



Rappresentanza Permanente d'Italia
OSCE

INTERVENTO DELL'ITALIA ALLA
CONFERENZA INTERNAZIONALE SULLA PENA DI MORTE
(OSCE, 4 maggio 2021)

Amb. Stefano Baldi

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

Italy wishes to thank the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union for organizing this International Conference, another important occasion to mark the EU commitment to the global campaign against death penalty.

Italy has a very long tradition in opposing death penalty, being at the forefront of the global campaign to abolish the death penalty since its beginning in the General Assembly, back in the 1990s.

We firmly believe that death penalty is an inhuman and degrading punishment; it is not a deterrent to crime, while it makes judicial mistakes fatally irreversible.

We are fully engaged in the global campaign for the abolition of death penalty and we are committed to contribute achieving this goal also by means of the UNGA Resolution for a universal moratorium on the use of the death penalty.

Over the years, support for UNGA Resolution for a universal moratorium on the use of the death penalty has continued to grow: last December the Resolution was approved in New York with the support of 123 states, a new record number.

We welcome the significant progress made so far but the goal of the global de iure abolition of death penalty is still way off and we will continue to work for this achievement.

Campaigning against death penalty requires a constant and sincere effort to listen to those Governments and societies who hold a different position, to respectfully engage with them to find alternative answers to their needs, to win their hearts and their minds.

In this process, it is essential to promote awareness, through the debate on the true effects of the death penalty on people sentenced, often unjustly, on their families, on society.

In this respect, we commend ODIHR for their annual background paper, dealing with topics of great interests. The last issue was dedicated to “whether the death penalty constitutes an inherently arbitrary form of punishment” and we found it particularly relevant. We look forward to the 2021 volume

Over the years, Italy has contributed to several initiatives to raise awareness about the stronger impact of death penalty on the most vulnerable persons (mainly persons living in poverty and/or belonging to minorities) and about the many other good reasons to stop killing in the name of justice.

The debate must also be stimulated on alternative measures and on the role of crime prevention, infinitely more effective and sustainable over time than punishment and fear.

It is indeed essential to promote debate at all levels: within the society, among individuals and countries, between Governments and Parliaments, and also supporting the civil society organisations’ priceless work.

To improve collaboration with civil society on this issue, in 2014 we set up a MFA-civil society coordination Task Force, involving the Italian civil society organizations most active in the campaign against the death penalty (Community of Sant’Egidio, Hands Off Cain and the Italian Section of Amnesty International).

Let me conclude just remind that campaigning for the abolition of death penalty is not only about promoting policies, legislative changes and judicial decisions. It is, first and foremost, about promoting the supreme value of the dignity of every single human being.