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**Permanent Council No. 584  
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**EU Statement on Death Penalty in Kyrgyzstan**

The European Union is closely following ongoing discussions in Kyrgyzstan related to the abolition of the death penalty.

The European Union is opposed to the death penalty in all cases and has consistently called for its universal abolition. The EU considers that the abolition of the death penalty is essential to protect human dignity and to the progressive development of human rights. We consider this punishment cruel and inhuman. It does not act as a deterrent and any miscarriage of justice – which is inevitable in any legal system - is irreversible. Consequently, the death penalty is abolished throughout the European Union. We therefore urge the Kyrgyz government to consider extending the moratorium on the application of the death penalty, pending its legal abolition.

In this context, the EU encourages the Kyrgyz authorities to continue co-operation in the OSCE in order to promote prison reform in Kyrgyzstan as well as a review of punishment policies. The introduction of alternatives to imprisonment and a coherent strategy for reducing the custodial sentences should be considered as a priority. The European Union stands ready to assist Kyrgyzstan in this regard.

The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey and Croatia<sup>1</sup>, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, EFTA countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

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<sup>1</sup> Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process