



**Towards the Abolition
of Death Penalty in Lebanon**

1997 – 2009

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“Mourning Protest”: May 20, 1998

An unprecedented protest in Lebanon and in the region was a crucial starting point of “The National Lebanese Campaign against Death Penalty in Lebanon”. Protesters in black started their sit-in at the dawn, at the time scheduled to execute two young men in a public square near where they had killed the owners of a home they were robbing. The execution decree stipulated the implementation of the sentence within the locality itself, at Tabarja in Kesserwan (Mount-Lebanon), on May 20, 1998.

The idea and the slogan of the action were launched by Dr. Walid SLAYBI, the initiator and the coordinator of the Campaign, on the day of the execution, to declare “We mourn the victims of the first crime and the victims of the execution”.

30 members and activists from the Movement for People's Rights, with the presence of Father Hady AL-AYA and young activists from the Association Justice and Mercy (AJEM), stood with their back to the gallows, blocked the road by a black and white banner to let the judges, religious men, security forces, media and other people, stop and read the slogan. “This is the first time anything like this happens”, was heard by many people there. The entire scene was witnessed by hundreds of people crowded the streets, flooded the balconies and the roofs of their houses (1500 persons)... Citizens who woke up at dawn with eagerness to applaud, with joy, the moment the death penalty was executed.

The event was headlined of tens of local, Arab and international newspapers and media, and presented as a milestone in the history of the abolition of death penalty in Lebanon. “Dar An-Nahar” (Publishing House) consecrating this event as the event of the year 1998 (photo), in the publication entitled “Lebanon: A Century in Photos (1900 - 1999)”.



“Death Penalty” Song

Lyrics: The Poet Joseph HARB

Music: Dr. Nida'a ABOU MRAD

-1-

Chorus

Whoever is condemned to death
Is not the only one
To have committed the crime

Traditions which have become
Savage and obsolete

Life void of dignity
Law, authority,
Poverty and deprivation

A system humiliating
Human freedom

All have taken part
In the crime

So why should the convicted
Suffer alone the penalty of death?

-2-

The Judge:

In the name of the people

Chorus:

You cannot execute the convicted
In the name of the people
Unless they agree

The Judge:

In the name of the people

Chorus:

You cannot judge in the name of
the people
If they are against the death penalty
And hanging gallows

-3-

The Public (1):

You must execute him.

The Public (2):

You ought to have mercy for him

The Public (1):

To protect people from the killer
You should execute him.

The Public (2):

You should judge him
But from life you cannot deprive him.

The Public (1):

Let him be killed.
Killing killer is justice.
The killer is to be killed.

The Public (2):

Killing the killer is just.
But mercy is higher justice
Between justice and mercy
Mercy is fairer,
More sacred, more perfect.
Why do we refuse mercy?
While God accepts it...

It is a first SONG against capital punishment written especially for
“The National Campaign for the Abolition of Death Penalty in Lebanon”,
performed for the first time on July 25, 2001, and produced on CD for the
Movement for People's Rights.

“The National Campaign for the Abolition of Death Penalty in Lebanon”

ITINERARY 1997 – 2009

For the first time in Lebanon, a national campaign has been launched; an ongoing and comprehensive strategy has been established in order to abolish death penalty, which started to reap its fruits.

Since its promulgation earlier in the thirties of the 20th century, the Lebanese law is filled with death sentences for various types of crimes, by hanging and the firing squad.

Hundreds were sentenced to death in Lebanon, throughout the years, even if the executions were limited in number, Lebanon is still turning around in a vicious circle. We do not treat the root causes of crime. We do not treat poverty and corruption, and we condemn small robbers. We do not treat the origins of emotional frustration and sexual ignorance, and we condemn those who commit sexual delinquencies. We do not treat revenge and violent traditions, and call upon the State to take revenge. We do not prosecute those responsible for wars and sentence to death minor beneficiaries from them. We put the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at the heart of the new Lebanese Constitution, but are still behind the 139 countries which have abolished the death penalty, etc. Years and experience have given us “the example”: the death penalty is not a solution.

Many in Lebanon have said 'no' to death penalty over the years, from time to time, individuals, officials, associations, parties and institutes, without insistence or practical decision and without forming a policy on their agenda and projects; until 1997 the year which carried another date for Lebanon...

At the outset of 1997, Walid SLAYBI and Ogarit YOUNAN launched the first national initiative for the abolition of death penalty in Lebanon, with the participation of individuals and associations. A pioneering civil campaign has thus seen the light in the Arab region. The first civil collective statement calling for the suspension of death penalty was launched by seven associations, on May 21, 1998, on the initiative of Association Justice and Mercy (AJEM) and The Association of the Defense of Human Rights and Liberties (ADDL). A large program of innovative and courage activities was implemented mostly by the Movement for People's Rights (SLAYBI and YOUNAN, the founders of the Movement) and managed by this Movement with perseverance, until 2004. Progressively, 64 parties and civil associations throughout Lebanon joined this national coalition, which constituted an unprecedented civil force in the history of Lebanon, under the title “abolish the death penalty”.

The process for the abolition of death penalty had started in Lebanon, paving the way for more appropriate conditions, which will definitely make Lebanon progressively get rid of capital punishment.

ANNULING Law No 302 / 94

A first achievement of the Campaign...

Law No 302/94 was promulgated for the first time in 1959, following the Lebanese crisis of 1958 (caused by political and sectarian tensions), known as “the killer law”.

During the civil war (1975-1990), the said law was frozen, and then restored in 1994.

Following the National Campaign and its arduous strategic plan aiming first and foremost at repealing the said law, a full year of demonstrations, activities and political lobbying have been implemented with great impact in favor of the abolition of this law,

And according to a juridical study prepared by the Association for the defense of Human Rights and Liberties (ADDL), on the reasons to repeal it,

And supporting by a clear position of the President of the Parliament who was convinced to repeal it,

And after a fruitful encouragement of the MPs to move forward in this direction, where the survey's MPs results revealed that 90% of them approved the abolition of this law,

And with a clear motivation of the Ministry of Justice and the Lawyers' Bar to put an end to such a law (without the abolition of the death penalty altogether),

And with an exceptional judicial movement of a group of judges rejecting such a law which paralyzed their role and cancelled the mitigating circumstances, making every crime sanctioned automatically by death penalty, Consequently, the Parliament voted to the abrogation of the law 302/94 on July 25, 2001, while the Campaign celebrated outside the Parliament its first victory, with the annulling of an important part of capital punishment law in Lebanon.



The first announcement of launching the Campaign 12 / 12 / 1997

Walid SLAYBI signs his book “Death Penalty Kills” (co-authoring with Ogarit YOUNAN), for former Prime Minister Dr. Salim HOSS, at the International and Arab Book Fair – December 1997. The book, which encompasses a scientific research, statistics, history, stories since independence, alternatives to the death penalty, etc. formed an important intellectual and sociological asset as a starting point for a National Campaign against death penalty in Lebanon. The book was among the best sellers within its category at the Book Fair.

Later, Dr. HOSS expressed a firm position against death penalty, officially announcing it for the first time in 2000, when he refused to sign execution warrants for two young men prisoners on death row; a position unprecedented in Lebanon and in the Arab world. “It is a matter of principle. I believe that God rewards life. God alone may take it back” he said. Since then, Mr. HOSS has been a strong opposition figurehead taking part in the National Campaign to eradicate death penalty in Lebanon.

A creative and integral Campaign

- **Research and alternative:** Setting up a scientific and accurate platform to understand the death penalty: the philosophy of law, sciences, crime, and history throughout the world. Elaborating alternatives...
- **Comprehensive library and statistical documentation:** Establishing the first statistics in Lebanon and collecting any information related to Lebanon: a first library and accurate documentation at the disposal of the society.
- **Publication and books:** Publishing valuable books, articles and leaflets; simplifying knowledge and arguments through a first manual: Q & A on death penalty; opportunities for books dedication...
- **Training and awareness-raising:** Sensitizing people by active methods. Awareness-raising at schools for the first time; in universities, clubs, associations, political youth organizations; discussions in the streets and public squares;

- **In media:** intensive mobilization of the issue through the media which had supported the cause in majority, as institutions and individuals; preparing special files for journalists; training journalists; producing TV spots; “Tele Lumière” TV campaign...

- **With the families of victims:** Moral solidarity. Home and prison visits; anchoring the principle of apology and responsibility, and the principle of pardon, tolerance, and non-revenge; anchoring the principle of rights, compensation and rehabilitation, through laws...

- **In laws:** Rejecting the obsolete provisions in the Penal Code; starting to abolish law No 302/94; preparing comprehensive judicial studies on Lebanese law; submitting alternative draft laws...

- **Civil forces:** Forming a Lebanese anti-death penalty civil power; highlighting the scope of civil lobbying all over Lebanon; motivating organizations to keep this issue among their top priorities; constituting a harmonious and efficient coordinating committee; cumulating joint actions...

- **On the international and Arab levels:** Mutual cooperation; adhering to the “World Coalition against Death Penalty”; positive and contagious impact on the Arab level where many coalitions created after 2003; joint initiatives and activities...

- **Parliamentarian political lobby:** Constituting a favorable political public opinion for the replacement of the death penalty; close coordination with the Parliamentary Commission for Human Rights and the Parliamentary Commission for Justice and Administration; Providing MPs with studies and data; First MPs written survey...

- **Non-violent direct actions and protestations:** The backbone and milestone of the Campaign; innovation through means, forms, and slogans; anchoring the opposition against death penalty “in the street” for the first time in Lebanon; mobilizing the public opinion...

In addition to the Campaign:

Individuals, especially jurists, had acted, individually or in small groups, in specific issues, adding support to the march of abolition of death penalty in Lebanon; especially on the level of lectures, political relations, articles and legal suggestions, among them a political jurists group initiated by the lawyer Chebli MALLAT...
As well as, number of associations and institutes, including bodies in the Campaign, organized as an own initiative, certain activity on awareness or in prisons or in the media, as a contribution to the march against death penalty...
Most of these initiatives have coordinated with the Campaign and participated in its activities.

14 principles and priorities

Attracting the law and the society towards non-violent choices in order to abolish death penalty

We are called upon to think thoroughly about these 14 principles and priorities and to adhere to their core value, in order to "free" our culture and our laws from the logic of violence and death penalty. (Brief from a study prepared by Dr. Walid SLAYBI and Dr. Ogarit YOUNAN).

1- The Death penalty, an act of killing

The death penalty, whatever the designation is, kills.

We should not veil it with slogans of justice, protection of the society, and deterrence of crime. The prerogative of killing should not be given to any party, neither in the name of law, nor religion, nor politics, nor ideology. It should be given either to a judge, a minister, a Prime Minister, a President of Republic, a religious, and nor to God who does not need it.

2- International human rights instruments supporting life

- Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948): "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person"; Article 5: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment." This Declaration has become an integral part of the preamble of the new Lebanese Constitution, and therefore binding to Lebanon.

- Article 6 of the "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights-ICCPR" (1966) underscores the importance of promoting the right to life.

- The Optional Protocol on the Death Penalty – United Nations (1991) stipulates the following:

Article 1: "The death penalty shall not be executed against anyone, according to the legislations of all countries signatories of the present optional protocol." Article 2: "Every country signatory of the present optional protocol shall take all necessary measures to abolish death penalty in its legislations."

- As for the latest achievements within the United Nations, Resolution No 62/149, 2007 calls the States Parties which still keep this sanction to suspend death penalty execution by adopting an official moratorium, paving the way for a total abolition at a later stage.

3-Priority to deal with the causes of the crime

It is high time to deal with the root causes of crime, instead of committing another act of killing. The objective is to eliminate crime, by scientifically determining its origins and through a fair distribution of responsibilities.

The criminal is responsible for committing the act of killing whereas the society is responsible, in its turn, for the causes motivating the crime. According to the major international studies, poverty is the main cause of crime; followed by war, racism, sectarian provocation, child violations, media, and the prevailing values praising violence.

Consequently, the responsibility of the criminal is relative. Absolute death penalty cannot hence be executed against him.

4-The theory of "innate" crime is erroneous

If the theory stipulating that violence lies in the nature of human kind itself is correct and that people are born criminals, such a human being is not held responsible for his violence and thus cannot be sentenced to death.

At the outset, the theory of "innate" crime is erroneous, holding the "nature" of individuals responsible and rejecting the responsibility of State's policies. Such hypotheses are numerous: the origin of human kind is an animal, and animals are violent / human beings hold in themselves the instinct of death / there are specific chromosomes related to crime / Human brain holds violence in it...

Whereas, credible human scientific research shows the opposite, that no bad behaviour is "natural" or "biological".

5- Responsibility towards the victim, the criminal and the society

The death penalty is merely a simple measure and a tripartite denial of responsibility from the State: Abstaining from dealing with the causes of crime and reducing them / Abstaining from rehabilitating the criminal, protecting the rights of his family and improving the situation in prisons / Abstaining from maintaining the rights of the family of the first-crime victim.

From this perspective, the concerned authorities shall assume their responsibilities when a crime is committed, towards the three parties affected by the crime, i.e.: the victim of the crime, the criminal and the society.

6- Executing death penalty is not crime dissuasion

The dissuasive theory of death penalty is a modern theory, going back to around 200 years only. The theory of deterrence comes to justify death penalty and adds to it a rational and legitimate character, estimating that the more the number of crimes increases, the more the execution of death penalty increases, and the more the crime rate decreases.

Comprehensive studies encompassing 110 countries and extending over 10 years revealed that there is no relationship between death penalty and crime dissuasion.

7- Outlawing killing

It is necessary to outlaw killing, because laws cannot kill. We are responsible for bringing the laws towards the culture of non-violence and the humanization of punishment. Laws should prevent and condemn violence.

Albert CAMUS said: "There will never be peace, neither in the heart of people, nor in their morals, unless death is outlawed."

8- The death penalty does not attenuate post-war crimes

We, in Lebanon, live in country which has witnessed and is witnessing situations of war.

The most comprehensive study undertaken in this regard and covering 50 countries which have taken part in wars and 20 countries which have not, extending for 12 years, has proven that the first countries witnessed an upsurge in the number of post-war crimes, whereas there was no increase in crime rates in the second countries.

The most common cause for the increase of post-crime war is about authorizing authorities to exercise violence in times of war, the individuals imitating the attitudes of these authorities. Wars produce "heirs" of violence by social learning or imitation.

9- The death penalty does not impact revenge habits

Death penalty, according to some, aims at putting an end to the expansion of acts of revenge. A surprising and contradictory argument! As if we were saying: Let us kill someone now because of the crime which he may commit later!

Shall we give up to the logic of vendetta and be on equal footing with clans and tribes in their negative dimension while remaining below in their positive dimension! Do we put an end to the individuals' revenge by consecrating revenge by the State within the State's legislations!

10- The death penalty is politicized and discretionary

By the execution of death penalty, the State is almost equal to a criminal, committing a "state crime" whereas the history of justice should not be worse than that of crime.

The death penalty in most countries, if not in all countries, is politicized and discretionary, affecting mainly poor people and political rivals. The study carried out in Lebanon about the history of death penalty since independence revealed a discretionary and class-based approach, coupled even with sectarian politicization...

11- Incapacity to correct a judiciary mistake

The history of prosecutions all over the world has proven that justice makes mistakes, especially that mistakes in death sentences are irreversible.

Relevant examples are numerous in Lebanon and throughout the world, examples of mistakes where innocent people were killed, burdening the conscience of judges for all their lives...

12- Approach of Islam and Christianity

Islam has asserted the respect of human life, and the rewarding of the one life-spirit in all people, and in life itself, even if the Koran mentioned the possibility of killing. Islam has also given precedence to the principles of forgiveness, repentance and indulgence, over the principle of reprisal by killing and revenge. And that's what has stipulated in more than one noble verse in the Koran.

And in spite of the fact that Islamic countries and states used capital punishment and kept it in their laws, there are many religious instances where the judge preferred pardon and forgiveness to reprisal by killing.

As for Christianity, in its essence, Christian theology is against capital punishment, from the view-point that God is the life-giver and has not delegated to humans the right to recover it. The greatest example on that is the life and teachings of Jesus the Nazarene (like his refusal to stone – to execute the woman-sinner).

Known that, the church has not excluded the resort to capital punishment by the state in exceptional circumstances, and at the same time it calls against that practice. The church (Vatican) has also given excuses regarding the executions it had permitted in the past. Moreover, most countries and states of Christian culture have abolished death penalty.

13-Pioneers of the abolition and increase of civil campaigns

No death penalty has been abolished in a country unless pioneer(s) motivated such a trend. No death penalty has been abolished in a country unless a political official adopted this idea and publicly asserted his stance, calling for the amendment of the law and its liberation from death penalty.

It has been the prevailing situation in Lebanon since 1997, with the launching of the process of abolition thanks to the efforts of the pioneers...

14-Increasing number of states abolishing death penalty or suspending its execution

More than two-thirds of the countries of the world, i.e. 139 countries, removed this sentence from the texts and/or suspended its implementation. 58 countries are still maintaining it and implementing it, at different degrees.

On the other hand, 126 countries voted at the United Nations in 2008 for a moratorium on executions; among which Algeria, the only Arab country to vote in favour of this resolution (No 62/149), Lebanon abstained to vote.

All Arab countries maintain the death penalty, with some suspending its execution for years (de facto and not by legal official decision). Lebanon has constituted a pioneering Arab stance when it abolishes the law 302/94, as a start for the abolition of the death penalty later. Algeria, for its part, is officially accelerating the steps in favour of abolition.

Draft Bills - Alternatives

With the launching of the process of the abolition of death penalty in Lebanon, jurists, human rights researchers and legislators submitted 4 main draft bills and proposals to replace death penalty, between 2001 and 2009:

- Proposition prepared by Dr. Walid SLAYBI in 2004, to abolish death penalty without replacing it by life imprisonment with hard labor but by imprisonment and rehabilitation for 20 years with the possibility to benefit from the Law No 463/2002. It did not reach the Parliament.
- Draft bill submitted by 7 MPs on June 30, 2004, to abolish death penalty and replace it by life imprisonment with hard labor without any extenuating circumstances. The proposition was not continued.
- Draft bill prepared by the National Campaign in 2006, which offered the right to study the nature and circumstances of every crime with the possibility to benefit from Article 4 of Law No 463/2002. It was signed by 7 MPs and introduced to the Parliament by MP and member of the "Campaign" Ghassan MOKHEIBER. It is on the agenda of the next phase.
- Draft bill submitted by Dr. Ibrahim NAJJAR the Minister of Justice, on October 7, 2008, to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, to abolish death penalty and replace it by life imprisonment with hard labor. To date, it was not placed on the Council's agenda.

To the Parliament

A draft bill aiming at abolishing death penalty and replacing it by life imprisonment with hard labor

Article 1: Clause 1, Article 37 of the Penal Code, is cancelled and replaced by the following text:

"1- Life imprisonment with hard labor not subject to any reduction or mitigating circumstances."

Article 2: Death penalty sentence is replaced wherever mentioned in the text by the sanction stipulated in the amended Clause 1, Article 37 of the Penal Code.

Article 3: The present law enters into force upon publication in the Official Gazette.

Beirut, June 30, 2004

Deputies Signatures:

Nayla MOAWAD
Nabil DE FREIGE
Dr. Marwan FARES
Selah HONEIN
Mesbah AL AHDAB
Bassem AL SABEH
Henri HELOU

2004 - 7 Deputies Proposal

The Parliament initiative - 2007

In the framework of the "National Plan for Human Rights" organized by the Parliament and led by the Parliamentary Commission for Human Rights and its main members MPs Michel MOUSSA, Marwan FARES, and Ghassan MOKHEIBER, Dr. Paul MORKOS was assigned to prepare a legal study on the abolition of the death penalty and its possibilities; it was discussed in an expanded meeting in the parliament with the participation of members of the Campaign, human rights organizations, MPs and concerned ministers, as a new alternative for abolition.

To the Parliament

A draft bill aiming at abolishing death penalty

Article 1: Death penalty sentence, wherever mentioned in the laws, especially in the Penal Code, is eliminated and replaced by life imprisonment with hard labor or life detention, in view of the nature and the circumstances of the committed crime, with a possibility to benefit from Article 4 of Law No 463 / 2002.

Article 2: The present law enters into force upon publication in the Official Gazette.

Deputies Signatures:

Hassan Yaacoub
Dr. Marwan Fares
Ibrahim KANAAN
Dr. Michel MOUSSA
Akram SHEHAYEB
Ghassan MOKHEIBER
Henri HELOU

2006 The National Campaign Proposal

2009-2010: A second Survey for all MPs prepared by LACR will be announced in 2010.

The 1st Survey for MPs On Death penalty Lebanon 2001

Within the framework of "The National Campaign for the Abolition of Death Penalty in Lebanon", the Movement for People's Rights carried out a survey for the members of the Lebanese Parliament who filled out a written questionnaire.

Out of the responding deputies, 68% were Beirut MPs, 80% Mount Lebanon MPs, 68% North MPs, 65% South MPs, and 83% Beqaa MPs.

Results:

90% of MPs are for the abolition of Law 302/94 (known "killer law").
74% approve an immediate or progressive abolition of death penalty.
39% call for a moratorium whereas 34% are against it.

This survey revealed that "Beirut MPs" reflected most conservative against the abolition, followed by the Beqaa, the South being in the middle in general, whereas the North came second in most cases, following Mount Lebanon (first), in terms of approving an immediate or progressive abolition of death penalty.

74% of MPs: For an immediate or a progressive abolition of death penalty

The Republic of Lebanon
Ministry of Justice
No 4941/3

To the attention of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers
Object: A draft bill aiming at abolishing death penalty and replacing it by life imprisonment with hard labor

Article 1: Death penalty sentence is eliminated wherever it is mentioned and is replaced by life imprisonment with hard labor.

Article 2: Article 37 of the Penal Code will be amended as following: Article 37 (new): The regular penal sanctions are:

- 1- Life imprisonment with hard labor
- 2- Life detention
- 3- Temporary imprisonment with hard labor
- 4- Temporary detention

Article 3: Article 43 of the Penal Code is repealed.
Article 4: Articles 420 to 424 (included) of Law No 328, dated August 2, 2001, are repealed.
Article 5: The present law enters into force upon publication in the Official Gazette.

Beirut, October 7, 2008

Minister of Justice
Dr. Ibrahim NAJJAR

2008 Minister of Justice Proposal

Universal Moratorium on Executions: UN resolution

Lebanon has today a significant official and legal opportunity to ratify the United Nations Resolution to freeze death penalty execution, as a serious official step paving the way for a total abolition at a later stage.

In fact, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights makes use of the Resolution No 59/2005 promulgated on April 20, 2005, to exert pressure on the countries maintaining death penalty to suspend death penalty executions, while striving for a total abolition progressively. Such a step paved the way for the voting of a special resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly No 62/149.2007 in favor of a Universal Moratorium on Executions. There was another voting on the same resolution in 2008, coupled with a global active civil campaign to incite states to ratify it. The result was: 126 countries voted for this resolution, Lebanon abstaining from voting.



"The March of Hope", February 8, 2001

For the first time in Lebanon, a march of civil organizations, parties, unions, and individuals was organized in the street under the title "NO to death penalty". It started in front of the Parliament in Beirut -Place de l'Etoile, and headed to the headquarters of the Council of Ministers near the Lebanese Museum. "Wood gallows" and "masked executioners" were at the forefront of the march. Protesters, in black, bore placards bearing the words, «Do not kill».

Children trained to oppose the death penalty were waiting for them in the vicinity of the Museum, approached the "executioners", kissed them in a very symbolic gesture to give them back their humanity and threw down the gallows, then removed the masks on their faces, untied the ropes and started rope-jumping and chanting: "ropes are for playing, not for hanging"...

"My name is Amanda AOUN. From the Beqaa. I'm here to express my opinion against this cruel punishment of human beings, especially that I consider the punishment must be to fight crime and rehabilitate the criminal. My father was a martyr and the one who killed him was executed. I was younger and I didn't know what was right and wrong at that time. I used to hear my grand-mother saying: "Hod I had a knife and had they asked me to kill him, I wouldn't have recovered anything." Today, when I think of that, I know that I am against what happened and I would not have wanted the killer to be executed. In this way, we wouldn't have reached the objective of punishment. Nothing brings back life to the dead. Today, I feel pity for those who are executed and I consider them as innocent people. The number of orphans increased from 2 to 5, because the killer had 3 children. We are currently trying to overcome the leftovers of war and there are many reasons pushing people to commit a crime. The killer of my father was a drug dealer. To prevent him from killing, the State could have provided him with the economic means to work and earn his daily bread, without resorting to bad means. I am with punishment, because punishment is rightful, but I am against death penalty, because death penalty is another crime, trying to mend a mistake with another mistake and giving a bad example to the society. Punishment should be through imprisonment. In prison, the prisoner will benefit from a psychotherapy treatment and will learn a profession to exercise when he goes out of prison... Now, I would like to send a call through those who are present here to all the Lebanese officials to put immediately an end to death penalty, deal with the root causes of crime and provide rehabilitation to criminals in prisons."

A sit-in of "Conscience", January 3, 2001

From the sidewalks of the Lebanese Museum, near the headquarters of the Council of Ministers at that time, during the first session of the government at the beginning of 2001, the National Campaign organized a non-violent action which highly impacted public opinion through a scene of protest, illustrating the cruelty of justice in case of death penalty sentencing: 8 wood gallows lifted by 8 masked executioners, in front of them 8 numbered cotton-made corpses lying in cold, with a large black banderole warning against "Becoming a state of death".

Protesters and parents of sentenced to death penalty addressed the Minister of Justice Samir Al- JISR, when he approached the Coordinator of the Campaign who delivered him the Campaign's file and propositions to abolish death penalty.



"Messages of Children", May 31, 2001

After three months of awareness-raising sessions on death penalty organized by the Movement for People's Rights with hundreds of children, around 400 children filled the halls of the Press Syndicate in Beirut leading the first press conference for children rejecting death penalty in Lebanon.

They were alone at the press conference, deciding to neither inviting politicians nor civil organizations. The walls were captured by gallows and ropes, where they have hanged on their drawings and their letters addressed to the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister and the President of the Parliament. Nine of them sat on the platform to speak in the name of all students, surrounded by the representative of the Syndicate and the coordinator of the Campaign. Among them, Amanda AOUN (14 years) who sent a very touching message against death penalty. Shaker AL BRAYDI, who killed her father, Shawki AOUN (ISF forces) was executed on a date close to that of the press conference (May 28, 1994)...



"Street Awareness through Theatre", May – June 2001

For the first time too, "the death penalty goes to the street" among people, to hold direct discussions and conversations: a play against death penalty, under the title "not in my name", organized by the international band "The Living Theatre", with the Movement for People's Rights and with the participation of students of the Lebanese University – Faculty of Arts. Two plays were performed, one in Sahet Al Tell, public square in Tripoli, and on the sidewalks Corniche Al Manara, Ain Al Mryasse, Beirut.

It was a unique experience, mainly for Lebanese students and the citizens who have spontaneously taken part in both occasions in these two very popular areas. Discussions heated up, voices raised high... But the song of the international band impacted the people:

"... As long as there is an inferior class, I belong to it, because those sentenced to death are among the poorest... When the government meets revenge, humanity is deprived of its value. Stop killing, not in my name, not in my name..."



"An open day & night sit-in", January 17, 2004

"Do not kill" outcries were chanted on the deserted "restricted" road leading to Roumieh Lebanon's main prison, the venue of three death penalty executions, the last executions in Lebanon. The protestors rallied behind police lines several blocks away, where police and troops manned barricades to keep them as well as journalists, from approaching the jail. They had staged an all-night vigil, lit candles throughout this cold evening. Supporters, journalists, parents of prisons on death-row flooded in, sat silently, than shouted: "Don't kill". They blocked the road by a wide black banner, each time the judges, security and religious cars arrived, and shouted: "Don't kill"...

Before the sit-in, a press conference was held in front of the office of the Association Justice and Mercy (AJEM), at the gate of the prison... Early in the afternoon, a group of activists lay on the ground in Beirut – Place de L'Etoile near to the parliament, simulating death for few minutes, than joined the Campaign's night-sit-in.



"A Musical Sit-In", July 25, 2001

During a General Assembly of the Parliament, with on its agenda the issue of the annulation's Law No 302/94, the National Campaign prepared a special demonstration to celebrate its first victory with the abolition of a part of the Law of death penalty in Lebanon. The sit-in included a press conference and a protest in open air, near to the Parliament in Beirut -Place de l'Etoile, calling for the abolition TODAY of the said law, on the basis of the results of MPs survey where 90% of them were in favor to abolish it. Statement on behalf of the first civil force abolitionist in Lebanon... Copies of the MPs survey were distributed to MPs, journalists and passer-bys, decorated with white carnations... A large banner blocked the street showing that 74% of MPs are with immediate and/or progressive abolition of death penalty.

At the end, a song on death penalty was chanted for the first time, by the protesters, the parents of prisoners on death-row and some parents of the victims, passer-bys, and even security forces...



Training trainers and activists on abolishing death penalty, 1999 - 2009

At dawn, at 4h, they gathered, stood up shaking, whether because of stress or because of a cold... Judges, lawyers, security forces, journalists, religious men, and medicine doctor... They all stood waiting for the executioners to lead the prisoner to the gallows awaiting him, to finish up the last chapters of the story they have contributed to and have taken part in."

It is true that all participants were totally aware that it was training through theatre playing. However, there was really a certain intimidation, the feel of guilt, the taste of bitterness. It was the objective behind this training, one of the workshops organized by LACR in October 2009, with the participation of 30 teachers, lawyers, counselors in prisons, association officers, university professors, students, etc.

The Innovative awareness program, carried out through interactive methods and specialized theoretical and practical contents, was created for the first time by Ogarit YOUNAN since 12 years, with dozens of graduates through years who benefited from the "manual of the activist"...

Victims of the first crime & Victims of the death penalty 1943 - 2004



Below a summary of names, numbers and facts as based on the first statistical and sociological study about death penalty in Lebanon, since Independence. The study, initiated and written by Dr. Ogarit YOUNAN, was published and updated since 1997.

The Death penalty STATISTICS since the independence 1943 - 2009

- 51 persons were officially executed in Lebanon (it is difficult to have the exact number, due to lack of accurate and official documentation and statistics).
 - Others, with no statistics about them, were executed by militias during the Lebanese War (1975-1990), while newspapers published some executions in texts and photos.
 - Following this war, and in the shade of the State in 1994, there was an exceptional execution in the Lebanese Republic, where Hussein AWADA (16 years, from Baalbeck) was executed in public place by a firing squad according to the Islamic Shariaa.
 - Between 1994 and 1998, 14 persons were executed.
 - In 2004 and after 6 years of a de facto moratorium, three men were executed altogether. They were the last executions in Lebanon, until the publication of this document in 2009.
 - Since 2004, there was again a sort of "freezing" of executions, a non-official moratorium.
 - All those executed were men, although some women were sentenced to death.
 - Never has a woman been executed in the history of death penalty in Lebanon!
 - 36 of the executed were hanged; 15 were by a firing squad.
 - 55% of them aged between 17 and 27 years.
 - 44% of them were married and had children.
 - 40 were Lebanese and 11 non-Lebanese (Syria, Palestine, Egypt, nationality sub-study...)
 - 23 committed the crime because of poverty, 8 for rape / adulterers / sentimental crises, 4 for revenge, 13 for political reasons, and 3 for sectarian reasons.
 - Poverty is the common denominator among the majority of the executed and the prisoners.
- * 2009: 43 persons sentenced to death in Lebanon are currently in the prison of Roumieh and Tripoli.

VICTIMS OF THE DEATH PENALTY	VICTIMS OF THE FIRST CRIME
1. Said Mitri LTEIF (hanged - 1947)	Elias STEPHAN
2. Ali Hassan AMMAR (hanged - 1948)	The child Feryal AL HAJJ
3. Youssef SAADE (hanged - 1948)	Gergy ABOU KHALIL
4. Victor Hanna AWAD (hanged - 1949)	Antoinette NAJJAR, Joseph AWAD and Emily AINTOURY
5. Charles AL BACHA (by firing squad - 1949)	Antoine AL BACHA (Charles's father)
6. Antoine Khalil SAADE (The Party's founder) (firing squad - 1949)	(Coup d'Etat of the Syrian Nationalist Social Party)
7. Shebel Nassif Gergy Al Hajj BOUTROS (hanged - 1949)	Mansour WAKIM
8. Adib Semaan AL JADAA (firing squad - 1949)	(Coup d'Etat of the Syrian Nationalist Social Party)
9. Maarouf Mohammed MOWAFFAQ (firing squad - 1949)	(Coup d'Etat of the Syrian Nationalist Social Party)
10. Abdel Hafiz Hassan ALAME (firing squad - 1949)	(Coup d'Etat of the Syrian Nationalist Social Party)
11. Abbas Abdel Raouf HAMMAD (firing squad - 1949)	(Coup d'Etat of the Syrian Nationalist Social Party)
12. Mohammed Ibrahim SHEBLI (firing squad - 1949)	(Coup d'Etat of the Syrian Nationalist Social Party)
13. Mohammed Ahmed ZOGHBI (firing squad - 1949)	(Coup d'Etat of the Syrian Nationalist Social Party)
14. Melhem ALATHATH (hanged - 1951)	Hanna AL QOUSAYFI and his son Doumit
15. Taan ZEAYTER (hanged - 1951)	Hanna AL QOUSAYFI and his son Doumit
16. Mostafa Mohammed KHAWAJA (hanged - 1951)	The child Ghazi KHAWAJA
17. Moussa MOUSSA (hanged - 1951)	Georgettes BESHARA
18. Jamil Wakim YOUNES (hanged - 1952)	? (unclear statistics)
19. Elias Saadallah ABOU KHALIL (hanged - 1952)	Fouad Assaf AL ZOGHBI
20. Mehdi Abbas Hassan AL SHALL (hanged - 1953)	The child Mohammed Hussein ABDALLAH
21. Mohammed Mahmoud AL SHEIKH (hanged - 1953)	Mohammed AL ABOUD
22. Khamis Ahmed AL BAYYOUMI (hanged - 1955)	(Israeli spying)
23. Habib Ramzi AL SAYEGH (hanged - 1957)	A mother and her daughter - AL MOWAKADIYE
24. Ramzi FAYYAD (hanged - 1957)	A mother and her daughter - AL MOWAKADIYE
25. Majid Mahmoud SAFI (hanged - 1957)	(revenge)
26. Ibrahim AL NABOULSI (known as TAKMIL) (hanged - 1959)	(1958 sectarian armed crisis) Rashid SHLELA, Boutros AL RAYYES, Georges SAAD
27. Ibrahim Raja ABDEL RAZZAK AL AZIZI (hanged - 1960)	Fatima Abed EL - RAZZAK

VICTIMS OF THE DEATH PENALTY	VICTIMS OF THE FIRST CRIME
28. Jamil Gergy Hanna SAAAD (hanged - 1960)	Assaad KARAM; Abdallah SAAAD
29. Wehbe Hassan Daher BAYRAM (firing squad - 1960)	Mostafa Mohammed AL HAJJ
30. Gerges Hanna LOLESH (hanged - 1970)	? (unclear statistics)
31. Adel Ibrahim HALAWI (hanged - 1971)	Hajj Mostafa AL KHESHEN
32. Georges Toufic RAAD (hanged - 1971)	Georges Tannous RIZK
33. Toufic Mohammed Ali ITANI (hanged - 1972)	Hassan Jomaa ITANI
34. Ibrahim Tarraf TARRAF (hanged - 1983)	Malthide HELOU and her son Marcel BAHOUT
35. Bassam Saleh AL MOSLEH (hanged - 1994)	The child Maryam Hassan MOHSEN
36. Abdel Karim GEU (hanged - 1994)	Jaili and Ghassan ANTONIOS
37. Mohammed Salman ZAATAR (hanged - 1994)	Jaili and Ghassan ANTONIOS
38. Shaker Mohammed Omran AL BRAIDY (firing squad - 1994)	Police officers Shawki ADUN, Mostafa HARES, and Nadim AL MOALLEM
39. Hussam Ali NASSER (by firing squad - 1995)	Omar Riyad ABOU AL HASSAN
40. Ahmed Abdel Badih HALLAK (firing squad - 1996)	(Israeli spying)
41. Ares Shamel ZOUBIANE (firing squad - 1996)	Rafic MAHMOUD, Nora HAMADE
42. Khaled Mohammed HAMED (hanged - 1997)	Sheikh Nizar AL HALABI, Ramadan AL TABESH, Nabil DAW and his son BILAL
43. Mounir Salah ABOUD (hanged - 1997)	Sheikh Nizar AL HALABI, Ramadan AL TABESH, Nabil DAW and his son BILAL
44. Ahmed Mounzer AL QASSAM (hanged - 1997)	Sheikh Nizar AL HALABI, Ramadan AL TABESH, Nabil DAW and his son BILAL
45. Mohammed Mahmoud KOUR (hanged - 1997)	Hajj Mahmoud MANSOUR
46. Hassan Jamal ATTIEH (hanged - 1997)	Nassib AL MAALOUF and his spouse Linda
47. Wissam Navef Issa AL NABHAN (hanged - 1998)	Charbel Antoine AL SKAYYEM and his sister Marie ALAAM
48. Hassan Nadia ABOU JABEL (hanged - 1998)	Charbel Antoine AL SKAYYEM and his sister Marie ALAAM
49. Remy ZAATAR (firing squad - 2004)	Michel RAAD and Ziad AL TANNOURY
50. Badih Hamade "ABI OBEIDAH" (firing squad - 2004)	Sergeant Major Ali HAMZE, Corporal Major Radwan MELHEM and soldier Ali SALEH
51. Ahmed MANSOUR (hanged - 2004)	(The crime of the Private School Teachers' Mutual Fund) Rachele Rahme SAADE, Moussa SHOUEIRY, Maroun MOUSSA, Maria Tabet, Sleiman AL JAMOUS, Carlos SALAME, Ughett FEGHALI, and Sakineh HARKOUS

The Republic Mandates:

- **19 executions:** Under the President of the Republic, Beshara AL KHOURY, with Prime Minister Gabriel AL MURR, Riad AL SOLH, and Sami AL SOLH.
- **6 executions:** Under the President of the Republic Camille CHAMOUN, with Prime Minister Saeb SALAM, Abdallah YAFI, Gabriel AL MURR, and Sami AL SOLH
- **4 executions:** Under the President of the Republic Fouad SHEHAB, with Prime Minister Rashid KARAME and Saeb SALAM
- **No executions:** Under the President of the Republic Charles HELOU
- **4 executions:** Under the President of the Republic Sleiman FRANGIEH, with Prime Minister Saeb SALAM
- **No executions:** Under the President of the Republic Elias SARKIS
- **1 execution:** Under the President of the Republic Amine AL GEMAYEL, with Prime Minister Chafic AL WAZZAN (during war - 1983)
- **14 executions:** Under the President of the Republic Elias HRAOUI, with Prime Minister Rafic HARIRI
- **3 executions:** Under the President of the Republic Emile LAHOUD, with Prime Minister Rafic HARIRI
Under this mandate, the Prime Minister Salim HOSS refused to sign execution warrants for 2 prisoners on death row, for personal ethical convictions "I was five times prime minister and I didn't sign any decree to execute people. Isn't the time to abolish the death penalty in Lebanon?"
- **None till now:** Under the current mandate of the President of the Republic Michel SLEIMAN

Excluding "public places" since 1939. but...

Under the clause of death penalty, the original French text of the report set up in March 24, 1939, by the drafting committee of the Lebanese Penal Law, composed of late President Fouad AMMOUN and two main members Wafiq AL KASSAR and Najib BOULOS, read as follows:
"Execution in public places to intimidate people and teach them a lesson has negative repercussions, because of what the critics and those sentenced to death may say upon execution. Newspapers relate the last-minute words, calling, between the lines, for sympathy."
 And the report concludes: *"It is a barbaric means which should be excluded from our traditions."*



The last execution undertaken in Lebanon in a public place was at the dawn of May 20, 1998, in Tabarja - Kesserwan. The gallows was displayed for more than a week at the sight of passer-bys and citizens. Hundreds of people flooded the roads, the balconies and the roofs of houses to witness the execution of two young men, in a barbaric moment which should be excluded from our public places.

We visited them to defend their Rights:

The parents of the victims, the parents of the executed, and the death-row inmates

The National Campaign made a substantial choice for its slogan: NO to crime, NO to death penalty. It does not side only with the criminal neither only with the victim, but supports justice and endeavors to protect the rights of the victim and his family, while keeping the right of the criminal to rehabilitation and maintaining the right of his family.

It is, indeed, a crucial issue for the Campaign which aims at disseminating the spirit of non-violence in the minds, the culture of responsibility, pardon and tolerance; a culture that will permit learning from the mistakes of the society and its members, to preserve the immunity of life and the sharing of its goods.

Within this context, the Campaign carried out a series of repeated visits to the parents of the victims and those of the convicted, as well as those of the executed, and to the death row inmates. Emotional meetings and hard discussions, filled with more than hope and lessons ...

Below: echoes, messages and deep revelations from all of them; from all those victims...

Statements of Parents of Victims

"We are a family in the veins of which an authentic Arab blood runs. We do not accept but the execution of the killer. Otherwise, we will take the appropriate measure", says the father of a victim to the medias.

... A while after, and following visits and discussions carried out by representatives of the Campaign, the father of the victim said that he was touched by the execution, since execution remains useless: *"Instead of one killed person, there are now two..."* *"We are a believing family. Had the law authorized the suspension of execution because we have forgiven the killer, it would have been lighter on our conscience..."*

"Had one of the officials visited us, had we felt that the State cared for us, had anyone talked to us or offered compensations to the children of the victim who have become orphans, we would have felt some dignity and solidarity. We would have felt better than yielding to our instinct... Finally, they have executed the killer. But what have they given us? A dead body! It is true that we have called for revenge, but what's the use!"

Statements of Parents of Executed:

"We condemned the crime and apologized in the media. Even, we have visited the family of the victim for forgiveness. We have asked the state to punish him (the killer), but not to execute him. God curses the time of the devil... Despite that, no official has encouraged people like us who are not asking for pardon to their son, but severe punishment, not killing..."

"The State executed my husband. We have five children and I don't work. We ran away from the people and from poverty. We went to a remote village. People there feel pity for us and give us bread everyday. I see my children growing up in front of my eyes and they won't be normal. They have been forced to grow up on this. Who knows what they will do..."

"We will definitely not stay here. We have decided to immigrate for ever. My son was executed by mistake. A judge himself admitted it... Despite that, he was executed. They have chosen him because they needed a confessional balance... How can we stay here! They have sentenced us all to death..."

Messages of Death-Row Inmates

Special Visits to ROUMIEH Prison - 2009

The last visits to the death row prisoners, being mostly in Roumieh Lebanon's main prison, were initiated and organized by the Lebanese Association for Civil Rights (LACR); Visits which generated most importantly letters of apology and remorse, and messages of responsibility, calling for the forgiveness of the victims' relatives.

"Every human being needs a second chance in life. I firmly believe that what I am saying is not a miracle or a magic trick, but something realistic."

"I have acknowledged the accusations which were addressed to me. I reckoned before God and before everyone that I am guilty and that I accept my fate. I also deeply regret the past and what happened and God only knows what I am saying."

"You have all the rights and I have nothing to offer to you except my soul. If that suits you, I am ready and I thank God for that."

"I have killed a person as if I have killed all mankind and I really regret my act. I know that the word "sorry" is not sufficient and I ask for your mercy. I hope that you will save a life, as if you have saved the life of all mankind."



The PIN of the Campaign was launched from inside the prison during the last visit to the prisoners sentenced to death.



The prison team activity at the end of visits: Organizers from LACR and CHAML, the co-founder of the Campaign Ogarit YOUNAN, with the representative of Amnesty International, Association Justice and Mercy (AJEM) and the embassy of Germany, supportive of the activity.



From inside a special room at the prison, the results of the visits were announced; the prisoners, obliged to stay upstairs under strict control, far from the media, have been "visited" for a short discussion by Dr. Ogarit YOUNAN and the Minister of Interior and Municipalities Ziad BAROUD invited by LACR, "Maybe the pardon is more powerful than the abolition itself" he said...



We went into their prison, their "life" ... Autumn 2009

... We went into the prison to talk, to get to know them. We went in with some caution. Faces convicted to a deferred death penalty sentence. Old people, young people, cold, hunched back.

As soon as we presented ourselves from the National Campaign for the abolition of death penalty, their tongues untied. Flows of words, floods of burning tears and great sorrow...

A huge map was then drawn up, a map full of faces. Faces full of stories, like me, like you. Stories with a mother, a father, siblings, a spouse, children... The only difference between them and us is that the picture is broken and that they have lost some of its pieces with their stories. It is weird. But, progressively, the killer became more human... He turned into a human being. Weak, timid, in pain, he laughs and cries...

It is very important to put a face on the "killer", then death penalty or legitimate killing will be more difficult.

Some acknowledged their crime; others deny it to date. Some are frank; others not. Like people outside the walls... The difference is that the mistake has become a sin and ruined the life of human beings.

People say that those on the verge of a breakdown see hope in the slightest things. What about those on the verge of being hanged? They have killed in a moment of weakness, fear or greed.

Why does the law kill?
In the name of the Lebanese people, the law kills. Who told the law that you or I want to kill? The victim is very aggrieved. We feel pity for him/her. But who pushed the killer to kill? The killer should be punished. But if you kill him, how can you benefit the parents of the victim? It is a mere tribal revenge.
Punish him. Don't kill him. Be severe in your punishment, but don't kill.

Tanya AWAD GHORRA
Journalist and member of the Prison team activity.

The National Campaign: Lebanese Coalition With Arab & International Partners

Active human rights organizations have joined "The National Campaign for the Abolition of Death Penalty in Lebanon", since 1998, and six of them formed the coordinating committee which prepared the main manifestations and lobbying. By 2000-2001, many other parties and associations from all over Lebanon become members, some more actively engaged than others. The Bar of Beirut and the Bar of the North Lebanon joined the Campaign only to repeal the Law 302/94.

It was a gradual process created a wide civil national coalition, welcoming continuously new members...



64 parties and civil organizations and hundreds of individuals are today the "National Campaign" in Lebanon - 2009:

Movement for People's Rights (MPR)
 Association for the Defence of Rights and Freedoms (ADDL)
 Association Justice and Mercy (AJEM)
 Lebanese Association of Human Rights (ALDOHOM)
 Progressive Socialist Party (PSP)
 Amnesty International – Lebanon
 Lebanese Association for Civil Rights (LACR)
 CHAML – Lebanese Citizens YOUTH Non-violent Non-sectarian
 Joseph and Laure Moghaizel Foundation
 Foundation for Human and Humanitarian Rights (FHHRL)
 Lebanese Association for Permanent Civil Peace
 Mirsad (Human Rights Association)
 TAUk for Human Rights
 Ecumenical Project for Popular Education
 University Pastoral Students
 Committee of the Parents of the War Missing and Kidnapped
 International Union for Peace and Human Rights
 Association of Human Rights without Discrimination
 Generation for Integration of Lebanon (GIL)
 Free Patriotic Movement (political party)
 Lebanese Communist Party
 People's Movement (political party)
 Republican Party
 Lebanese Movement Party
 Democratic Secular Party
 Democratic Youth Movement (political organization)
 Democratic Forum (political organization)
 Lebanese Democratic Youth Gathering (political organization)
 Progressive Youth Organization (political organization)
 Research Centre on Peace and Human Rights – North
 Rene Moawad Foundation (RMF)
 Follow-Up Committee for the Detainees in Israeli Prisons

Farh Al Ataa : Joy of Giving
 Lebanese School for Social Training (ELFS)
 Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE)
 Lebanese Physically Handicapped Union (LPHU)
 League of University Students in the North
 Social Movement
 General Chaplain of Prisons in Lebanon
 Civil Society Current
 Lebanese popular Rescue
 Association for the Protection of Human Rights
 National Union of Syndicates
 The Citizen Movement
 AMEL Association
 Youth Gathering of Renaissance (political organization)
 Democratic Youth Union (political organization)
 Democratic Gathering for Lebanese Women
 Progressive Women Union
 League of Working Women
 Lebanese association to Resist Violence against Women
 Kafa (Enough) violence against Women Association
 Arts and Culture Association – Sidon
 Antelias Cultural Gathering
 House of Plastic Arts and Culture - Rashaya Al-Wadi
 Cultural Council for South Lebanon
 Cultural Council of Tyr
 Siraj wa Midad (Cultural association)
 League of Literature – Tannoureen
 Association for Human Rehabilitation and against Illiteracy
 Lebanese Association for Environment and Development (LAED)
 Contact and Resources Center (CRC)
 League of University Students for Armenian Church
 Lebanese Center for Human Rights

Current Coordination Committee: Association Justice and Mercy (AJEM), Association for the Defence of Rights and Freedoms (ADDL), Movement for People's Rights (MPR), Lebanese Association for Human Rights (ALDOHOM), Progressive Socialist Party (Justice Commission), and Amnesty International – Lebanon.

Members: Lawyer Nehme Jemaa, Father Hadi Al-Aaya, Lawyer Marie Ghantous, Lawyer Ghassan Hamoud, Mr. Charles Nasrallah, Dr. Ogarit Younan, General Coordinator: Dr. Walid Slaybi.

Arab and International Partners

On the Regional Arab level, the Lebanese Campaign is considered as the oldest integrated model of a civil anti-death penalty campaign. Its impact, coupled with long and common relationships with human rights activists and organizations in the region, clearly illustrates a positive effect in other Arab countries. The local initiatives and national coalitions were launched in many countries, in addition to the creation of a Regional Arab anti-death penalty network.

On the international level, the Lebanese Campaign had supportive global partners, especially Amnesty International and its regional office in Beirut, which was present and active in all activities of the Campaign. Moreover, the Campaign was among the first participants from the Arab region in the First World Congress against Death Penalty held in Strasbourg – June 2001, which continues to be organized regularly each two-three years. In 2002, the Campaign became a member of the "World Coalition against Death Penalty", which is still developing.

Therefore, the Lebanese Campaign is a National Coalition reflecting a local, Arab and international process; people supporting each other for more justice and humanity everywhere...

Arab Coalitions & Contacts

- Regional Arab Network against Death Penalty (since 2007)
- Moroccan Coalition for the Abolition of Death Penalty (2003)
- Tunisian Coalition for the Abolition of Death Penalty (2007)
- Egyptian Coalition against Death Penalty (2007)
- Yemenite Coalition against Death Penalty (2007)
- Jordanian Coalition against Death Penalty (2007)
- Algerian Coalition for the Abolition of Death Penalty (2009)
- Arab Observatory against Death Penalty / Amman Centre for Human Rights - Jordan www.achrs.org
- Centre for - Right to Life - Against Death Penalty – Middle East and North Africa www.rtladp.org
- Arab Institute for Human Rights www.aihr.org.tn (Regional conference & Book on death penalty - 1995)
- Arab Penal Reform Organization www.aproarab.org

* Preparatory committees tried to form coalitions against death penalty, in other Arab countries, Iraq, Palestine, Syria...

International Partners

- Amnesty International www.amnesty.org
- World Coalition against Death Penalty www.worldcoalition.org
- Ensemble Contre la Peine de Mort (ECPM) www.abolition.fr
- Penal Reform International (PRI) www.penalreform.org
- Hands Off Cain www.handsoffcain.info
- Fédération Internationale des ligues des Droits de l'Homme (FIDH) www.fidh.org
- Action des Chrétiens pour l'Abolition de la Torture (ACAT) www.acatfrance.fr

"Death Penalty in the Arab World: Actors, Arguments and Perspectives", prepared by Mona CHAMASS, published by "The World Coalition against Death Penalty", 1st copy 2008-updated – February 2010.



January 2, 2004: In solidarity with the Lebanese Campaign, and aiming to mobilize the concerned authorities to suspend the last three executions on 2004, a delegate from the World Coalition against Death Penalty came to Lebanon and lead meetings and initiatives, combined with the European Union efforts... A press conference was jointly organized by the Lebanese Campaign and the World Coalition at the Syndicate of Press in Beirut, with Amnesty International...



February 24, 2006: A specialized legal workshop was organized by the Lebanese Association for Civil Rights (LACR), based on the integral study on the Lebanese law of sanctions prepared to LACR by the expert lawyer Joseph HADDAD, especially to be discussed in this workshop, with the participation of international experts from France and Canada. It aims to present a draft bill for the abolition of death penalty... Were also present, the supporters of the study and the workshop, from German and Dutch embassies in Lebanon.



December 19, 2008: A national workshop, jointly organized by Penal Reform International (PRI) – Regional Office in Amman and the Lebanese Association for Civil Rights (LACR), in order to uphold the Lebanese Campaign, with the participation of the Ministry of Justice, the Parliamentary Commission for Human Rights and judges... A detailed comparative analysis took place on the three drafts bills currently raised in Lebanon for the abolition of death penalty, and a first discussion on the universal moratorium on executions (UN resolution)...

The National Campaign deeply appreciated the financial support of international organizations, for some of its activities and publications, especially from EU, Netherlands, France and Germany.

Children Messages for a Society without Execution

Within the framework of innovative first-of-its-kind awareness-raising activity which was launched on 2000 by the initiators of the "National Campaign for the Abolition of Death Penalty in Lebanon", training sessions were organized with school students in various regions. A special program was implemented by social animators who visited schools and became 'teachers' on a new curricula subject, which has to be at the core of our civic education. Surprising and deep discussions were expressed spontaneously by students... After, the school students have written a series of letters addressed to the president of the republic, the president of the parliament, and the president of the government, and to the public opinion, calling for the abolition of death penalty. Then, they voted "for / against" death penalty, with a majority against it.

It is about EDUCATION that prepares the human spirit from the start, to avoid being raised on violent tendencies; education which humanizes the idea of punishment and laws...

Below, excerpts from dozens of these students letters.

Dominique

Your Excellency the President of the Republic of Lebanon,
We ask you, we also beg you from the bottom of our broken heart, to understand our stance, we peaceful children, to reconsider this law, because we are fed up of the killing and violence we are currently suffering from.

Elias

Your Excellency the Prime Minister,
Nothing justifies the existence of human beings except for their soul. Human beings live their present and look for a future. Why don't we forgive a wrongdoer who has committed a mistake?
In my name and in the name of my friends, we call upon you and hope that you will deploy your efforts to abolish death penalty, to live altogether in love and peace.

Rabab

You should not punish the killer by killing him. Otherwise, the crime becomes double, knowing that the second crime will be harsher than the first one, since it is premeditated and scheduled and people are invited to watch it. Everyone who signs the execution of a person has killed this person.

Leila

Isn't it preferable to rehabilitate our prisons to become places where assistance is provided to criminals to overcome their wrongdoings? We have to study the root causes of crime in a human manner, because every human being does not turn into a killer except for one reason: poverty, psychological diseases and even political problems. We have no right to sentence to death, because life is not the property of human beings. God has given us life...

Nadwa

Indeed, every human being is well-organized and talented. What does he lack? Think.
The head of a good man: Cultivate it, take care of it, water it, fertilize it, lighten it up, and use it. You won't then need death penalty.

Suzanne

Lebanon approved many human rights treaty, except for the abolition of death penalty. Why? When we execute a killer, do we put an end to crimes? No, because criminals are still there and crimes are even increasing, instead of decreasing.

Christine

Ropes are made to facilitate the work of human beings, not to destroy them. Who are we and how can we decide to take out the life of another human being on Earth? God only can give life and take it back. There are many reasons to execute people. But what's the use to kill a killer? Don't we become ourselves killers?



Toufic

A drawing done by the student: "what if he is innocent!?" referring to the irreversible juridical mistakes, and that many innocent people have been sentenced to death and executed...

"Caution: Children imitate adults!"

L.A., a child (6 years) tried to hang himself while simulating a hanging operation he has seen on TV and in the newspapers. He tied a rope to a ladder in his parents' house, went up on a chair and asked his brother to pull the chair beneath him. But his brother refused to abide and went to tell his mother who rushed to the room where her son was, to find him short-breathed and hanging on the rope, and saved him at the last minute... Many other examples all over the times of execution have showed children playing hanging "as a toy"...

mardi 21 mars 2006

L'Orient
LE JOUR

Walid Slaybi décoré par la France pour son combat en faveur de l'abolition de la peine de mort



In 2005, Walid SLAYBI and Ogarit YOUNAN, writers, civil activists and founders of the *"Academic University for Non-violence and Human Rights in the Arab World"* (AUNOHR), were decorated with the French Republic Human Rights Award for their pioneering and perseverant role and for their unprecedented arduous efforts in Lebanon and in the region to abolish death penalty.

The honoring ceremony was organized by the French embassy in Lebanon on behalf of the French Government on Monday March 20, 2006. The award was symbolic, as the awarded wished to be, and SLAYBI received the medal, in the presence of friends and coordination committee members of the Campaign, who wishing to him good health and continuous fulfillment in his struggle.

This moral award, SLAYBI and YOUNAN wanted to dedicate it to every thinker, legislator, activist, and educator who believe and act for the abolition of death penalty and for a culture of non-violence and justice.

On the artistic painting stamped on the medal, a man and woman yearning for freedom, fighting altogether, hand in hand ...

www.deathpenaltylebanon.org

You are welcome to the first website on the history of the capital punishment in Lebanon and the National Campaign for the abolition of the death penalty. Inside: 13 years of civil struggle, archives and written and audiovisual documents...



Its place on your chest

This PIN and the LOGO were designed by Greg MAJDALANI – **GREY** ;
THANK YOU for your support.

This booklet, the website, the logo and the pin, were offered by the Lebanese Association for Civil Rights (LACR), for "The National Campaign for the Abolition of Death Penalty in Lebanon".

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THANK YOU

