Life imprisonment

The growing use of it around the globe and reform possibilities

Tuesday 9 March 2021, 11:30 - 13:00 (JST)
Recording will be available at www.penalreform.org

At least 183 countries and territories allow for life imprisonment. There are at least half a million persons serving ‘formal life sentences’ as of 2014 – a rise of nearly 84% since 2000. At this event leaders and experts will discuss global findings, country case studies and hear testimony about serving life – providing the evidence and basis for reform on this critical issue.

Welcoming remarks

Ilze Brands Kehris, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights

H.E. Ms. Francisca Van Dunem, Minister of Justice, Portugal

Life imprisonment globally


Olivia Rope, Executive Director, Penal Reform International

Philipp Meissner, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, Inter-regional Advisor and Prison Reform Focal Point

Country case studies and testimony

Mr Shoji Sakurai, who spent 29 years in Japanese prison and then acquitted.

Yuichi Kaido, Japan Federation of Bar Associations

Inês Horta Pinto, PhD researcher at the School of Law, University of Coimbra, Portugal

Frances Crook, Executive Director, Howard League for Penal Reform (England and Wales)

Moderated by Jamil Dakwar, Director, Human Rights Program, American Civil Liberties Union