



ORAL STATEMENT FOR THE UPR OUTCOME OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

42ND SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL – 19 SEPTEMBER 2019

Thank you, Mr. Vice-President.

Together Against the Death Penalty, Culture for Peace and Justice, the Advocates for Human Rights and the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty welcome the adoption of the report of the Working Group for the Universal Periodic Review concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Although the DRC has sustained a de facto moratorium on executions since 2003, death sentences continue to be imposed. Last year, approximately 41 death sentences were handed down. The use of the death penalty is characterized by a lack of transparency; it is estimated that 300 people are currently held on death row.

At least 19 offences still carry the death penalty, including some that do not meet the threshold of 'most serious crimes'.

Despite a favourable vote within the 3rd Committee in 2018, the DRC has never voted in favor of the United Nations resolution for a universal moratorium on the use of the death penalty, having always abstained or been absent during the vote in plenary session of the General Assembly

We remind this Council that the death penalty has no demonstrable deterrent effect, that it will not lead us to a more secure society, and that it is being applied in a manner that is inconsistent with international obligations.

With this in mind, it is disappointing to discover that the DRC has not yet been moved to accept the recommendations contained within the Working Group's report; to formally abolish the death penalty, to commute all death sentences and to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR.

As we are convinced that the abolition of the death penalty is necessary to ensure the preservation of human dignity and the development of human rights, we call upon the DRC to strengthen its efforts towards ending the practice.

Our organizations invite the international community to support the DRC on this path.

Thank you.