



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU Statement on a death sentence in Belarus

A death sentence was handed down on 20 November to Ivan Kulesh by the Hrodna Regional Court of the Republic of Belarus. The European Union expects that Mr Kulesh's right to appeal will be fully guaranteed.

Mr Kulesh was convicted for serious crimes and we extend our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of the victim of these crimes. Nevertheless, the European Union opposes capital punishment in all cases as it cannot be justified under any circumstances. The death penalty is a cruel and inhuman punishment, which fails to act as a deterrent and represents an unacceptable denial of human dignity and integrity.

The European Union urges Belarus, the only country in Europe still applying capital punishment, to join a global moratorium on the death penalty as a first step towards its abolition.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.