



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

# **Response to the EU statement on death penalty in the United States**

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
July 12, 2012

We are aware of the European Union's continuing concern regarding the use of the death penalty in some jurisdictions in the United States. As we have consistently noted, international law does not prohibit the death penalty or otherwise require imposition of a moratorium on executions with a view toward its abolition. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which the United States is a party, provides for imposition of the death penalty for the most serious crimes when carried out pursuant to a final judgment rendered by a competent court, and accompanied by appropriate procedural safeguards and the observance of due process. This includes the right to seek pardon or commutation of sentence in all cases. The imposition of the death penalty, in appropriate circumstances, has also been upheld by the United States Supreme Court.

The death penalty continues to be the subject of open discussion among the American people.

We note that the European Union Delegation to the United States has sent similar appeals to officials in the States of Georgia and Arizona. The European Union can be assured that appropriate officials will also be apprised of its appeal today.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.