

Zimbabwe scraps colonial-era death penalty law

Zimbabwe's cabinet on Tuesday agreed to abolish the death penalty following months of debate in parliament, choosing instead to impose lengthy prison sentences for the worst offences.

By Nyasha Chingono ^{7 Feb 2024}



File photo: President of Zimbabwe Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa addresses the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly in New York City, US, 21 September 2023. Reuters/Brendan McDermid/File Photo

The cabinet passed a private member's bill introduced last year in the National Assembly to abolish the death penalty inherited from British colonial rule.

"In view of the need to retain the deterrent element in sentencing murderers, it is expected that the new law will impose lengthy sentences without violating the right to life," the cabinet said in a statement.

"The existence of aggravating circumstances may attract life sentences."

Zimbabwe carried out its last execution in 2005.

President Emmerson Mnangagwa, who was once put on the death row during the struggle for independence against British rule, has been pushing to end the death penalty.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Reporting by Nyasha Chingono; editing by Anait Miridzhanian and Christina Fincher