



**CAPITAL PUNISHMENT
JUSTICE PROJECT**
Ending the death penalty.



Samoa
**Joint Stakeholder Report for the United Nations Universal Periodic Review:
The Death Penalty**

Submitted by The Advocates for Human Rights
a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with ECOSOC since 1996
Capital Punishment Justice Project
and
The World Coalition Against the Death Penalty

for the 53rd Session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review
3 November 2026

Submitted 10 April 2026

The Advocates for Human Rights (The Advocates) is a volunteer-based nongovernmental organization committed to the impartial promotion and protection of international human rights standards and the rule of law. Established in 1983, The Advocates conducts a range of programs to promote human rights in the United States and around the world, including monitoring and fact finding, direct legal representation, education and training, and publications. In 1991, The Advocates adopted a formal commitment to oppose the death penalty worldwide and organized a death penalty project to provide pro bono assistance on post-conviction appeals, as well as education and advocacy to end capital punishment. The Advocates currently holds a seat on the Steering Committee of the World Coalition against the Death Penalty.

Capital Punishment Justice Project (CPJP) is an Australian-based NGO that stands for a world without the death penalty or other forms of state-sanctioned killing. CPJP works closely with partners in Asia to support the defence of people facing the death penalty, assist local anti-death penalty civil society organisations, and campaign to convince governments to abolish the death penalty. Ending the death penalty is one of the Australian Government's human rights priorities and CPJP's work is imperative to ensuring that Australia is a leading voice on abolition.

The World Coalition Against the Death Penalty (WCADP), an alliance of more than 150 NGOs, bar associations, local authorities, and unions, was created in Rome on 13 May 2002. The aim of the World Coalition is to strengthen the international dimension of the fight against the death penalty. Its ultimate objective is to obtain the universal abolition of the death penalty. To achieve its goal, the World Coalition advocates for a definitive end to death sentences and executions in those countries where the death penalty is in force. In some countries, it is seeking to obtain a reduction in the use of capital punishment as a first step towards abolition.

1. Samoa abolished the death penalty in 2004.¹ During its third-cycle Universal Periodic Review in 2021, Samoa committed to ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. Since that time, however, it has taken no steps toward ratification.

Scope of international obligations; Acceptance of international norms; Death penalty

Status of Implementation: Accepted, Not implemented

2. In its third-cycle Universal Periodic Review in 2021, Samoa supported 6 recommendations to ratify or accede to OP2.² Despite this commitment, Samoa has neither signed nor ratified OP2.
3. On 17 December 2024, Samoa again voted in favor of the UN General Assembly resolution calling for a global moratorium on the death penalty.³ Samoa has supported the resolution in every vote since 2007.⁴
4. **Suggested recommendations:**
 - **Take all necessary steps to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, without reservations.**
 - **Request technical assistance from the Friends of the Second Optional Protocol to facilitate the process of finalizing ratification.**

¹ The Advocates for Human Rights and the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty, *Samoa's Compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: Suggested List of Issues Prior to Reporting Relating to the Death Penalty*, 6 Jan. 2025, ¶ 1.

² Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Samoa* (6 Jan. 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/49/7, ¶ 106.4 (Argentina), .19 (France), .20 (Finland, Portugal), .21 (Iceland), .22 (Uruguay).

³ World Coalition Against the Death Penalty, *Two thirds of the United Nations General Assembly vote in favor of the 10th resolution for a moratorium on the death penalty*, Dec. 20, 2024, <https://worldcoalition.org/2024/12/20/two-thirds-of-the-united-nations-general-assembly-vote-in-favor-of-the-10th-resolution-for-a-moratorium-on-the-death-penalty/>.

⁴ International Commission Against the Death Penalty, *Voting Records*, <https://icomdp.org/unga/> (last visited Mar. 30, 2025).