

National Assembly of Gambia
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THE GAMBIA

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Abolish The Death Penalty

Dear Honourable Members of the National Assembly,

As you consider the Constitution of the Republic of The Gambia (Promulgation) Bill, 2024, I urge you to use the opportunity to expressly abolish the death penalty for all crimes in the new Constitution of Gambia.

In the last few years, Gambia has made remarkable progress against the death penalty. Since February 2018, Gambia has had an official moratorium on executions in place. On 28 September 2018, Gambia became a party to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. As a state party to the treaty, Gambia has the obligation not to carry out executions and shall take all necessary measures to abolish the death penalty within its jurisdiction.

The death penalty violates the right to life as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and it is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment. There is no credible and convincing evidence that the death penalty has a greater deterrent effect on crime than other punishments like prison terms. The death penalty does not make people and their communities safer, but simply entrenches further brutalization and disregard for human life in the society.

The majority of countries in the world – 113 – have abolished the death penalty for all crimes, while close to three quarters of the countries in the world – 144 – have abolished the punishment in law or practice. In Africa, 24 countries have abolished the death penalty for all crimes while two countries have abolished it for ordinary crimes only.

The abolition of the death penalty in Gambia would be an important, internationally welcomed, achievement for the country. It will also demonstrate the government's commitment to promoting, protecting and fulfilling human rights for all in Gambia.

I thank you for your kind consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Please send your letters to the postal and email addresses above, with copies sent by post to the Gambian embassy in your country.