



Slovensko predsedstvo EU 2008
Slovenian Presidency of the EU 2008
La Présidence slovène de l'UE 2008

PC.DEL/119/08
14 February 2008

ENGLISH only

Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

Permanent Council No. 701 14 February 2008

EU statement on the death penalty in Belarus

The EU reiterates its longstanding and active opposition to the death penalty in all circumstances. We consider the abolition of the death penalty to be fundamental to the protection of human dignity and the progressive development of human rights. The EU considers the death penalty to be a cruel and inhuman punishment, which degrades the respect for the right to life. The EU wishes to stress that, in our view, the death penalty does not serve as an effective deterrent, and any miscarriage of justice, which is an inevitable possibility in any legal system, is irreversible.

The EU therefore deplores the recent execution of Syarhey Marozaw, Ihar Danchanka and Valerii Gorbatii in Belarus.

The EU further regrets that its appeal to the Belarusian authorities to commute the capital punishment on these three individuals to alternative sentences was without success.

The EU recalls the recommendation of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Belarus in 2004 either to remove capital punishment from the Criminal Code or to introduce a moratorium on executions. Accordingly, the EU urges the President and Parliament of Belarus to introduce immediately a moratorium on the use of the death penalty with a view to its abolition, which would be in line with UN General Assembly resolution 62/149, adopted on 18 December 2007.

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The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Norway, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Azerbaijan align themselves with this statement.

* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process

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