



Committee on International Justice and Peace

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December 14, 2022

Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
2201 C St., NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken:

In July 2021, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a statement welcoming the U.S. Department of Justice's moratorium on executions as an incremental step, while also advocating for abolition of the death penalty in both federal and state statutes. In light of the upcoming vote before the United Nations General Assembly on a resolution calling for an international moratorium on the use of the death penalty, the United States can encourage other member states to similarly establish moratoriums as an improvement in recognizing the dignity of every human life.

Pope Francis has affirmed that, "no matter how serious the crime that has been committed, the death penalty is inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and the dignity of the person."ⁱ As recently as September of this year, the Holy Father reiterated his call for the end of the death penalty stating, "I...call on all people of goodwill to mobilize for the abolition of the death penalty throughout the world."ⁱⁱ The Catholic bishops of the United States, accordingly, oppose all executions in all cases.

I join Pope Francis in this sentiment and urge the United States to consider advancing a further international moratorium on the death penalty.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Most Reverend David J. Malloy
Bishop of Rockford
Chairman, Committee on International Justice and Peace

Cc: Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield

ⁱ Pope Francis, Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to Participants in the Meeting Promoted by the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization (October 11, 2017).

https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2017/october/documents/papa-francesco_20171011_convegno-nuova-evangelizzazione.html

ⁱⁱ Pope Francis, Pope's Prayer Intention for September 2022: For the Abolition of the Death Penalty (September, 2022). <https://www.usccb.org/resources/popes-prayer-intention-september-2022-abolishment-death-penalty>