



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU Statement on the Death Penalty in the United States

The EU is deeply concerned by the latest developments in the United States regarding the death penalty.

On 27 February 2017, the Governor of Arkansas announced he had set the execution date for eight convicts to take place over a period of 11 days, which would have been unprecedented since the resumption of the use of the death penalty in 1977 in the United States. Whilst four of these executions have been stayed, on 20th April, the US State of Arkansas executed Ledell Lee, breaking a de facto moratorium on the death penalty which has been in place in Arkansas since 2005. On Monday, two more inmates, Jack Jones Jr. and Marcel Williams, were executed. This is the first time in nearly 17 years that a US State has executed two inmates in the same day. Another execution is scheduled for today.

While we recognise the serious crimes committed by the individuals in question and extend our deepest sympathy to the families and friends of the victims, we reiterate our firm opposition to the use of the death penalty at all times and in all circumstances, even when backed by due process in a democratic society. The death penalty is incompatible with human dignity, it is an inhuman and degrading treatment, it does not have any proven significant deterrent effect and allows judicial errors to become irreversible and fatal.

The EU will continue its long-standing campaign against the death penalty, including within the OSCE. We call on the United States and Belarus, the only two countries in the OSCE who still apply the death penalty, to introduce a moratorium on executions as a first step towards full 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, as well as the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA 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.