

Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

Permanent Council No. 592
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EU Statement on Death Penalty in the USA

1. The EU reiterates its longstanding and firm opposition to the death penalty in all circumstances.
2. We remain particularly concerned by the imposition of the death penalty in cases of persons suffering from mental or intellectual disabilities. We urge states not to impose the death penalty in these cases.
3. We wish to express our concern about an imminent case of execution in the United States of a person suffering from mental illness. The EU has learned that Mr. Steven Staley, who has been diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, is to be executed in the State of Texas on 23 February this year. We appeal to the appropriate authorities in the State of Texas to grant Mr. Staley relief from his death penalty.
4. While aiming for the universal abolition of the death penalty, we seek a moratorium in all countries which retain capital punishment as a first step towards this end.
5. The EU is profoundly encouraged by the decision of the New Jersey Legislature in the United States to adopt a moratorium on executions in the State of New Jersey.
6. The EU trusts that the appropriate State authorities will be informed of this statement.

The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, the EFTA country Norway, a member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine align themselves with this declaration.

*Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process