

9 October 2021

Law Council reaffirms its opposition to the death penalty

To mark World Day Against the Death Penalty (10 October 2021), the Law Council of Australia has released its revised Policy Statement on the Death Penalty and reaffirmed its absolute opposition to the imposition or execution of the death penalty.

“No person – irrespective of their nationality, the nature of the crime, or the country in which they have allegedly committed a crime – should be subjected to the death penalty,” Law Council of Australia President, Dr Jacoba Brasch QC stated.

“We agree with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights who said earlier this year that ‘the death penalty undermines dignity and denies our most basic human right, the right to life’.

“The Law Council has reviewed its position on the death penalty in light of developments on these issues since its original policy of 2007, and our stance remains that it must be abolished in all countries across the globe.

“There is no persuasive evidence the death penalty deters crime more effectively than other forms of punishment. In fact, it may contribute to a broader societal culture of violence.”

The Law Council will continue to advocate for Australia to maintain its commitment to the abolition of the death penalty across the world.

Australia’s Strategy for Abolition of the Death Penalty describes the Australian Government’s commitments to policy and advocacy at the national and international level that are supported by the Law Council. However, gaps remain in the Strategy which must be addressed, such as in the operation of domestic legislation and policy that may expose persons to the death penalty overseas.

To the extent that resources allow, the Law Council is also committed to providing assistance and support to Australian legal practitioners who provide *pro bono* and legal assistance to Australian citizens and residents facing the death penalty abroad, and, where appropriate, to work with and support counterpart peak bodies in the Asia Pacific region seeking to build the case for abolition in their jurisdictions.

A full copy of the Law Council’s Policy Statement on the Death Penalty is available [here](#).

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The Law Council of Australia is the national voice of the legal profession, promoting justice and the rule of law.