



**PERMANENT DELEGATION  
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

STATEMENT ON THE DEATH PENALTY IN BELARUS  
As delivered by Ambassador Steffen Kongstad  
to the Permanent Council  
Vienna, 1 December 2016

Thank you, Mr Chair,

This statement is also delivered on behalf of Iceland, Liechtenstein, San Marino, Switzerland and Norway.

We strongly condemn the executions of Mr Ivan Kulesh and Mr Sergei Khmelevsky that have taken place in Belarus.

Death penalty undermines human dignity. Our countries oppose the death penalty in all cases and without exceptions, and we are constantly calling for its abolition. Capital punishment is not a deterrent against crime and makes miscarriage of justice irreversible.

Mr Chair,

In the international community there is an increasing support for the view that the death penalty constitutes a violation of the prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment. There is a growing momentum towards the abolishment of the death penalty.

We strongly urge all OSCE participating States to close the chapter on the death penalty in our region.

Thank you, Mr Chair.