



United States Mission to the OSCE
**Response to the European Union's
Statement on the Death Penalty**

As prepared for delivery by Chargé d' Affaires Kyle Scott
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
March 26, 2009

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

We want to thank the European Union for its statement regarding the abolition of the death penalty in the state of New Mexico.

As we have said on numerous occasions, the use of the death penalty in the United States is a decision of democratically elected governments at the federal and individual state levels and is not prohibited by international law, nor does capital punishment violate any OSCE commitments. The people of the United States, acting through their freely elected representatives, have chosen, in most states, to continue the use of the death penalty. New Mexico now joins fourteen other U.S. states in deciding to abolish use of the death penalty.

Madam Chairwoman, the issue of the imposition of the death penalty continues to be the subject of vigorous and open discussion among the American people.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.