



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY  
TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT ON  
THE WORLD DAY AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY

Delivered by Ambassador Anne- Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council  
Vienna, 8 October 2020

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

I give this statement on behalf of Andorra, Canada, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, and my own country Norway.

Chair,

In the OSCE, two participating States retain the death penalty in both law and in practice. Three more participating States maintain the death penalty in law, but have suspended executions.

We oppose the death penalty in all cases without exception. The death penalty is incompatible with human rights and human dignity. It does not deter crime, and States that retain the death penalty risk perpetuating the miscarriage of justice; As long as human justice remains prone to error, the risk of executing the innocent can never be eliminated.

The 18<sup>th</sup> World Day Against the Death Penalty, this Saturday, addresses the right to access to counsel. We look forward to the ODIHR report on this issue.

All OSCE participating States are State Parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), in which Article 14 declares the right to a counsel of the defendant's own choosing, the right to a fair trial and the right of appeal.

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Poor and economically vulnerable persons, foreign nationals, persons exercising their human rights and persons belonging to religious or ethnic minorities are disproportionately represented among those sentenced to the death penalty in the world today. Persons facing the death penalty must have access to justice without discrimination.

We call on the two OSCE countries in question to suspend all executions and take immediate steps towards abolition. They should join the global trend to move away from the death penalty. The OSCE region deserves to be free of this form of punishment.

Thank you.