



**PERMANENT DELEGATION  
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT ON WORLD DAY AGAINST DEATH PENALTY**

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile to the Permanent Council,  
Vienna, 15 October 2012

**Thank you, Mr. Chairman,**

I am speaking on behalf of Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Norway.

On the occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> World Day against the Death Penalty, we reiterate our conviction that the right to life and the respect for human dignity are at the core of human rights.

Death penalty has no deterrent effect and does not provide better protection for society. The irreversible nature of the punishment is problematical because we know that innocent people have been executed and that the penalty has been applied in a discriminatory fashion.

Our countries reject capital punishment in all circumstances.

We also support the assertion that the death penalty constitutes torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. These human rights breaches may occur in the period following sentencing and before execution, in the method of execution, or in the loss of life itself.

We are concerned by the fact that two OSCE participating States, the United States and Belarus, still apply the death penalty.

We regret that executions are still carried out in the United States, but note that death sentences and execution rates declined in the last ten years and that more and more states are following the path to the abolition. We therefore hope and encourage the remaining retentionist states to follow this trend.

We are concerned about the situation in Belarus, including about the existing secrecy around the executions. We call upon Belarus to promptly establish a moratorium on all death sentences and executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty.

It is indispensable that we keep the abolishment of the death penalty on our agenda. Therefore we welcome the debates that are taking place in the Permanent Council, in the course of the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting as well as in the Human Dimension Committee.

**Thank you, Mr. Chairman**