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EU Statement on the death penalty in the USA

The EU is opposed to the death penalty in all circumstances and accordingly aims at its universal abolition, seeking a global moratorium on its use as a first step. Furthermore, the EU considers respect for treaty based rights to be of vital importance both nationally and within the international community.

For both these reasons, it is with deep regret that the EU has learned that Mr. Jose Ernesto Medellin is to be executed in the state of Texas on August 5, 2008. Although Mr. Medellin is a Mexican citizen, the Texas authorities failed to notify him of his right to contact a Mexican consulate for assistance at the time of his arrest, as required by Article 36 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, to which both the United States and the EU Member States are Parties. The right to consular notification and assistance is intended to redress the inherent disadvantages facing detained foreign nationals in any country. While we recognize that the US criminal justice system provides numerous safeguards to protect the legal rights of those facing criminal charges, consulates provide further humanitarian, protective and legal assistance.

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In view of the violation of the Vienna Convention, the European Union urges the competent authorities in Texas to grant Mr. Medellin relief from the death penalty.

The EU trusts that the federal authorities will ensure that the competent State authorities be informed of this statement.

La Turquie, la Croatie* et l'ancienne République yougoslave de Macédoine*, pays candidats, l'Albanie, la Bosnie et Herzégovine, le Monténégro et la Serbie, pays du processus de stabilisation et d'association et candidats potentiels, l'Islande, le Liechtenstein et la Norvège, pays de l'Association Européenne de libre-échange et membres de l'Espace économique européen, ainsi que l'Ukraine, la République de Moldavie, l'Arménie et l'Azerbaïdjan se rallient à cette déclaration.

*La Croatie et l'ancienne République yougoslave de Macédoine continuent à participer au processus de stabilisation et d'association.

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