



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council Nr 864
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EU statement on death penalty in the United States

It is with deep regret that the EU has learned that Mr Milton Mathis is due to be executed in the State of Texas on 21 June 2011.

The EU opposes the use of capital punishment in all cases and under all circumstances, and calls for a global moratorium as a first step towards its universal abolition, in line with resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007, 2008 and on 21 December 2010.

We remain particularly concerned by the imposition of the death penalty in cases where the convicted is suffering from mental or intellectual disabilities, and we consider this practice to be contrary to widely accepted human rights norms set out in several international instruments. The EU notes with concern that there is evidence to suggest that Mr Mathis is intellectually disabled.

While we are aware of the suffering of the victims of violent crime and their families, we recall that, with capital punishment, any miscarriage of justice, from which no legal system is immune, represents an irreversible loss of human life. The EU believes that the abolition of the death penalty is essential to protect human dignity and to the progressive development of human rights. The EU considers capital punishment cruel and inhuman. Furthermore, it has not been found to act as a deterrent. While the EU fully respects the democratic process of

other countries, the concern for human integrity and human dignity, which has inspired us to abolish capital punishment, obviously applies to all human beings.

Taking account of these factors, the EU calls on the appropriate authorities in the State of Texas to grant Mr Mathis relief from the death penalty.

The EU trusts that the Government of the United States of America will ensure that the appropriate authorities in the State of Texas will be informed of this statement.

The candidate countries TURKEY, CROATIA*, the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ICELAND**, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA and SERBIA, the European Free Trade Association countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

*Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

**Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and the European Economic Area.