



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Statement Regarding Executions in the United States

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
October 8, 2015

Thank you to our colleagues from the delegations of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland, and all those who associated themselves with the European Union's statement for raising their concerns.

As they noted, on October 6, the State of Texas executed Juan Martin Garcia for the 1998 murder of Hugo Solano.

On October 1, the Commonwealth of Virginia executed Alfredo Prieto for the rape and murder of Rachael Raver and the killing of her boyfriend, Warren Fulton III, in 1988.

On September 29, the State of Georgia executed Kelly Renee Gissendaner for orchestrating the murder of her husband, Douglas Gissendaner, in 1997.

The United States recognizes the debate on the death penalty both within and among nations.

In our closing statement, as was already mentioned, at the 2015 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, we committed to inviting a non-governmental participant in that debate in our country to come to Vienna and share perspectives on this issue.

We respect the views of our friends around this table. We remind colleagues 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, Madam Chair.