

## V. Capital punishment

### 18. Capital punishment\*

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 2393 (XXIII) of 26 November 1968 concerning the application of the most careful legal procedures and the greatest possible safeguards for the accused in capital cases as well as the attitude of Member States to possible further restriction of the use of capital punishment or to its total abolition,

*Taking note* of the section of the report of the Economic and Social Council<sup>1</sup> concerning the consideration by the Council of the report on capital punishment<sup>2</sup> submitted by the Secretary-General in implementation of the aforementioned resolution,

*Taking note* of the Economic and Social Council resolution 1574 (L) of 20 May 1971,

*Expressing* the desirability of continuing and extending the consideration of the question of capital punishment by the United Nations,

1. *Notes with satisfaction* the measures already taken by a number of States in order to ensure careful legal procedures and safeguards for the accused in capital cases in countries where the death penalty still exists;

2. *Considers* that further efforts should be made to ensure such procedures and safeguards in capital cases everywhere;

3. *Affirms* that, in order fully to guarantee the right to life, provided for in article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the main objective to be pursued is that of progressively restricting the number of offences for which capital punishment may be imposed, with a view to the desirability of abolishing this punishment in all countries;

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\*General Assembly resolution 2857 (XXVI).

<sup>1</sup>*Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/8403), chap. XVIII, sect. C.*

<sup>2</sup>E/4947 and Corr.1.

4. *Invites* Member States which have not yet done so to inform the Secretary-General of their legal procedures and safeguards as well as of their attitude to possible further restriction of the use of the death penalty or its total abolition, by providing the information requested in paragraphs 1 (c) and 2 of General Assembly resolution 2393 (XXIII);

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to circulate as soon as possible to Member States all the replies already received from Member States to the queries contained in paragraphs 1 (c) and 2 of resolution 2393 (XXXIII) and those to be received after the adoption of the present resolution, and to submit a supplementary report to the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-second session;

6. *Further requests* the Secretary-General, on the basis of material furnished in accordance with paragraph 4 above by Governments of Member States where capital punishment still exists, to prepare a separate report regarding practices and statutory rules which may govern the right of a person sentenced to capital punishment to petition for pardon, commutation or reprieve, and to submit that report to the General Assembly.

### **19. Safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty\***

1. In countries which have not abolished the death penalty, capital punishment may be imposed only for the most serious crimes, it being understood that their scope should not go beyond intentional crimes with lethal or other extremely grave consequences.
2. Capital punishment may be imposed only for a crime for which the death penalty is prescribed by law at the time of its commission, it being understood that if, subsequent to the commission of the crime, provision is made by law for the imposition of a lighter penalty, the offender shall benefit thereby.
3. Persons below 18 years of age at the time of the commission of the crime shall not be sentenced to death, nor shall the death sentence be carried out on pregnant women, or on new mothers, or on persons who have become insane.
4. Capital punishment may be imposed only when the guilt of the person charged is based upon clear and convincing evidence leaving no room for an alternative explanation of the facts.

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\*Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/50, annex.

5. Capital punishment may only be carried out pursuant to a final judgement rendered by a competent court after legal process which gives all possible safeguards to ensure a fair trial, at least equal to those contained in article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>1</sup> including the right of anyone suspected of or charged with a crime for which capital punishment may be imposed to adequate legal assistance at all stages of the proceedings.
6. Anyone sentenced to death shall have the right to appeal to a court of higher jurisdiction, and steps should be taken to ensure that such appeals shall become mandatory.
7. Anyone sentenced to death shall have the right to seek pardon, or commutation of sentence; pardon or commutation of sentence may be granted in all cases of capital punishment.
8. Capital punishment shall not be carried out pending any appeal or other recourse procedure or other proceeding relating to pardon or commutation of the sentence.
9. Where capital punishment occurs, it shall be carried out so as to inflict the minimum possible suffering.

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<sup>1</sup>General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

## **20. Implementation of the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty\***

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recalling* its resolution 1984/50 of 25 May 1984, in which it approved the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty,

*Recalling also* resolution 15 of the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders,<sup>1</sup>

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\*Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/64.

<sup>1</sup>See *Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. Milan, 26 August-6 September 1985: report prepared by the Secretariat* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.86.IV.1), chap. I, sect. E.

*Recalling further* section X of its resolution 1986/10 of 21 May 1986, in which it requested a study on the question of the death penalty and new contributions of the criminal sciences to the matter,

*Taking note of* the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty,<sup>2</sup>

*Noting with satisfaction* that a large number of Member States have provided the Secretary-General with information on the implementation of the safeguards and have made contributions,

*Noting with appreciation* the study on the question of the death penalty and the new contributions of the criminal sciences to the matter,<sup>3</sup>

*Alarmed* at the continued occurrence of practices incompatible with the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty,

*Aware* that effective implementation of those safeguards requires a review of relevant national legislation and the improved dissemination of the text to all persons and entities concerned with them, as specified in resolution 15 of the Seventh Congress,

*Convinced* that further progress should be achieved towards more effective implementation of the safeguards at the national level on the understanding that they shall not be invoked to delay or to prevent the abolition of capital punishment,

*Acknowledging* the need for comprehensive and accurate information and additional research about the implementation of the safeguards and the death penalty in general in every region of the world,

1. *Recommends* that Member States take steps to implement the safeguards and strengthen further the protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, where applicable, by:

(a) Affording special protection to persons facing charges for which the death penalty is provided by allowing time and facilities for the preparation of their defence, including the adequate assistance of counsel at every stage of the proceedings, above and beyond the protection afforded in non-capital cases;

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<sup>2</sup>E/AC.57/1988/9 and Corr.1 and 2.

<sup>3</sup>E/AC.57/1988/CRP.7.

(b) Providing for mandatory appeals or review with provisions for clemency or pardon in all cases of capital offence;

(c) Establishing a maximum age beyond which a person may not be sentenced to death or executed;

(d) Eliminating the death penalty for persons suffering from mental retardation or extremely limited mental competence, whether at the stage of sentence or execution;

2. *Invites* Member States to cooperate with specialized bodies, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and specialists in the field in efforts to conduct research on the use of the death penalty in every region of the world;

3. *Also invites* Member States to facilitate the efforts of the Secretary-General to gather comprehensive, timely and accurate information about the implementation of the safeguards and the death penalty in general;

4. *Further invites* Member States that have not yet done so to review the extent to which their legislation provides for the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty as set out in the annex to Council resolution 1984/50;

5. *Urges* Member States to publish, for each category of offence for which the death penalty is authorized, and if possible on an annual basis, information on the use of the death penalty, including the number of persons sentenced to death, the number of executions actually carried out, the number of persons under sentence of death, the number of death sentences reversed or commuted on appeal and the number of instances in which clemency has been granted, and to include information on the extent to which the safeguards referred to above are incorporated in national law;

6. *Recommends* that the report of the Secretary-General on the question of capital punishment, to be submitted to the Council in 1990, to pursuance of its resolution 1745 (LIV) of 16 May 1973, should henceforth cover the implementation of the safeguards as well as the use of capital punishment;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to publish the study on the question of the death penalty and the new contributions of the criminal sciences to the matter, prepared pursuant to Council resolution 1986/10, section X, and to make it available, with other relevant documentation, to the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.

## **21. Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extralegal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions\***

### **Prevention**

1. Governments shall prohibit by law all extralegal, arbitrary and summary executions and shall ensure that any such executions are recognized as offences under their criminal laws, and are punishable by appropriate penalties which take into account the seriousness of such offences. Exceptional circumstances including a state of war or threat of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency may not be invoked as a justification of such executions. Such executions shall not be carried out under any circumstances including, but not limited to, situations of internal armed conflict, excessive or illegal use of force by a public official or other person acting in an official capacity or by a person acting at the instigation, or with the consent or acquiescence of such person, and situations in which deaths occur in custody. This prohibition shall prevail over decrees issued by governmental authority.
2. In order to prevent extralegal, arbitrary and summary executions, Governments shall ensure strict control, including a clear chain of command over all officials responsible for apprehension, arrest, detention, custody and imprisonment, as well as those officials authorized by law to use force and firearms.
3. Governments shall prohibit orders from superior officers or public authorities authorizing or inciting other persons to carry out any such extralegal, arbitrary or summary executions. All persons shall have the right and the duty to defy such orders. Training of law enforcement officials shall emphasize the above provisions.
4. Effective protection through judicial or other means shall be guaranteed to individuals and groups who are in danger of extralegal, arbitrary or summary executions, including those who receive death threats.
5. No one shall be involuntarily returned or extradited to a country where there are substantial grounds for believing that he or she may become a victim of extralegal, arbitrary or summary execution in that country.
6. Governments shall ensure that persons deprived of their liberty are held in officially recognized places of custody, and that accurate information on their

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\*Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/65, annex.

custody and whereabouts, including transfers, is made promptly available to their relatives and lawyer or other persons of confidence.

7. Qualified inspectors, including medical personnel, or an equivalent independent authority, shall conduct inspections in places of custody on a regular basis, and be empowered to undertake unannounced inspections on their own initiative, with full guarantees of independence in the exercise of this function. The inspectors shall have unrestricted access to all persons in such places of custody, as well as to all their records.

8. Governments shall make every effort to prevent extralegal, arbitrary and summary executions through measures such as diplomatic intercession, improved access of complainants to intergovernmental and judicial bodies, and public denunciation. Intergovernmental mechanisms shall be used to investigate reports of any such executions and to take effective action against such practices. Governments, including those of countries where extralegal, arbitrary and summary executions are reasonably suspected to occur, shall cooperate fully in international investigations on the subject.

### **Investigation**

9. There shall be thorough, prompt and impartial investigation of all suspected cases of extralegal, arbitrary and summary executions, including cases where complaints by relatives or other reliable reports suggest unnatural death in the above circumstances. Governments shall maintain investigative offices and procedures to undertake such inquiries. The purpose of the investigation shall be to determine the cause, manner and time of death, the person responsible, and any pattern or practice which may have brought about that death. It shall include an adequate autopsy, collection and analysis of all physical and documentary evidence and statements from witnesses. The investigation shall distinguish between natural death, accidental death, suicide and homicide.

10. The investigative authority shall have the power to obtain all the information necessary to the inquiry. Those persons conducting the investigation shall have at their disposal all the necessary budgetary and technical resources for effective investigation. They shall also have the authority to oblige officials allegedly involved in any such executions to appear and testify. The same shall apply to any witness. To this end, they shall be entitled to issue summonses to witnesses, including the officials allegedly involved, and to demand the production of evidence.

11. In cases in which the established investigative procedures are inadequate because of lack of expertise or impartiality, because of the importance of the

matter or because of the apparent existence of a pattern of abuse, and in cases where there are complaints from the family of the victim about these inadequacies or other substantial reasons, Governments shall pursue investigations through an independent commission of inquiry or similar procedure. Members of such a commission shall be chosen for their recognized impartiality, competence and independence as individuals. In particular, they shall be independent of any institution, agency or person that may be the subject of the inquiry. The commission shall have the authority to obtain all information necessary to the inquiry and shall conduct the inquiry as provided for under these Principles.

12. The body of the deceased person shall not be disposed of until an adequate autopsy is conducted by a physician, who shall, if possible, be an expert in forensic pathology. Those conducting the autopsy shall have the right of access to all investigative data, to the place where the body was discovered, and to the place where the death is thought to have occurred. If the body has been buried and it later appears that an investigation is required, the body shall be promptly and competently exhumed for an autopsy. If skeletal remains are discovered, they should be carefully exhumed and studied according to systematic anthropological techniques.

13. The body of the deceased shall be available to those conducting the autopsy for a sufficient amount of time to enable a thorough investigation to be carried out. The autopsy shall, at a minimum, attempt to establish the identity of the deceased and the cause and manner of death. The time and place of death shall also be determined to the extent possible. Detailed colour photographs of the deceased shall be included in the autopsy report in order to document and support the findings of the investigation. The autopsy report must describe any and all injuries to the deceased including any evidence of torture.

14. In order to ensure objective results, those conducting the autopsy must be able to function impartially and independently of any potentially implicated persons or organizations or entities.

15. Complainants, witnesses, those conducting the investigation and their families shall be protected from violence, threats of violence or any other form of intimidation. Those potentially implicated in extralegal, arbitrary or summary executions shall be removed from any position of control or power, whether direct or indirect, over complainants, witnesses and their families, as well as over those conducting investigations.

16. Families of the deceased and their legal representatives shall be informed of, and have access to any hearing as well as to all information relevant to the

investigation, and shall be entitled to present other evidence. The family of the deceased shall have the right to insist that a medical or other qualified representative be present at the autopsy. When the identity of a deceased person has been determined, a notification of death shall be posted, and the family or relatives of the deceased shall be informed immediately. The body of the deceased shall be returned to them upon completion of the investigation.

17. A written report shall be made within a reasonable period of time on the methods and findings of such investigations. The report shall be made public immediately and shall include the scope of the inquiry, procedures and methods used to evaluate evidence as well as conclusions and recommendations based on findings of fact and on applicable law. The report shall also describe in detail specific events that were found to have occurred and the evidence upon which such findings were based, and list the names of witnesses who testified, with the exception of those whose identities have been withheld for their own protection. The Government shall, within a reasonable period of time, either reply to the report of the investigation, or indicate the steps to be taken in response to it.

### **Legal proceedings**

18. Governments shall ensure that persons identified by the investigation as having participated in extralegal, arbitrary or summary executions in any territory under their jurisdiction are brought to justice. Governments shall either bring such persons to justice or cooperate to extradite any such persons to other countries wishing to exercise jurisdiction. This principle shall apply irrespective of who and where the perpetrators or the victims are, their nationalities or where the offence was committed.

19. Without prejudice to principle 3 above, an order from a superior officer or a public authority may not be invoked as a justification for extralegal, arbitrary or summary executions. Superiors, officers or other public officials may be held responsible for acts committed by officials under their authority if they had a reasonable opportunity to prevent such acts. In no circumstances, including a state of war, siege or other public emergency, shall blanket immunity from prosecution be granted to any person allegedly involved in extralegal, arbitrary or summary executions.

20. The families and dependents of victims of extralegal, arbitrary or summary executions shall be entitled to fair and adequate compensation within a reasonable period of time.

## **22. Safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty\***

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recalling* General Assembly resolutions 2857 (XXVI) of 20 December 1971 and 32/61 of 8 December 1977 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1745 (LIV) of 16 May 1973, 1930 (LVIII) of 6 May 1975, 1990/51 of 24 July 1990 and 1995/57 of 28 July 1995,

*Recalling also* article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>1</sup>

*Recalling further* the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, annexed to its resolution 1984/50 of 25 May 1984, and its resolution 1989/64 of 24 May 1989 on the implementation of the safeguards,

*Taking note* of the report of the Secretary-General on capital punishment and implementation of the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty,<sup>2</sup>

*Recalling* the Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extralegal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions, set forth in the annex to its resolution 1989/65 of 24 May 1989 and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 44/162 of 15 December 1989, and taking note of the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions concerning the death penalty contained in his report to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-second session,<sup>3</sup>

*Taking note* of Security Council resolution 827 (1993) of 25 May 1993, in which the Security Council decided to establish the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 and to adopt the statute of the International Tribunal annexed to the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 2 of Security Council resolution 808 (1993) of 22 February 1993,<sup>4</sup> and taking note also of Security

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\*Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/15.

<sup>1</sup>See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>2</sup>E/CN.15/1996/19.

<sup>3</sup>E/CN.4/1996/4 and Corr.1.

<sup>4</sup>See *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1993*, document S/25704 and Add.1.

Council resolution 955 (1994) of 8 November 1994, in which the Security Council decided to establish the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994 and to adopt the statute of the International Tribunal for Rwanda annexed to that resolution,

1. *Notes* that, during the period covered by the report of the Secretary-General on capital punishment and implementation of the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty,<sup>2</sup> an increasing number of countries abolished the death penalty and others followed a policy reducing the number of capital offences and declared that they had not sentenced any offender to that penalty, while still others retained it and a few reintroduced it;

2. *Calls upon* Member States in which the death penalty has not been abolished to effectively apply the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, which state that capital punishment may be imposed for only the most serious crimes, it being understood that their scope should not go beyond intentional crimes with lethal or other extremely grave consequences;

3. *Encourages* Member States in which the death penalty has not been abolished to ensure that each defendant facing a possible death sentence is given all guarantees to ensure a fair trial, as contained in article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>1</sup> and bearing in mind the Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary,<sup>5</sup> the Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers,<sup>6</sup> the Guidelines on the Role of Prosecutors,<sup>7</sup> the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment,<sup>8</sup> and the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners;<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>*Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Milan, Italy, 26 August-6 September 1985: report prepared by the Secretariat* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.86.IV.1), chap. I, sect. D.2, annex.

<sup>6</sup>*Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Havana, 27 August-7 September 1990: report prepared by the Secretariat* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.91.IV.1), chap. I, sect. B.3, annex.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, sect. C. 26.

<sup>8</sup>General Assembly resolution 43/173, annex.

<sup>9</sup>*First United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Geneva, 22 August-3 September 1955: report prepared by the Secretariat* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 1956.IV.4), annex I, sect. A.

4. *Also encourages* Member States in which the death penalty has not been abolished to ensure that defendants who do not sufficiently understand the language used in court are fully informed, by way of interpretation or translation, of all the charges against them and the content of the relevant evidence deliberated in court;

5. *Calls upon* Member States in which the death penalty may be carried out to allow adequate time for the preparation of appeals to a court of higher jurisdiction and for the completion of appeal proceedings, as well as petitions for clemency, in order to effectively apply rules 5 and 8 of the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty;

6. *Also calls upon* Member States in which the death penalty may be carried out to ensure that officials involved in decisions to carry out an execution are fully informed of the status of appeals and petitions for clemency of the prisoner in question;

7. *Urges* Member States in which the death penalty may be carried out to effectively apply the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, in order to keep to a minimum the suffering of prisoners under sentence of death and to avoid any exacerbation of such suffering.

### **23. The question of the death penalty\***

*The Commission on Human Rights,*

*Recalling* article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which affirms the right of everyone to life, article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and articles 6 and 37 (a) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

*Recalling also* General Assembly resolutions 2857 (XXVI) of 20 December 1971 and 32/61 of 8 December 1977, as well as resolution 44/128 of 15 December 1989, in which the Assembly adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty,

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\*Commission on Human Rights resolution 2003/67. (See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 3 (E/2003/23)*, chap. II, sect. A.)

*Recalling further* the relevant Economic and Social Council resolutions, 1984/50 of 25 May 1984, 1985/33 of 29 May 1985, 1989/64 of 24 May 1989, 1990/29 of 24 May 1990, 1990/51 of 24 July 1990 and 1996/15 of 23 July 1996,

*Recalling* its previous resolutions in which it expressed its conviction that abolition of the death penalty contributes to the enhancement of human dignity and to the progressive development of human rights,

*Noting* that, in some countries, the death penalty is often imposed after trials which do not conform to international standards of fairness and that persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities appear to be disproportionately subject to the death penalty, and condemning cases in which women are subjected to capital punishment on the basis of gender-discriminatory legislation,

*Welcoming* the exclusion of capital punishment from the penalties that the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the International Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Criminal Court are authorized to impose,

*Commending* the States that have recently become parties to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and welcoming the recent signature of the Second Optional Protocol by some States,

*Welcoming* the abolition of the death penalty which has taken place in some States since the last session of the Commission, and in particular in those States that have abolished the death penalty for all crimes,

*Welcoming also* the fact that many countries which still retain the death penalty in their penal legislation are applying a moratorium on executions,

*Welcoming further* regional initiatives aimed at the establishment of a moratorium on executions and the abolition of the death penalty,

*Referring* to the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, set out in the annex to Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/50,

*Deeply concerned* that several countries impose the death penalty in disregard of the limitations set out in the Covenant and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

*Concerned* that several countries, in imposing the death penalty, do not take into account the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty,

1. *Recalls* the sixth quinquennial report of the Secretary-General on capital punishment and implementation of the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, submitted in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/57 of 28 July 1995 (E/2000/3), and welcomes the yearly supplement which is the subject of the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.4/2003/106 and Add.1) on changes in law and practice concerning the death penalty worldwide, as requested in Commission resolution 2002/77 of 25 April 2002;

2. *Reaffirms* resolution 2000/17 of 17 August 2000 of the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights on international law and the imposition of the death penalty on those aged under 18 at the time of the commission of the offence;

3. *Calls upon* all States parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights that have not yet done so to consider acceding to or ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the Covenant, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty;

4. *Urges* all States that still maintain the death penalty:

(a) Not to impose it for crimes committed by persons below 18 years of age, and to exclude pregnant women from capital punishment;

(b) Not to impose the death penalty for any but the most serious crimes and only pursuant to a final judgement rendered by an independent and impartial competent court, and to ensure the right to a fair trial and the right to seek pardon or commutation of sentence;

(c) To ensure that all legal proceedings, including those before special tribunals or jurisdictions, and particularly those related to capital offences, conform to the minimum procedural guarantees contained in article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

(d) To ensure that the notion of “most serious crimes” does not go beyond intentional crimes with lethal or extremely grave consequences and that the death penalty is not imposed for non-violent acts such as financial crimes, non-violent religious practice or expression of conscience and sexual relations between consenting adults;

(e) Not to enter any new reservations under article 6 of the Covenant which may be contrary to the object and the purpose of the Covenant and to

withdraw any such existing reservations, given that article 6 enshrines the minimum rules for the protection of the right to life and the generally accepted standards in this area;

(f) To observe the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty and to comply fully with their international obligations, in particular with those under article 36 of the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, particularly the right to receive information on consular assistance within the context of a legal procedure;

(g) Not to impose the death penalty on a person suffering from any form of mental disorder or to execute any such person;

(h) To exclude mothers with dependent infants from capital punishment;

(i) To ensure that, where capital punishment occurs, it shall be carried out so as to inflict the minimum possible suffering and shall not be carried out in public or in any other degrading manner, and to ensure that any application of particularly cruel or inhuman means of execution, such as stoning, be stopped immediately;

(j) Not to execute any person as long as any related legal procedure, at the international or at the national level, is pending;

5. *Calls upon* all States that still maintain the death penalty:

(a) Progressively to restrict the number of offences for which the death penalty may be imposed and, at the least, not to extend its application to crimes to which it does not at present apply;

(b) To abolish the death penalty completely and, in the meantime, to establish a moratorium on executions;

(c) To make available to the public information with regard to the imposition of the death penalty and to any scheduled execution;

(d) To provide to the Secretary-General and relevant United Nations bodies information relating to the use of capital punishment and the observance of the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty as contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/50;

6. *Calls upon* States which no longer apply the death penalty but maintain it in their legislation to abolish it;

7. *Requests* States that have received a request for extradition on a capital charge to reserve explicitly the right to refuse extradition in the absence of effective assurances from relevant authorities of the requesting State that capital punishment will not be carried out;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit again to the Commission, at its sixtieth session, in consultation with Governments, specialized agencies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, a yearly supplement on changes in law and practice concerning the death penalty worldwide to his quinquennial report on capital punishment and implementation of the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, paying special attention to the imposition of the death penalty against persons younger than 18 years of age at the time of the offence;

9. *Decides* to continue consideration of the matter at its sixtieth session under the same agenda item.