but are marked by opacity and uncertainty. In many systems, unclear procedures and timelines leave prisoners and their lawyers without meaningful recourse. Against this backdrop, the Kuala Lumpur

Guidelines were identified as a practical framework for strengthening defence work across the region⁵, alongside closer cooperation among lawyers, bar associations, academic institutions and international networks.

**“We are here together with you,
moving forward for justice.”**



Participants at the workshop Legal representation in capital cases

⁵ Kuala Lumpur Guidelines. Regional Guidelines for Lawyers Representing Individuals Facing the Death Penalty and Execution in Asia, available at: <https://www.klguidelines.com/>.

LEARNING THROUGH INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT: INSIGHTS FROM TWO CHINESE LAWYERS

Participating in such events helps Chinese lawyers understand mainstream global attitudes towards abolition of the death penalty, as well as the progress and prospects for its abolition. Learning from the experiences of civil society in other Asian countries is particularly valuable to us.

Chinese lawyers can also reflect on our own attitudes towards the death penalty. In the current social context, we can consider the historical background and the public's receptiveness so that we can learn how to increase public awareness of the death penalty issue, how to steadily promote the abolition of the death penalty through advocacy and legislation, and how to integrate abolitionist principles in our own legal practice. These are all enlightening experiences for us. Currently in China, there is insufficient relief for victims and their families, with the death penalty serving as a form of psychological support for them. This means that society and the government can evade their responsibility to provide relief and consolation to victims and their families. We need to learn more from and study the practices of other regions in this regard. Providing victims with the greatest possible consolation and support is crucial for reducing the death penalty in China.

3 QUESTIONS TO ELIJAH TAY

Abolitionist activist and student, Singapore

What stood out to you the most during the Congress, and why?

The first thing that struck me was the sheer number of people who were at the Congress. Coming from an authoritarian country, where the state has been depoliticising the masses for decades (while also knowing how depoliticised the masses are in Japan as well), it was refreshing to see hundreds of people gathering to call for the end of the death penalty – the peak manifestation of state control. The abolition of the death penalty may seem impossible in certain countries given prevailing political climates, but we are in it for the long haul, to conscientise the masses one person at a time. It was hopeful to see that, through decades of work, building a sizeable base of abolitionists is possible. We just need to keep the work going sustainably, empowering the people to learn and unlearn and take action together.

What actions do you think the youth can take to help advance the abolition of the death penalty?

Youths in Singapore recently came together to start a grassroots organisation called Student Actions for Transformative jUstice (SATU; @studentsfromsatu on Instagram). Youths are in a unique position – many of us are in school, with a potential of building broad networks across various student spaces while not being too bogged down with the economic responsibilities of income generation (yet). We are hungry to learn and shape our thoughts through dialectical processes – we learn from literature, from our elders, and from one another. Youths have always played a crucial role in combatting extreme violence across the globe, from protests against the Vietnam War and the South African apartheid, to mass mobilisations against the Israeli genocide of Palestine. Young people see the interconnectivities of the anti-imperial struggle, the anti-authoritarian struggle, and the working-class struggle, and draw from principles of unity to advance our collective interests in society – not just through engagements on campus, but also in how to reach out to educate the masses. The conviction and actions of youth ripple across the abolitionist movement at large.

How has participating in the Congress shaped your activism moving forward?

The struggle for collective liberation – from structures within and outside our borders – are international struggles that require solidarity across the world. At the Congress, I met some younger attendees who were keen to start collectives of their own! While the movement in Singapore is young, we have learned from those who have come before us, and we are also excited to exchange resources with activists, advocates, and organisers around the world to strengthen our shared efforts for abolition. Being in a space that has brought folks across the world together has strengthened my hope for the possibility that more of such gatherings may occur, for us to exchange insights, skills, and resources to advance the anti-death penalty movement.



Elijah Tay, Abolitionist activist and student, Singapore

ROUNDTABLE: JUDGES AND PROSECUTORS ON THE FRONTLINES OF DEATH PENALTY CASES 9 NOVEMBER 2025

What does it mean for judges to decide on life and death in systems that continue to retain the death penalty?

Moderator

- **Michael Hor**, Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Hong Kong

Speakers

- **Chien-Jung Chien**, Lawyer, former Supreme Court judge, Taiwan
- Kiyong Kim, former Justice at the Constitutional Court, South Korea

This session brought together two senior judges from Taiwan and South Korea to discuss how judicial actors confront capital punishment in systems that still retain it. Their reflections revealed not only legal complexities, but personal dilemmas, institutional pressures and the moral weight borne by judges working within retentionist frameworks.

TAIWAN: JUDICIAL RESISTANCE WITHIN A RETENTIONIST FRAMEWORK

In Taiwan, dissent is tolerated only within narrow limits and often carries professional and reputational costs for judges opposing the death penalty. Media scrutiny, political rhetoric and public distrust of the judiciary reinforce the perception that judges who refrain from imposing death sentences undermine public security. Legislative reforms, including the 2023 Citizen Judges Act, were widely perceived as implicitly constraining judicial discretion and weakening abolitionist positions from within the courts. Opposing the death penalty becomes a sustained ethical struggle for judges, conducted largely without public visibility.

Within these constraints, judges have relied on collegial dynamics, procedural rigor and strategic discretion to limit death sentences. The role of first-instance courts is key, because appellate courts rarely overturn non-capital sentences once imposed. The 2024 Constitutional Court ruling, which upheld the constitutionality of the death penalty while tightening procedural safeguards, was received ambivalently. While falling short of abolition, it strengthened the capacity of individual judges within collegial panels to block

executions. At the same time, it exposed political incoherence, as both ruling and opposition parties promoted life imprisonment without parole while retaining capital punishment, leaving judges to navigate an unsettled sentencing framework.

▶ SOUTH KOREA: JUDICIAL CONSCIENCE UNDER AN UNRESOLVED MORATORIUM

South Korea combines a long-standing moratorium on executions with the continued legality of the death penalty. No executions have occurred since 1997, yet prosecutors continue to seek death sentences and courts continue to impose them. The situation is one of suspension rather than resolution, with the machinery of capital punishment intact despite its non-use. Repeated constitutional challenges have failed to secure abolition, with earlier rulings upholding the death penalty and a more recent case remaining undecided, reflecting both institutional caution and the high voting threshold required to strike down legislation.

For judges, personal conscience carries particular weight. The fear is of rendering an irreversible judgment in a system known to be fallible. Historical cases of wrongful executions are a constant reminder that judicial error, once paired with death, cannot be corrected. The Constitutional Court's repeated inability to resolve the issue deepens this burden, requiring judges to balance human dignity, public necessity and constitutional restraint without definitive guidance. The moratorium is not a solution, but a prolonged dilemma borne by the judiciary itself.

“What truly frightened me was not external criticism. What truly frightened me was my own conscience.”

▶ DISCUSSION

While public opinion is influential, judicial decision-making ultimately rests on constitutional principles, legal reasoning and conscience. But the limits of judicial action are clear: moratoria without abolition leave systems legally unstable, while constitutional compromises risk entrenching incoherence. Judges are often the last actors capable of restraining capital punishment, yet they operate within frameworks resistant to definitive change. In both Taiwan and South

Korea, the judiciary has become a central arena for negotiating the future of the death penalty through incremental resistance rather than formal abolition, leaving its place within democratic constitutional orders unresolved.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Retentionist systems place judges in a position of permanent moral and legal tension.
- Prolonged moratoria suspend executions but leave the burden of uncertainty on judicial actors.

WORKSHOP: DOCUMENTING THE DEATH PENALTY

9 NOVEMBER 2025

Access to accurate and reliable information is a precondition for meaningful advocacy against the death penalty. This workshop examined why transparency remains central to abolition efforts, the obstacles to documenting capital punishment, and the methods used by advocates to collect, verify and share information in restrictive environments.

Facilitator

- Heo Yu-jeong, Journalist, Hankook Ilbo, South Korea

Transparency is a structural condition for abolition advocacy. Without access to information, it becomes impossible to plan strategies, sustain public debate or ensure accountability. Transparency must be understood broadly, extending beyond execution statistics to include detention conditions, access to legal counsel, notification of families and decision-making processes throughout the criminal justice system. In several contexts, partial or selective disclosure creates an appearance of openness while leaving key aspects of capital punishment inaccessible.

Barriers to transparency were described as both systemic and deliberate. Governments frequently invoke the sensitivity of information, public order or national security to justify withholding data, often to avoid scrutiny. In some contexts, inadequate record-keeping further obstructs access to reliable information. Control over mass media and social media, combined with disinformation and fragmented sources, further complicates efforts to establish accurate and credible accounts of death-penalty practices.

Despite these constraints, several documentation practices have proven effective. These include annual reports, grassroots discussions, engagement with national human rights institutions, and the collection of testimonies from families, lawyers and former detainees based on informed consent. Where direct access to persons sentenced to death is limited or impossible, courtroom observation by journalists, lawyers or NGOs provides valuable insight into sentencing patterns and procedures. Information sharing within trusted networks remains essential to strengthening

credibility. Parliamentary mechanisms can allow sympathetic legislators to request information or raise oversight questions. Cooperation between NGOs, journalists and legal professionals helps consolidate fragmented data, while confidential sources and secure communication channels remain crucial in highly restrictive contexts, alongside strict ethical safeguards.

**“Without information,
we cannot plan further action,
we cannot have any public debate.”**

WORKSHOP: THE PSYCHOLOGICAL TOLL OF THE DEATH PENALTY

9 NOVEMBER 2025

Working on the death penalty often entails deep emotional strain and isolation. This workshop created a space for participants to share their struggles, lived experiences and the forms of support needed to sustain abolition work over time, particularly for those in direct contact with people sentenced to death and their families.

Facilitator

- **Toshi Kazama**, Photographer, Member of ADPAN Executive Committee

Working on the death penalty has a significant personal impact, particularly for those in direct contact with people sentenced to death and their families. This work entails emotional strain, moral fatigue and isolation that accumulate over time, often in the absence of institutional recognition or adequate support.

Maintaining contact with people on death row is emotionally demanding, especially in restrictive contexts where relationships are limited to letters rather than visits. Learning of an execution after years of correspondence creates a profound rupture between knowing someone as alive and later confronting their death. Similar tensions arise when accompanying families through legal proceedings, where hope may abruptly give way to irreversible loss.

Abolition work also involves difficult ethical boundaries. Requests for practical assistance from persons sentenced to death raise questions about responsibility and limits, particularly where basic needs should fall under state obligations. Hearing people ask, “How much longer do I have to live?” illustrates the emotional weight carried by those providing informal support.

“There is no goodbye for us.”

The human impact of the death penalty extends beyond the person sentenced to death to include victims’ families, executioners and others involved in the system. Excluding these experiences from public debate distorts understanding of capital punishment and obscures long-term psychological harm. Mental health neglect within detention facilities

further reflects the broader damage produced by the death penalty. Sustaining abolition work requires collective support. Informal peer groups, shared spaces to process grief and anger, and opportunities to transform personal experience into education or testimony are essential. Overall, this work cannot be sustained in isolation and demands greater recognition of its emotional and social costs.

The workshop concluded with a poem by Pannir Selvam Pranthaman, read by Angela Barnabas.

BEING LISTENED TO: REFLECTIONS FROM YANG YEN-CHIEH

Legal Director of TAEDP, Taiwan

“Active listening” does not seem to be a common practice within the movement to abolish the death penalty. Supporters of capital punishment may feel that abolitionists talk incessantly without truly valuing victims’ rights or social justice. Conversely, abolitionists might feel that death penalty supporters focus solely on retribution and justice while ignoring the inherent costs and risks. Both sides often cling to their own arguments, rarely sitting down to truly listen to one another.

However, participating in the Tokyo Regional Congress on the Death Penalty showed me a different kind of dialogue. Among the participants were many who held reservations about abolition, and some who even firmly supported the death penalty or life imprisonment. Yet, when individuals shared their thoughts, no one rushed to interrupt. Instead, everyone present sincerely “held” and acknowledged each person’s perspective. For a human rights worker like myself, who has been involved in the abolition movement for just under four years, this scene was particularly precious. For A, a family member of a Taiwanese death row prisoner who attended with me, it was one of those rare moments in life where they felt truly respected. During a workshop discussing those affected by the death penalty, A mentioned that her father was a death row prisoner.

The looks from other participants weren’t filled with pity or sympathy, but rather a genuine desire to understand A’s life journey. Although A said with a smile that her father was often in and out of prison since she was young—and that she didn’t have a huge reaction to the death sentence—the reality was that growing up, there were very few people A could trust with this secret. In fact, A noted that coming out as lesbian was actually easier. After this sharing, the silence from the other participants did not signify neglect; it was a form of quiet companionship. This pure act of listening let A know: “We are here; you are not alone.” While A’s sharing lasted only fifteen minutes, its impact was profound. On our way to lunch, A—who had never been deeply involved in the movement before—quietly asked: “If other families of death row prisoners face difficulties or low points in the future, could I help them too?” Perhaps the companionship offered by A, or by myself

as an activist, won’t bring about immediate material change or solve every problem.

But if this willingness to accompany and listen begins to take root in society beyond our circles, it becomes the warmest and most powerful force of connection for the families of the condemned. It ensures that those impacted by the death penalty are no longer isolated. At the very least, through these few days of interaction, I have seen a growth in trust and a change in A. The person who initially seemed stern and had a “tough-as-nails” exterior has started sending me funny stories from her daily life and joking around with me.

SELECTED QUOTATIONS FROM SPEAKERS

“True justice is measured by the place it grants to human dignity. It is a justice that refuses to kill.”

Vanessa Bousardo, Vice-President of the Paris Bar Association, France

“It is almost impossible to impose the death penalty without breaching the absolute prohibition of torture or causing other prohibited ill-treatment.”

Alice Jill Edwards, United Nations Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

“The death penalty always creates new victims: the innocent families of those who are executed.”

Mario Marazzeti, spokesperson for the Community of Sant'Egidio, Italy

“This penalty itself is a violation of human rights.”

Sorane Sakihama, winner of the speech contest, Japan

“This competition was made possible thanks to the commitment of many people who believed in giving young voices a place.”

Osamu Niikura, Professor emeritus and Attorney at Law, Aoyama Gakuin University-Tokyo, Japan

“Years of solitary confinement and execution without notice leave prisoners living in constant fear.”

Teppei Ono, Secretary General of CPR, Japan

“Abolition is not only a legal fight. It is also a deeply human one.”

Carole Berrih, Coordinator of the Academic Committee

“My brother’s story is not only about one man. It is about the silencing of an entire people.”

Nury Tashpolat, brother of Tiyo Tashpolat who was sentenced to death in China in 2017

“We wage this fight with conviction, patience, and perseverance, because every step forward matters.”

Richard Sédillot, Lawyer, Member of ECPM Board, France

FROM TOKYO TO PARIS: COLLECTIVE WORKING SESSION FACILITATED BY LAURENT DUARTE (ECPM)

During the closing ceremony, a collective working session facilitated by Laurent Duarte brought together participants of the Regional Congress to discuss and vote on a set of key regional priorities. The outcomes of this exercise will inform the preparation of the World Congress against the Death Penalty, to be held in Paris in June 2026. Discussions focused in particular on the mental and emotional impact of work on the death penalty, the need to strengthen transparency and documentation, and the importance of supporting those directly affected, including persons sentenced to death, families, lawyers and activists.



Dolkun Isa, president and members of the World Uyghur Congress during the closing session



Participants during the closing session

CLOSING ADDRESS, BY CHOW YING NGEOW

Deputy Convenor, ADPAN, Malaysia

Distinguished delegates, friends, and fellow advocates,
As we come to the close of this congress, we do so with both a heavy heart and a renewed sense of purpose. The struggle against the death penalty is never an easy one. It demands courage, persistence, and above all, compassion.

I have the privilege of working alongside many of you — people I deeply respect and treasure. But in these final moments together, I want us to turn our attention to the extraordinary courage and sacrifices of our colleagues in what we often call the Global South — those working in circumstances most of us gathered here can scarcely imagine.

In many of these countries, abolition work unfolds against a backdrop of profound hardship. Our partners navigate failing institutions, endemic corruption, and justice systems that often serve power rather than truth. They work in societies still bearing the scars of colonialism, where poverty is not an abstraction but a daily reality, and where public anger and fear — born of legitimate grievances — make calls for abolition, politically dangerous.

The death penalty in these contexts is never merely a legal matter. It is woven into the fabric of fractured societies, used by government to demonstrate strength, to channel public rage, to silence dissent. To challenge it is to challenge not just a policy, but entire structures of power.

And yet, despite these immense obstacles, activists in these countries have shown extraordinary courage.

In some countries, advocating for abolition means being labeled a traitor, an enemy of the state, or worse, an agent of foreign influence. It means facing harassment, surveillance, and threats. It means watching colleagues imprisoned, exiled, or attacked for daring to speak out.

They work with resources many of us would consider inadequate, and often at great personal and family sacrifice. While some of us here benefit from institutional support, legal frameworks that protect

advocacy, and reliable funding streams, our colleagues in the Global South often have none of these.

We gather here not as critics of nations, but as believers in human dignity. Yet we must also ask ourselves difficult questions about our own movement.

Are we truly listening to those at the margins, or merely amplifying voices that echo our own? Are we providing solidarity, or simply imposing blueprints? When funding flows, does it reach those who need it most, or does it stop at organizations that speak our language, literally and figuratively?

For this is not — and must never be — a movement of privilege, but one of principle. The dream of abolition cannot be handed down from the powerful; it must rise from the collective conscience of all of us, from every corner of the world.

Our colleagues in the Global South. They need our partnership. They need us to use whatever privilege and platform we have to amplify their voices, to share resources, to defend them when they are attacked, and to acknowledge that they often understand this struggle more deeply than we ever will.

As we leave this congress, let us carry with us one truth: that our movement is strongest when it centers those who pay the highest price for this work. That meaningful solidarity requires more than statements — it requires sacrifice, humility, and a willingness to follow rather than lead.

Let us commit ourselves to ensuring that no one in our movement fights alone. That resources reach those who need them. That when one of us is threatened, all of us respond. That this movement truly belongs to all of us.

For every execution carried out in silence, there are still voices that believe in mercy, justice, and humanity. And as long as those voices continue to speak — in every language, from every corner of the world — this movement will endure.

Thank you. And to all who continue this struggle in difficult times and dangerous places: may you never doubt that we see you, we hear you, and we will stand with you.

Not just today, but always.

THE WAY FORWARD: A CALL TO ACTION, RAPHAEL CHENUIL-HAZAN

Director of ECPM

As we move toward the World Congress Against the Death Penalty in Paris in 2026, this Call to Action sets out key country-specific priorities to accelerate political, judicial, and civil society engagement across Asia.

Japan

Relaunch the Parliamentary Group on the Death Penalty

- Resume activities of the Parliamentary Working Group (meetings, hearings, public initiatives).
- Mobilize parliamentarians to join and actively support the Working Group.

South Korea

Strengthen High-Level Political Mobilization

- Call on NGOs to support coordinated political advocacy in preparation for Paris 2026.

Engage the Judiciary

- Encourage magistrates and judges, including members of the Constitutional Court, to participate in the World Congress in Paris.

North Korea (DPRK)

- Mobilize NGOs working on the DPRK to systematically raise the issue of the death penalty.
- Call on the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the DPRK to include the death penalty as a full and distinct item in her March 2026 report to the Human Rights Council.
- Strengthen coordination among NGOs by encouraging collaboration with ECPM, membership in the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty, and participation in the World Congress in Paris.

China

Promote Transparency

- Call on the Chinese authorities to enhance transparency regarding the use of the death penalty as a critical step toward accountability and reform.

Taiwan

- Encourage Taiwan to move decisively toward full abolition of the death penalty and to serve as a positive regional example, including in dialogue with China.

Singapore

- Call for a moratorium on executions and for the establishment of conditions enabling a calm, informed, and inclusive public debate on the death penalty.

Mongolia

- Encourage Mongolia to take a more active leadership role on the international stage through strong and visible abolitionist diplomacy.

Malaysia

- Support the next steps toward full abolition following the abolition of the mandatory death penalty.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Work on the programme began in March 2025, under the coordination of the Academic Committee, which identified and prioritised the key themes structuring the Congress, drawing on a collective and iterative process. The objective was not to be exhaustive, but to reflect the most pressing issues and dynamics related to the death penalty in East Asia.

From the outset, the programme was conceived to ensure balance and plurality — in terms of gender, regional representation and perspectives — bringing together researchers, lawyers, journalists, policymakers, former judges, civil society actors, parliamentarians and members of the United Nations system. The work of the Academic Committee was coordinated by Carole Berrih, Associate Researcher at Université Grenoble Alpes and Invited Researcher at Ryukoku University-Kyoto, Japan. Its members are listed below.

MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMIC COMMITTEE:

- **Carolyn Hoyle**, Professor of Criminology and Director of the Death Penalty Research Unit at University of Oxford
- **Sara Kowal**, Deputy Convenor of the Executive Committee of the ADPAN
- **Hsin-Yi Lin**, Executive Director of the Taiwan Alliance to End the Death Penalty
- **Yasuhiro Maruyama**, Professor at Ritssho University
- **Karyn Nishimura-Poupée**, journalist
- **Teppei Ono**, Secretary General of CPR
- **Nobuko Otsuki**, defence lawyer and member of the Japan Federation of Bar Associations
- **Marie-Lina Perez**, Africa-Asia Programme Officer at ECPM

While the Academic Committee ensured the intellectual coherence of the Congress, its realisation depended on a broader collective effort. The Regional Congress in Tokyo was made possible by the sustained commitment of ECPM teams — staff members and volunteers — whose work before, during and after the event made the discussions possible in concrete terms. Coordination,

logistics, participant support, interpretation, communication, crisis management and follow-up all required continuous attention and adaptability. ECPM wishes to explicitly recognize all those who contributed to the organization and smooth running of the Congress, to ensure that the debates took place in conditions consistent with both the seriousness of the subject matter and respect for the people involved.



Members of the ECPM team

ANNEXES PROGRAMME RÉSUMÉ DU CONGRÈS

DAY 1 NOVEMBER 7, 2025

4:30 PM \ 6:00 PM

LOTUS HALL:

Building 13: Lift to B1/F

Opening session

Welcome remarks & keynote speeches, followed by the special testimony of

Ms. Hideko Hakamata (sister of Mr Iwao Hakamata, 46 years on death row in Japan)

DAY 2 NOVEMBER 8, 2025

All sessions on 8 and 9 November

will be held in Building 9: ground floor • B1 = workshops & Level -1 • B2 = plenary, roundtables and coffee break.

10:00 AM \ 12:00 PM

Level -1: room 9B21

Plenary session: A call for transparency: detention conditions of people sentenced to death

The plenary session aims to examine the lack of transparency surrounding conditions on death row, including solitary confinement, prohibiting family contact, and absence of advance notice before executions.

Moderator: Hsin-Yi Lin, Executive Director, Taiwan Alliance to End the Death Penalty (TAEDP)

• **Ethan Hee-Seok Shin**, Member of the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD), South Korea

• **Maiko Tagusari**, Professor at the Faculty of Contemporary Law, Tokyo Keizai University, Co-founder of Crimelife, Japan

• **Nicola Macbean**, Executive Director, The Rights Practice

12:00 PM \ 2:00 PM

Lunch break (meal not provided).

2:00 PM \ 3:30 PM

Level -1: room 9B22

Roundtable: Advocacy Pathways to Abolition: Promoting Political Dialogue

This roundtable is organized in partnership with the JFBA. It will explore strategies to open and sustain dialogue with national authorities. Speakers will share political success stories and approaches to overcoming resistance.

Moderator: Nobuko Otsuki, Former Secretariat Staff Member of the Roundtable for Reflecting upon the Death Penalty System of Japan, Member of the JFBA

Keynote speaker: Kazuhiro Nakamoto, former President of the JFBA

• **Oyungerel Tsedevdamba**, Chairperson of the Civic Unity Participation Party of Mongolia, former Minister of Culture, Tourism and Sports, former Member of Parliament

• **Ramkarpal Singh**, Malaysian Lawyer, Member of Parliament, former Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reforms)

• **Hideo Hiraoka**, Member of Parliament and former Minister of Justice of Japan.

2:00 PM \ 3:30 PM

Level 0: room 9B12

Workshop: Safety of Abolition Advocates

This workshop will address vicarious trauma, state repression, and public antipathy, faced by abolitionists. Participants will share strategies for protection and building resilience through solidarity.

Facilitator: Daisuke Sato, Senior Writer and Member of the Editorial Board, Kyodo News, Japan

3:30 PM \ 4:00 PM

Level -1: room 9B

Coffee break

4:00 PM \ 5:30 PM

Level -1: room 9B21

Roundtable: Beyond "the most serious crimes"

This roundtable will analyse the use of the death penalty for drug-related and other non-lethal offences, including political offences. It will also highlight the challenges of narrowing its scope, the implications of mandatory sentencing, and failures to comply with international human rights standards.

Moderator: Abdul Rashid Ismail, Lawyer, Messrs. Rashid Zulkifli, Malaysia

• **Elizabeth Salmón**, Professor of International Law at the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru and Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

• **Michelle Miao**, Associate Professor of Law from the Faculty of Law, Chinese University of Hong Kong

• **Derek Wong**, Lawyer, Phoenix Law Corporation, Singapore

4:00 PM \ 5:30 PM

Level 0: room 9B11

Workshop: Profile of people sentenced to death: Inequities Behind Death Sentences

The aim of this workshop is to create a regional map of the social and economic patterns behind death sentences. The criminalization of poverty and intersectional discrimination will be a key focus.

Facilitator: Ngeow ChowYing, Deputy Convenor, ADPAN

DAY 3 NOVEMBER 9, 2025

10:00 AM \ 11:30 AM

Level -1: room 9B21

Roundtable: Deconstructing Public Support for the Death Penalty

This roundtable will unpack the drivers of public opinion on capital punishment. Are polls neutral? How does knowledge of the administration of justice as well as cultural and socio-demographic variables influence support for or resistance to abolition? The roundtable will also explore strategies for reframing the public narrative.

Moderator: Kar-Yen Leong, Associate professor in Cognitive Sciences, National Chung Cheng University, Taiwan

• **Wing Cheong Chan**, Professor of Law, Yong Pung How School of Law, Singapore Management University

• **Thaatchayini Kananatu**, Senior Lecturer in Global Studies at the School of Arts and Social Sciences, Monash University Malaysia

• **Mai Sato**, Professor and Director, Institute for Crime & Justice Policy Research, School of Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Birkbeck, University of London

10:00 AM \ 11:30 AM

Level 0: room 9B11

Workshop: Legal Representation in Capital Cases

This workshop aims to develop recommendations for effective legal representation at all stages — from police investigation and arrest to execution. It will focus on systemic barriers, the role of the judiciary and of community-based support networks.

Facilitator: Khaizan Sharizad (Sherrie) Binti Ab Razak, Lawyer, Malaysia

10:00 AM \ 11:30 AM

Level 0: room 9B12

Side event Passing the Torch: Empowering the New Wave of Abolitionists

TBC

11:30 AM \ 1:00 PM

Level -1: room 9B22

Roundtable: Judges and Prosecutors on the Frontlines of Death Penalty Cases

This roundtable aims to understand the legal and ethical dilemmas faced by judges and prosecutors in capital cases. It will discuss possible approaches to discretion, and their potential role as allies in the abolitionist movement.

Moderator: Michael Hor, Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Hong Kong

• **Chien-Jung Chien**, Lawyer, former Supreme Court judge, Taiwan

• **Kiyoung Kim**, former Justice at the Constitutional Court, South Korea

11:30 AM \ 1:00 PM

Level 0: room 9B11

Workshop: Documenting the Death Penalty

The aim of this workshop is to identify best practices to collect, protect, and share reliable data on the death penalty. Participants will explore methods to overcome barriers to transparency, including the role of civil society and NHRIs.

Facilitator: Heo Yu-jeong, Journalist, Hankook Ilbo, South Korea

11:30 AM \ 1:00 PM

Level 0: room 9B13

Workshop: Inside death row: The Psychological Toll of Death Row

This workshop will explore the emotional and psychological impact of death row on detainees, prison staff, and others in proximity to executions (families of detainees, of victims). An emphasis will be made on mental health consequences and institutional responsibilities.

Facilitator: Toshi Kazama, Photographer, Member of ADPAN Executive Committee

1:00 PM \ 3:00 PM

Lunch break (meal not provided).

2:15 PM \ 3:00 PM

Coffee

3:00 PM \ 5:00 PM

Level -1: room 9B21

Closing session

Simultaneous or consecutive interpretation in English-Japanese-English will be available at most sessions

ANNEXES ELÉMENTS DE LA REVUE DE PRESSE

- 04/11/2025 - KYODO NEWS (Japon) : « *Promouvoir l'abolition de la peine de mort en Asie de l'Est Conférence internationale à Tokyo à partir du 7 novembre* ».
- Language: Japanese (Translated in French). Page 69.
- 06/11/2025 - RFI (France) : « *Corea del Norte, ¿dispuesta a escuchar a la ONU acerca de la pena de muerte?* ».
- Language: Spanish. Pages 70-71.
- 06/11/2025 - IRISH TIMES (Ireland) : « *Japan's death penalty in the spotlight after inmate freed from decades on death row* ».
- Language: English. Pages 72-74.
- 08/11/2025 - RFI (France) : « *La jeunesse a un nouveau rôle à jouer dans le combat pour l'abolition universelle* ».
- Language: French). Page 75.
- 18/11/2025 - THE DIPLOMAT (South Korea) : « *North Korea's Execution State: When Law Becomes a Tool of Terror* ».
- Language: English. Pages 76-82.



2025年11月04日 18:55:47 共X3T1085外信067S

東アジアで死刑廃止促進を 7日から東京で国際会議

フランスの非政府組織（NGO）「ともに死刑廃止」のラファエル・シュニユイユアザン事務局長は4日、東京都内で記者会見し、日本や中国、北朝鮮などが死刑を続ける東アジア地域に関し「廃止を推し進める時だ」と訴えた。日本のNPO法人「監獄人権センター」と共に7～9日に東京で国際会議を開催する。

シュニユイユアザン氏は、東アジアでは韓国が1997年から死刑を執行しておらず、モンゴルは2017年に廃止したと指摘。日本は「死刑をまだ行っている数少ない民主主義国の一つだ」と話し「廃止は世界的な潮流。問題は（実現するかどう）かではなく）いつするかだけだ」と訴えた。

監獄人権センター代表の海渡雄一（かいど・ゆういち）弁護士は「日本の政治家に死刑廃止の考えがあっても口に出すのは難しい。次の選挙で落ちる可能性があるからだ」と説明し、法務省の官僚らが意見を述べるべきだとの見解を示した。

会議は立正大・品川キャンパス（東京都）で開催。1966年の静岡県一家4人殺害事件で死刑判決を受け、再審無罪が確定した袴田巖（はかまた・いわお）さんの姉ひで子（ひでこ）さんも参加する。



<https://www.rfi.fr/es/programas/enfoque-internacional/20251106-corea-del-norte-dispuesta-a-escuchar-a-la-onu-acerca-de-la-pena-de-muerte>



ENFOQUE INTERNACIONAL

Corea del Norte, ¿dispuesta a escuchar a la ONU acerca de la pena de muerte?

Primera modificación: 06/11/2025 - 16:14
Escuchar - 03:47

Este viernes comienza en Tokio un Congreso sobre la pena de muerte en Asia Oriental, organizada por asociaciones abolicionistas de la región y Juntos Contra la Pena de Muerte. Países como Corea del Norte siguen aplicando ejecuciones, en su gran mayoría fuera de la vista de la comunidad internacional, y han sido señalados por defensores de derechos humanos. RFI conversó con Elizabeth Salmón, relatora de la ONU para los derechos humanos en la República Popular Democrática de Corea.



Una policía penitenciaria norcoreana monta guardia detrás de las vallas de una cárcel a orillas del río Yalu, cerca del condado de Chongsong, en Corea del Norte, frente a la ciudad fronteriza china de Dandong, el 8 de mayo de 2011. Reuters

Se le conoce como **Corea del Norte**, pero en Naciones Unidas su nombre oficial es República Popular Democrática de Corea - o RPDC. La peruana Elizabeth Salmón es relatora de la ONU para los derechos humanos en ese país y entre sus tareas se encuentra la de monitorear cómo se imparte justicia en el terreno, donde no hay un equipo de Naciones Unidas. El derecho internacional exige que los Estados que no han abolido la pena de muerte solo la apliquen a los crímenes o delitos de extrema gravedad.

"En el caso de la República Popular Democrática de Corea, sin embargo, lo que tenemos es que existen alrededor de 40 posibles delitos que podrían terminar siendo objeto de pena de muerte", apunta Salmón.

Entre los delitos castigados con muerte están aquellos vinculados a la comercialización de droga, prostitución y trata de personas.

Se incluye también algo "tremendamente llamativo, el consumo de información de lo que se llama naciones hostiles o enemigas, que básicamente se refieren a Corea del Sur". Salmón participa en Tokio en el Congreso regional sobre la pena de muerte en **Asia** Oriental, del 7 al 9 de noviembre.

Aunque es imposible establecer cifras, tuvo acceso a casos de ejecuciones incompatibles con el estándar de castigo a "delitos más graves".

"Como relatora, junto con otros relatores de Naciones Unidas, levantamos la voz y enviamos comunicaciones a la RPDC porque llegó a nuestro conocimiento el caso de 11 mujeres que habían sido repatriadas de China y que fueron sometidas el 31 de agosto de 2024 a un juicio público en el que se les acusaba de haber cometido el delito de tráfico humano y esclavitud sexual. Dos de estas mujeres fueron ejecutadas ese mismo día", explicó.

Dos recomendaciones aceptadas

La RPDC ha participado en varios ciclos del Examen Periódico Universal, el mecanismo del Consejo de Derechos Humanos de Naciones Unidas para vigilar que se cumplan obligaciones. "En noviembre de 2024, en su cuarto ciclo, por primera vez en la historia de este mecanismo, aceptó dos recomendaciones que tienen que ver precisamente con el tema de la pena de muerte", aseguró la relatora.

Chile pedía reducir los casos castigables con la pena de muerte mientras que Países Bajos le solicitó restringir la pena de muerte a los crímenes más serios del derecho.

"A pesar de que tradicionalmente la RPDC no ha querido conversar sobre este tema, en el año 2024 ha aceptado estas dos recomendaciones, que considero tremendamente importantes. Podría ser un signo para poder conversar en el futuro, y ojalá que se tomen en serio estas dos recomendaciones y puedan, en su próximo ciclo o incluso antes, presentar elementos positivos, reformas normativas, restricciones y protocolos que garanticen el derecho a la vida".

Salmón apunta además que, al realizar ejecuciones públicas, Pyongyang busca desalentar cualquier crítica en la ciudadanía.

Por: **Melissa Barra**

THE IRISH TIMES

<https://www.irishtimes.com/world/asia-pacific/2025/11/06/japans-death-penalty-in-the-spotlight-after-inmate-freed-from-decades-on-death-row/>

Asia-Pacific

Japan's death penalty in the spotlight after inmate freed from decades on death row Experts gather in Tokyo this weekend to push for abolition of the death penalty in Asia



Serial killer Takahiro Shiraishi was executed in June. Photograph: STR/AFP/Getty Images



David McNeill in Tokyo

Thu Nov 06 2025 - 11:53 • 4 MIN READ

Dubbed the "Twitter Killer", Takahiro Shiraishi trawled social media for posts by suicidal young women and lured them to his apartment outside Tokyo. Before being caught in 2017, he had murdered nine people, including three teenage girls, who he also raped and mutilated. His Twitter handle loosely translated as "hangman".

Shiraishi was [executed](#) in June, using the “long drop” hanging method that Japan borrowed from the UK in the 19th century. Prison guards placed him over a trapdoor and three of their colleagues simultaneously pressed release buttons, only one of which sent him to his death. The method is designed to disperse responsibility and assuage guilt.

Japan is the only G7 country, apart from the United States, that retains the right to legally execute its own citizens. Shiraishi’s hanging was quickly condemned by the European Union. Japan responds to such criticism by pointing to the death penalty’s popularity with the public: a [survey](#) published earlier this year found support at over 83 per cent.



Death row inmate Iwao Hakamada (L), flanked by his sister Hideko, was released from Tokyo Detention House after serving more than 30 years. Photograph: Kyodo/Reuters

But the system has been thrown into crisis by the final acquittal last year of [Iwao Hakamada](#), often called the world’s longest-serving death-row inmate. The former boxer was convicted of murdering a family of four in 1968 and spent nearly half a century waiting in a small cell to be hanged on fabricated evidence.

His release, and revelations about his life behind bars, which pushed him into mental illness, triggered a [rare media debate](#) about the gallows and the difficulty of reversing a miscarriage of justice. Hakamada is one of only five prisoners released from Japan’s death row since 1945.

Nearly half of the 105 people on death row in Japan are appealing for a retrial, according to Yuji Ogawara of the Japan Federation of Bar Associations (JFBA). “There are surely more cases where innocent people have been executed,” he says. “The only way to avoid such mistakes is to abolish the death penalty.”

Since Hakamada’s acquittal, a panel of politicians, prosecutors and senior police, under the initiative of the JFBA, have recommended setting up an official parliamentary body to “fundamentally re-examine” capital punishment, but the government has yet to agree.

There is little expectation that right-wing prime minister Sanae Takaichi will get behind an inquiry.

In the meantime, death penalty abolitionists are [gathering in Tokyo](#) this weekend to demand Japan and the rest of East Asia scrap the state’s ultimate sanction. “The trend toward abolition worldwide is irreversible,” says Raphael Chenuil-Hazan, who leads Together Against the Death Penalty, a French lobby group. “Like slavery and torture, the abolition of the death penalty is inevitable.”

Despite competition from the Middle East, [particularly Iran](#) and Saudi Arabia, governments in East Asia execute more people than anywhere else in the world. That’s largely thanks to China, [the world’s leading executioner](#), according to Amnesty International. While data on Chinese executions is kept secret, many estimates put the number at several thousand a year.

Just 20 nations use the death penalty on a regular basis, and only a handful of democracies – notably Japan, India and the US.

US president Donald Trump used an executive order to reinstate the federal death penalty on his first day office in January, but long-term [public opinion](#) appears to be moving against its use nationwide.

In practice, Japan reserves the gallows for exceptionally heinous crimes (the last execution before Shiraishi was [Tomohiro Kato](#), who killed seven people in a 2008 rampage through a crowded Tokyo shopping district).

But what abolitionist politician Nobuto Hosaka calls the “peculiar cruelties” of the system in Japan have drawn unwelcome attention since the Hakamada case.

Death row inmates in Japanese jails are kept in solitary confinement and forced to wait for years, and sometimes decades, while the legal system grinds on. A prison rule that inmates cannot be told of their execution until the morning it happens means they live every day believing it will be their last.

Once the justice minister signs an execution order, condemned inmates have minutes to get their affairs in order before dying. There is no time to say goodbye to families. Like the prisoners, the guards are told only on the day of an order when an execution is to be carried out and are frequently rotated to prevent them building up feelings of empathy with their charges.

So secretive are the authorities regarding Japan’s gallows that even elected politicians must surrender recording and photographic equipment when they visit detention houses that carry out executions.

Abolitionists point to [fresh surveys](#) showing that a record 16.5 per cent of Japanese want the death penalty scrapped since the Hakamada case. Given this background, Ogawara believes the execution of Shiraishi is “symbolic”. “It is meant to show the public the importance of the death penalty in Japan.”



LE GRAND INVITÉ INTERNATIONAL

Peine de mort : «La jeunesse a un nouveau rôle à jouer dans le combat pour l'abolition universelle»

Publié le : 08/11/2025 - 09:21
Écouter - 08:33

C'est la région du monde où on exécute le plus : l'Asie, où 948 nouvelles condamnations à mort avaient été prononcées l'année dernière, selon les chiffres disponibles, et ils sont encore très parcellaires. Au total, une vingtaine de pays, du continent, de l'Iran à la Chine en passant par les Maldives, continuent d'appliquer la peine capitale. C'est dans ce contexte que s'est ouvert vendredi à Tokyo, le cinquième Congrès régional sur la peine de mort, à l'initiative du collectif Ensemble contre la peine de mort. Son directeur, Raphaël Chenuil-Hazan, est, ce matin, notre grand invité international.



Le directeur général de l'ONG française « Ensemble contre la peine de mort », Raphaël Chenuil-Hazan à Paris, le 15 septembre 2024. © AFP - SAMEER AL-DOUMY

Par : Pierre Boudias

THE | DIPLOMAT

THE KOREAS | SOCIETY | EAST ASIA

North Korea's Execution State: When Law Becomes a Tool of Terror

Public executions showcase that the death penalty in North Korea continues to function as a political tool.

By Lee Sang-yong

November 18, 2025



Credit: Depositphotos



At the Fifth East Asian Forum for the Abolition of the Death Penalty in Tokyo, participants [emphasized](#) that abolishing capital punishment is crucial for protecting human dignity, calling it “state violence masked as justice.”

However, around the same time, a completely different scene unfolded in Pyongyang. A couple in their 50s who had made significant money selling bicycle parts were publicly [executed](#) by firing squad in front of hundreds of people. This stark contrast symbolically demonstrates that the death penalty in North Korea continues to function as a political tool of terror-based governance.

This public execution took place in mid-October at an open area in Pyongyang's Mirim district. It was originally scheduled for the Sadong District shooting range, but authorities suddenly changed the location and mandated attendance by approximately 200 or more people, including nearby market managers and stall supervisors.

Parents with nowhere to leave their children brought them along, and even passing middle school students watched the scene. While authorities explained this as “a warning to block economic disorder and provide ideological education to citizens,” it was a ritual of terror designed to imprint on people the message that the state can take your life at any time.

The Kim Jong Un Era: The “Normalization of Executions”

Under the Kim Jong Un regime, North Korea's legal system has expanded dramatically. However, this expansion has meant not the expansion of freedom and human rights, but rather the refinement of control. Looking at the laws enacted and amended since 2020 as shown in the table below, a common trend is clear: the use of executions as a tool for maintaining the regime. This represents the result of laws redefining people's everyday actions as political threats, going beyond crime prevention or the maintenance of social order.

North Korean Laws Specifying "Death Penalty" Since 2020

Law Name	Enactment/Amendment Period	Major Provisions Related to Death Penalty
Emergency Quarantine Law	Enacted Aug 2020 / Amended Oct 2021	Articles 68, 72, 73: Life imprisonment or death penalty if violations of quarantine orders, blockade failures, or quarantine obstruction cause extremely serious consequences
Law on Rejecting Reactionary Ideology and Culture	Enacted Dec 2020 / Amended Aug 2022	Article 27 (Crime of Spreading Puppet Ideology and Culture): Death penalty removed in 2022 amendment, maximum sentence is life imprisonment. Article 28 (Crime of Spreading Hostile State Ideology and Culture): Life imprisonment or death penalty maintained. Article 29 (Crime of Spreading Pornography and Superstition): Death penalty maintained
Drug Crime Prevention Law	Enacted July 2021	Articles 23, 24, 28, 29: Life imprisonment or death penalty with property confiscation for extremely serious cases of mass production, smuggling, distribution, etc.
Pyongyang Cultural Language Protection Law	Enacted Jan 2023	Life imprisonment or death penalty for using or distributing South Korean language, expressions, or writing when the crime is very serious
Enemy Material Handling Law	Enacted Feb 2023	Up to death penalty possible if concealing or distributing enemy materials such as anti-North leaflets or USB drives causes serious consequences
Disaster Prevention and Rescue/Recovery Law	Amended 2022	New provision allowing death penalty when obstruction or negligence in disaster response causes major damage

Table: Daily NK, *Source: Daily NK - Created with Tablesgenerator

Specifically, the enactment of the Emergency Quarantine Law, the Law on Rejecting Reactionary Ideology and Culture, and the Pyongyang Cultural Language Protection Law following COVID-19 has subjected the daily lives of North Koreans to increased regulation and oversight. Watching Korean dramas, using South Korean phrases, or possessing external USB drives are now considered "system-subverting acts" in North Korea. This demonstrates that law in North Korea serves as a tool for instilling fear.

To put it simply, the law has shifted from being a safeguard for citizens to serving as a tool that demands allegiance to the regime. Specifically, execution is now recognized as a symbolic method of control, linking acts of defiance against the regime directly to matters of life and death.

North Korea's legal system has evolved into a regime-driven structure that influences every aspect of thought, speech, action, and morality. In this society, where punishment serves to intimidate rather than rehabilitate, the law operates purely as an extension of politics to uphold the regime, distancing itself entirely from the concept of justice.

It is widely acknowledged that North Korea maintains conditions under which summary executions may be carried out without recourse to a court verdict: 1. When North Korean soldiers participating in the Ukraine war [violate military law](#), 2. When overseas dispatched IT workers [attempt to escape](#), and 3. When river crossing or escape attempts are [detected](#) in the China-North Korea border region

In these three cases, orders for “on-the-spot summary execution” can be issued. However, this clearly corresponds to extrajudicial killings prohibited by international human rights law. In particular, it demonstrates that North Korea’s death penalty system has reached the stage of normalizing state violence, rather than being merely a matter of the legal system.

A Key Consideration in Debates on Death Penalty Abolition

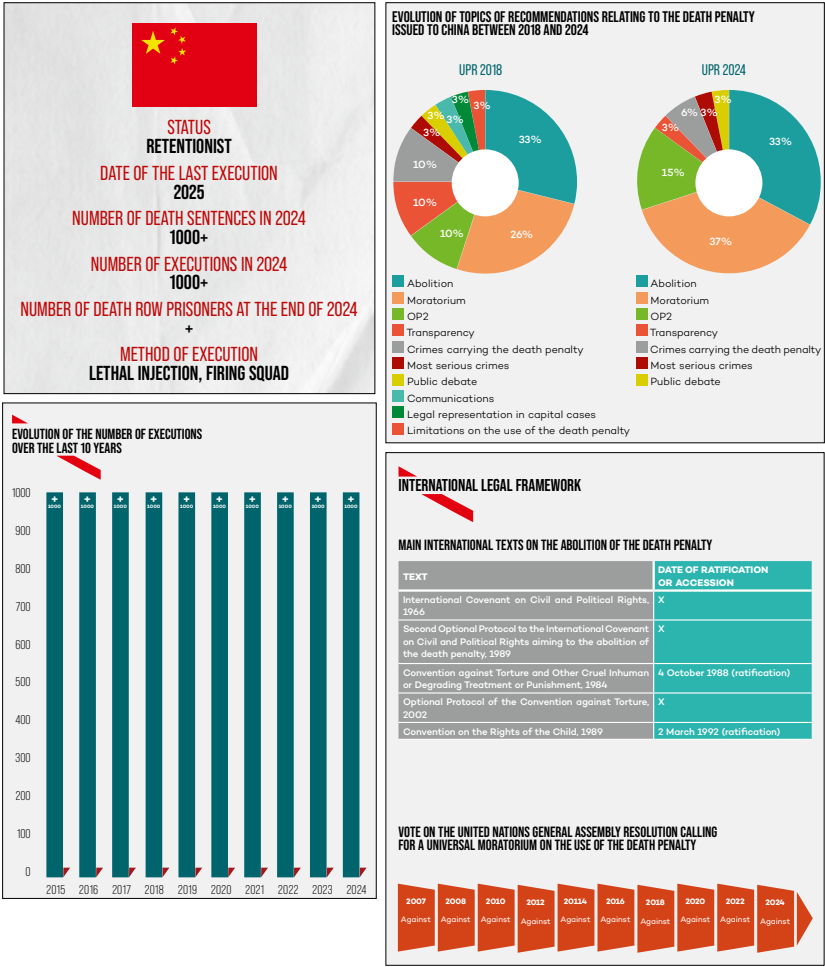
The death penalty abolition forum in Tokyo highlighted that execution concerns human dignity, not just legal change. Countries debated the limits of state power over life, but these discussions have not influenced North Korea.

In North Korea, daily life is closely aligned with state objectives and propaganda. Social order is maintained primarily through the authority of security forces rather than legal frameworks, and silence is upheld by means of intimidation rather than judicial proceedings. As noted by U.N. Special Rapporteur on North Korean Human Rights Elizabeth Salmon during the East Asian Forum, “the expanded application of the death penalty system is causing serious conflict with international human rights standards.”

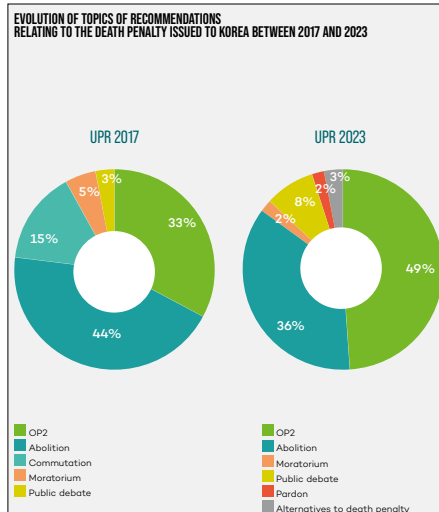
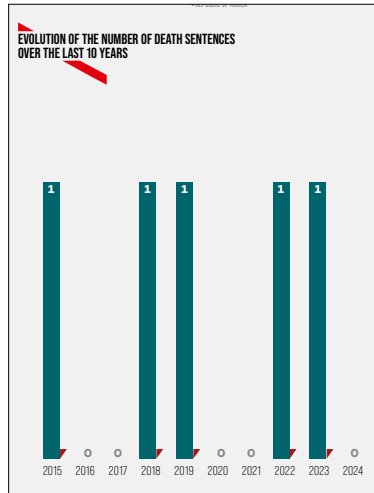
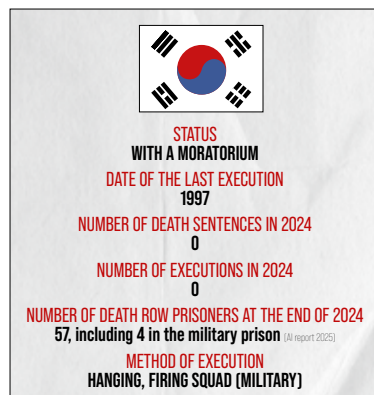
On the same day that Tokyo emphasized the importance of dignity, Pyongyang demonstrated its military presence once again. The cessation of such actions would mark a pivotal moment at which residents of North Korea could reclaim both their inherent dignity and right to life, thereby realizing the abolition of the death penalty not only as a stated goal but also as a substantive reality.

ANNEXES KEY FACTS AND FIGURES FROM THE REGION

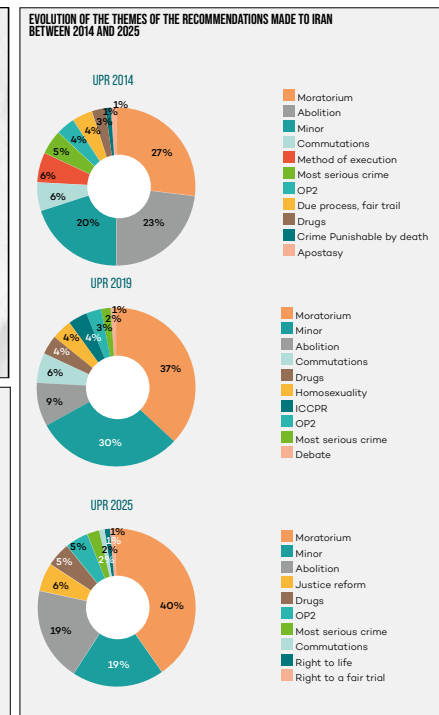
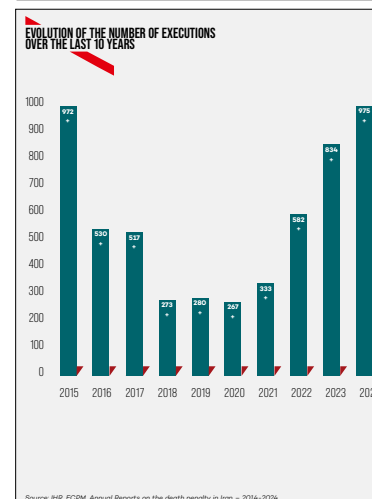
CHINA

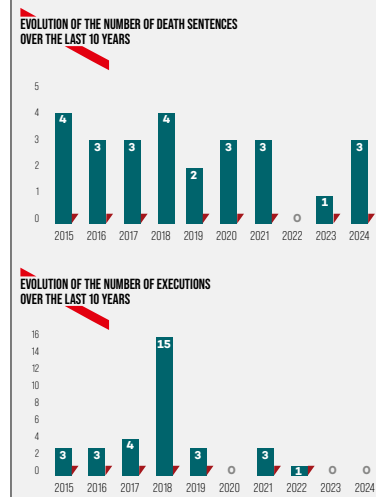
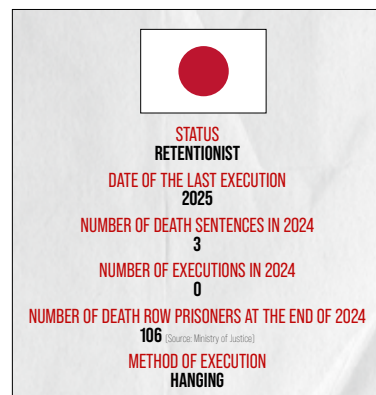


SOUTH KOREA

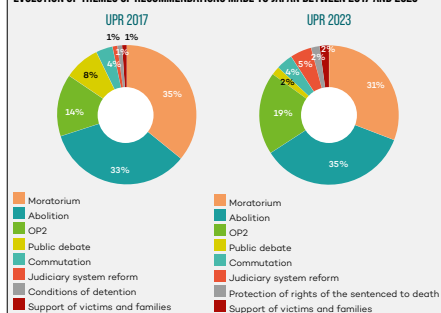


IRAN





EVOLUTION OF THEMES OF RECOMMENDATIONS MADE TO JAPAN BETWEEN 2017 AND 2023

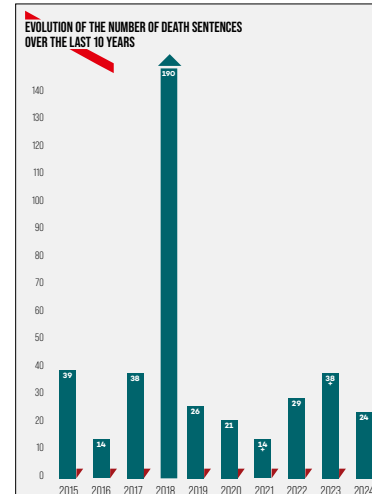
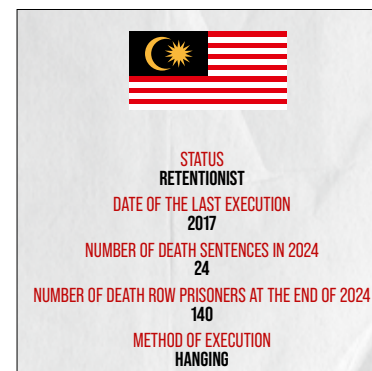


INTERNATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK

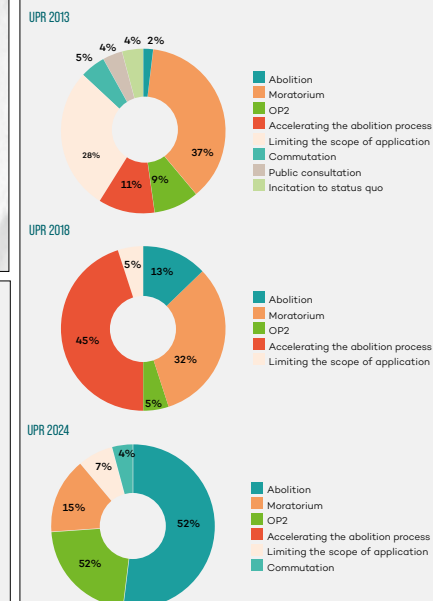
MAIN INTERNATIONAL TEXTS ON THE ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY

TEXT	DATE OF RATIFICATION OR ACCESSION
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966	21 June 1979 (ratification)
Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, 1989	X
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 1984	29 June 1999 (accession)
Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 2002	X
Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989	22 April 1994 (ratification)

VOTE ON THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A UNIVERSAL MORATORIUM ON THE USE OF THE DEATH PENALTY



EVOLUTION OF TOPICS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO THE DEATH PENALTY ISSUED TO MALAYSIA BETWEEN 2013 AND 2018



INTERNATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK

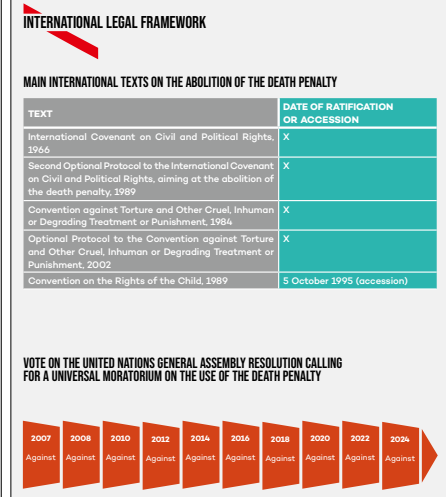
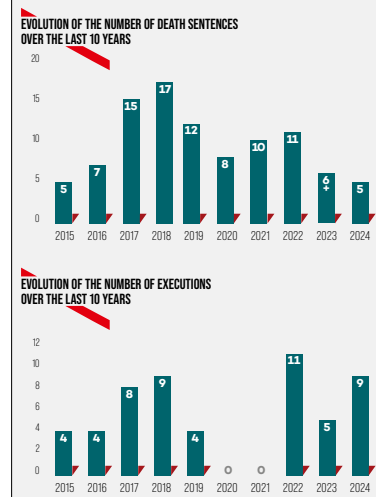
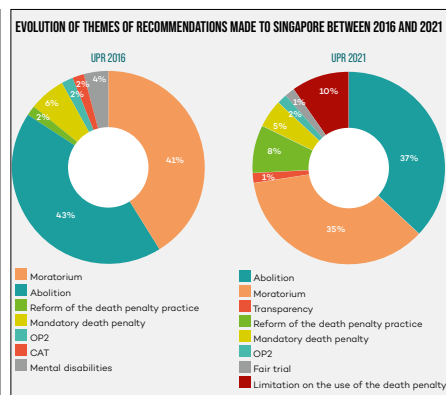
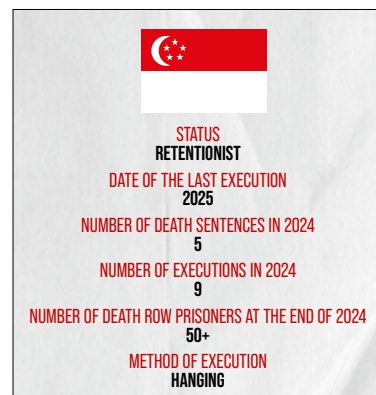
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Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, 1989	X
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 1984	X
Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 2002	X
Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989	17 February 1995 (accession)

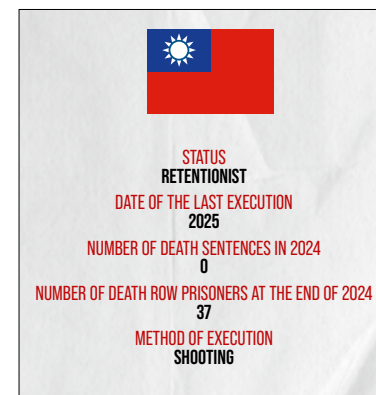
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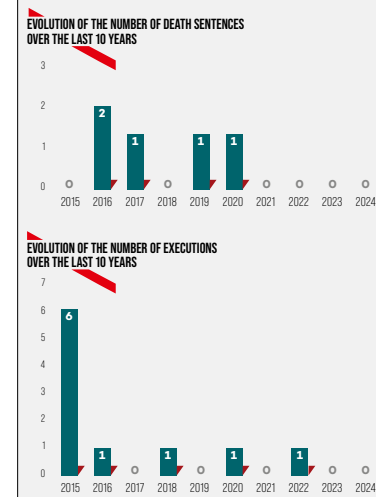
SINGAPORE



TAIWAN



TEXT	DATE OF RATIFICATION OR ACCESSION
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966	N/A Incorporated into national law on 31 March 2009
Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, 1989	N/A
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 1984	N/A
Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 2002	N/A
Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989	N/A Incorporated into national law on 20 November 2014





June 2026