Caribbean voices against the death penalty

Gran Caribe por la Vida

Greater Caribbean for Life

stop crime, not lives
**Working towards the abolition of the Death Penalty in the Greater Caribbean**

**HISTORY**
For many years, there has been a drive for a stronger movement against the death penalty in the Caribbean. The First Greater Caribbean Conference against the Death Penalty, held in Madrid in 2011, paved the way for the creation of a full-fledged regional organization against the death penalty. The Greater Caribbean for Life (GCL) was officially created at a later Conference in Trinidad and Tobago in October 2013, with the participation of activists and organizations from 12 Greater Caribbean countries.

**VISION**
The ultimate goal of the GCL is to achieve the permanent abolition of the death penalty in each and every country of the Greater Caribbean and the creation of a culture of respect for the human right to life and the inherent dignity of all human beings.

**MISSION**
The Greater Caribbean for Life aims at campaigning for and working towards the permanent abolition of the death penalty in the Greater Caribbean; supporting Caribbean abolitionist activists and organizations in this Region; and collaborating with the international abolitionist community.

**OBJECTIVES**
- Spearhead the lobbying efforts to convince Caribbean decision-makers to abolish the death penalty
- Build the grassroots struggle in the region by encouraging activism
- Campaign and educate the wider Caribbean public about the need to abolish the death penalty
- Support Caribbean activists with all the tools, information and strategies necessary to campaign for abolition
- Cooperate with and take part in the international campaigning efforts against the death penalty

Founding members of GCL at the organisation’s launch, 2 October 2013.
Caribbean states represent more than 1/4 of the votes opposed to the global moratorium on the use of the death penalty at the UN.

**DEATH PENALTY IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN**

The Greater Caribbean, also known as the Caribbean Basin, is composed of 25 countries. It includes 13 Caribbean islands, the Caribbean states of South America, and the countries of Central America and Mexico (in addition to Puerto Rico, and the US, British, Dutch and French Caribbean territories).

- **10 countries are abolitionist in law:** Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Salvador (for ordinary crimes only), Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and Venezuela;
- **2 countries are considered abolitionist in practice:** Grenada and Suriname;
- **13 countries are retentionist:** Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Guatemala, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.

The paradox of retentionist Caribbean:

**Few executions but a core of countries strongly opposed to abolition.**

Even though most of the Caribbean retentionist states have not carried out any execution for the past 10 years, they have consistently voted against the UN General Assembly resolutions on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty and have signed the Note Verbale, dissociating them from the moratorium.

GCL is an independent, not-for-profit civil society organization, incorporated under the laws of Puerto Rico.
Members of the 1st elected Executive Committee (left to right):
Mariana Nogales-Molinelli, Puerto Rico, Secretary;
Carmelo Campos-Cruz, Puerto Rico, Deputy Chair;
Leela Ramdeen, Trinidad and Tobago, Chair; Lloyd Barnett, Jamaica;
Fenella Wenham, Dominica, Treasurer; Mario Polanco, Guatemala.
Missing from photo: Nicole Sylvester, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Deputy Secretary.

CONTACT US:
295 Palmas Inn Way, Suite 134,
Humacao, Puerto Rico 00791
Tel: 1 (787) 375-6787
15 Pinewood Avenue,
Ridgeview Heights,
Tacarigua, Trinidad, W.I.
Tel: 1 (868) 299-8945
contact@gcforlife.org
www.gcforlife.org
facebook.com/GCFLife
twitter@GCLnoDP

This document has been produced with the support of the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty.