JOINT STATEMENT BY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS ON
ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY

We, the Members of XXXX, at our meetings in Apia, Samoa from 29 August to 1 September 2014,

Welcoming that no executions have been carried out in the Pacific since 1982, and that no new death sentences were imposed in the region last year,

Recognizing that 140 countries are now abolitionist in law or practice and that the worldwide trend is moving away from the death penalty,

Welcoming the commitment by states in the draft Samoa Pathway to reaffirm the importance of freedom, peace and security and respect for all human rights,

Noting with deep concern the unique challenges of Small Island States in addressing the sometimes high levels of violent crime,

Mindful of the lack of evidence of the deterrent effect of the death penalty,

Reaffirming that all persons have the right to life and that the death penalty is the ultimate denial of human rights,

1. Adopt this and organizations from XX countries of the Small Islands Developing States, and commit ourselves to:

1. campaign towards the abolition of the death penalty, inclusive of creating a culture of promotion and protection of human rights,

2. call upon governments of countries in Small Island Developing States that still retain the death penalty to:

   (a) immediately establish a moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty, in line with four resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly since 2007;

   (c) commute all death sentences to terms of imprisonment that conform with international human rights norms and standards;

   (d) promote a meaningful national and regional debate on the human rights issues that are relevant to the death penalty, including publishing regular and reliable information on the implementation of capital punishment and moves towards its abolition in the region and worldwide;

   (e) abolish provisions in national law that are contrary to international human rights law and standards;

   (f) ensure that international human rights law and standards are observed in all capital cases and at all stages of the process;

   (g) take immediate and concrete steps to abolish the death penalty for all crimes in national legislation and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty;

3. Call upon governments of Small Island Developing States that have abolished the death penalty to:

   (a) engage in concrete and strong action in favour of the abolition of the death penalty in Small Islands Developing states, especially in their diplomatic relations with the retentionist countries;

   (b) promote, including as part of the regional effort to fight crime in the region, the non-application of the death penalty in Small Islands Developing states.

Adopted in Apia, Samoa, on 1 September 2014.

Please contact Amnesty International’s Kate Schuetze, on kate.schuetze@amnesty.org if you or your organisation would like to endorse this statement by 6pm on Monday 1 September 2014.