



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council N° 1179 Vienna, 15 March 2018

EU Statement on the death penalty

Mr. Chairperson,

The EU reaffirms its strong and unequivocal opposition to the use of the death penalty at all times and in all circumstances. The death penalty is cruel, inhuman and degrading in nature and makes any miscarriage of justice irreversible and fatal. Furthermore, no convincing evidence of its deterrent effect has ever been presented.

The EU is increasingly concerned about the lack of transparency surrounding the use of the death penalty in Belarus, which leaves families of the convicted and the public in the dark. It was recently brought to the public's attention that a further execution took place in Belarus in October 2017: that of Kiryl Kazachok. We also recently learned of yet another death sentence that was handed down by the Vitsyebsk Regional Court on 22 September 2017 to Viktor Lyotaw.

Furthermore, the continued application of the death penalty runs counter to Belarus' stated willingness to engage with the international community to consider international trends and work towards a moratorium or abolition of the death penalty.

The EU calls for a universal abolition of the death penalty. Universal abolition contributes to the enhancement of human dignity and the progressive development of human rights. As a step towards universal abolition, the EU advocates for a global moratorium on the use of the death penalty.

The EU will continue its long-standing campaign against the death penalty, including within the OSCE, and we will continue to encourage Belarus and the United States to follow the global trend towards abolition.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country ICELAND, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and ANDORRA, align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.