



## STATEMENT OF THE HOLY SEE

### 2017 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

*Working Session 12: Rule of law*

**Warsaw, 19 September 2017**

Mr./Mme Moderator,

The Holy See is most pleased that a working session of the 2017 HDIM is devoted to the prevention of torture and the death penalty. However, further attention to these two issues alone is not enough. Our Delegation calls all 57 participating States to greater action, to ensure the timely end to torture and other forms of cruel or degrading treatment or punishment and the death penalty, not only in the OSCE region, but in the world as a whole.

Our Delegation, rather than making an extensive presentation, takes this opportunity to reiterate a few principled aspects of the position of the Holy See on these two grave violations of human dignity.

#### *Torture*

Recourse to torture is unacceptable and inhuman in each and every case. The Holy See strongly condemns all acts of torture and ill treatment as defined in the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment which was acceded to on behalf of Vatican City State, on June 22, 2002. The Convention supports victims of torture and respects their rights to complain and to obtain redress and to expect fair and adequate compensation, “including the means for as full a rehabilitation as possible” (articles 13- 14).

#### *Death penalty*

The position of the Holy See on the issue of the death penalty is well-known, but I would like to take this opportunity to echo Pope Francis, who stated in his video Message to the 6<sup>th</sup> World Congress against the Death Penalty (Oslo, Norway, 21-23 June 2016), that such a penalty “is unacceptable, however grave the crime of the convicted person. It is an offence to the inviolability of life and to the dignity of the human person.” It should further be noted that no clear positive effect of deterrence results, and the irreversibility of the punishment does not allow for eventual corrections in the case of wrongful convictions.

Mr. Moderator,

The death penalty and the use of torture are not consonant with any just purpose of punishment and are in contradiction with respect for the dignity of every human person. In conclusion, it is the view of our Delegation that bloodless means of defending the common good and upholding justice are possible and are a more humane form of punishment.

Thank you, Mr./Mme. Moderator!