



## EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council 887**  
**Vienna, 10 November 2011**

### **EU statement on death penalty in the USA**

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The European Union opposes the use of capital punishment in all cases and under all circumstances, and calls for a global moratorium as a first step towards its universal abolition, in line with resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007, 2008 and 2010.

The EU is of the firm view that States that have not as yet abolished the use of capital punishment should not impose this punishment when a *de facto* moratorium has been in place for an extended period. It is therefore with deep regret that the EU has learnt that the execution of Mr Paul Ezra Rhoades is set to be carried out on 18 November in the State of Idaho, where the last execution took place in January 1994.

While we are aware of the suffering of the victims of violent crime and their families, we recall that with capital punishment, any miscarriage of justice, from which no legal system is immune, represents an irreversible loss of human life. The EU believes that the abolition of the death penalty is essential to protect human dignity and to the progressive development of human rights. The EU considers capital punishment cruel and inhuman. Furthermore, we do not believe it has been found to act as a deterrent. While the EU fully respects the democratic process of other countries, the concern for human integrity and

human dignity, which has inspired us to abolish capital punishment, obviously applies to all human beings.

Taking account of these factors, the EU calls upon the appropriate authorities in the State of Idaho to continue the moratorium on executions and urges them to grant Mr Rhoades relief from the death penalty.

The EU trusts that the Government of the United States of America will ensure that the appropriate authorities in the State of Idaho will be informed of this statement.

The candidate countries TURKEY, CROATIA\*, the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\* and ICELAND\*\*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA and SERBIA, the European Free Trade Association countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

\*Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

\*\*Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and the European Economic Area.