



A major International Political Event: Montreal hosts the 2nd World Congress against the Death Penalty

Montreal, Canada - From Wednesday October 6th to Saturday October 9th, 2004, Montreal will host the 2nd World Congress against the Death Penalty. As the World Capital of Human Rights for these four days, Place des Arts in Montreal will be the meeting place for all citizens that believe in the universal abolition of capital punishment.

The 1st World Congress against the Death Penalty was held in Strasbourg, France, in June, 2001. The European Parliament, the Council of Europe, presidents of Parliaments, lawyers, the largest NGOs and citizens of the whole world called for "the stay of any execution on the way to universal abolition". The Conference also led to the creation of the World Coalition against the death penalty and the creation of the World Day against the death penalty, which is held annually on October 10th.

Strasbourg launched this collaborative effort for abolition; it is our hope that the Montreal Conference will accelerate it and make it universal.

The City of Montreal was selected because it is located in a country that has abolished the death penalty and is in close proximity to countries that continue to use it, such as the United States, Cuba and certain other Caribbean countries.

More than 1000 experts, diplomats, politicians, citizens of the world and honorary speakers, such as Mary Robinson, Catherine Deneuve and Bianca Jagger, will gather at Place des Arts in Montreal to explore strategies to encourage all countries to abolish capital punishment from their penal codes.

Together the participants will establish a strategy to promote the ratification of the 2nd Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, which is the official covenant used by the United Nations. This document prohibits the death penalty under all circumstances. Lawyers will explore how they can help their fellow abolitionist colleagues in the defense of those at risk of being sent to death.

Debates at the Congress will include the following topics: "Terrorism, International Justice, and how to judge terrorists and dictators like Saddam Hussein? ", "The history of abolition in

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Montreal 2004, the 2nd World Congress against the death penalty (October 6-9). www.montreal2004.org

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Canada”, “What are alternative penalties to a death sentence”, “The United States: the reduction of death sentences and the reduction of executions”, " What are the stakes of the American presidential elections for the future of capital punishment in the USA?", "Is it necessary to boycott the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, because the Chinese government executes 7 citizens per day in stadiums across China?"

The 2nd World Congress against the Death Penalty will also be the largest gathering of individuals who have been exonerated from death row and relatives of murder victims who are today supporting abolition.

Finally, to conclude the Conference, a large peaceful demonstration through the streets of Montreal will be organized on October 9th. This walk will be an opportunity for citizens to express their opposition to the death penalty and their attachment to the respect for human rights.

Find the complete program and accreditation form for the Congress at:
www.montreal2004.org

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