



United States Mission to the OSCE
**Response to Norway on the Execution of
Kent Sprouse, Andre Cole and Manuel Garza Jr.**

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
April 16, 2015

I want to thank the distinguished Norwegian Ambassador for his statement on behalf of his delegation and several others.

On April 9, the State of Texas executed Kent Sprouse for the October 2002 killing of Harry Marvin Steinfeldt, a police officer in Ferris, Texas. On April 13, Andre Cole was executed by the State of Missouri for killing Anthony Curtis in 1998. On April 15, Texas executed Manuel Garza Jr. for killing a San Antonio Police Officer, John Rojas, in February 2001.

The United States recognizes the debate on death penalty both within and among nations. As we stated before, President Obama has called for a study of the application of the death penalty in the United States. We intend to conduct an informal briefing on the results of this study when they are made public.

We respect the concerns of our friends around this table. We also recall that the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 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.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.