Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
https://pace.coe.int

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

**Doc. 16301**
04 December 2025

# Towards the universal abolition of the death penalty in all circumstances

**Motion for a resolution**
tabled by the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

The prohibition of capital punishment in all circumstances is a fundamental principle of the Council of Europe. Through its resolutions and recommendations, the Parliamentary Assembly played a key role in making Europe a death penalty-free continent. In its Recommendation 891 (1980), the Assembly called for the prohibition of capital punishment in times of peace, paving the way for Protocol No. 6 to the European Convention on Human Rights (ETS No. 114). In its Recommendation 1246 (1994), it called on the Committee of Ministers to draw up an additional protocol to the Convention, abolishing the death penalty in all circumstances, leading to the adoption of Protocol No. 13 (ETS No. 187), now ratified by all Council of Europe member States, with the exception of Azerbaijan. The Reykjavík Declaration, adopted at the 2023 Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe, gave new impetus to the Organisation's long-standing fight against the death penalty in Europe and beyond.

More than a decade has passed since the adoption by the Assembly of Resolution 1807 (2011), focused on the death penalty in the Council of Europe member and observer States. To maintain the abolitionist momentum, France will host the next World Congress Against the Death Penalty in Paris in 2026. This congress will focus on the role of judges in the abolition of the death penalty, as well as on youth mobilisation. The Assembly should contribute to this event by taking stock of recent trends, including new abolitions in Africa and Asia, regressions in certain Council of Europe observer States (United States and Japan), and concerning developments in countries whose parliaments have observer status with the Assembly (Israel). The Assembly should lead the effort against the reintroduction of the death penalty, and in favour of its universal abolition, in all places and in all circumstances.