



## EUROPEAN UNION

### **OSCE Permanent Council No. 1349 Vienna, 16 December 2021**

#### **EU Statement on the execution of Bigler Stouffer in the US State of Oklahoma**

1. It is with deep regret that the European Union has learnt of the execution of Bigler Stouffer, carried out on 9 December 2021 by the US State of Oklahoma, despite his advanced age, and against a recommendation for clemency from the Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Board.
2. Sentenced to capital punishment in 1985, Stouffer spent a total of 36 years on death row. At 79, he became the oldest person to be put to death by the US State of Oklahoma, and the second oldest inmate to be executed in the United States, since the US Supreme Court reinstated the death penalty in 1976.
3. The execution of Bigler Stouffer by the US State of Oklahoma is contrary to the clear trend to dispense with the death penalty, worldwide and in the US, where a growing majority of States have already abolished the death penalty or stopped using it.
4. The 11 executions carried out in the US this year are the fewest since 1983. Currently, 23 US States have abolished the Death Penalty and three have a gubernatorial moratorium in place. In addition, the US Federal Government has declared a moratorium on executions until the US Department of Justice reviews its policies and procedures on capital punishment – a step the EU welcomed last July at this Permanent Council. We regret, however, that 11 people were still executed this year in the United States, and that death sentences continue to be handed down.

5. The EU again reaffirms its strong opposition to the use of the death penalty at all times and in all circumstances. The death penalty violates the inalienable right to life enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment. Miscarriages of justice, inevitable in any judicial system, are irreversible. Capital punishment also fails to act as a deterrent to crime.
6. The EU will continue its long-standing campaign against the death penalty, including within the OSCE. We call on the two participating States that still maintain the death penalty in law and in practice, as well as on relevant OSCE Partners for Cooperation, to introduce a moratorium on executions as a first step towards abolition.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, SERBIA\* and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC of MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

\* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.