



EUROPEAN UNION
DELEGATION TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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The Head of Delegation

Washington, 17 August 2016
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HB/JG/df

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of Texas State Capital
P.O. Box 12428 Austin
Texas 78711 -2428

Fax: +1 512 463 1849

Subject: Death Penalty case of Mr. Jeffery Lee Wood

Dear Governor,

The European Union takes note of the fact that Jeffery Lee Wood has been sentenced to death and is to be executed on August 24, 2016. The EU, represented by its Delegation to the United States, wishes to make an urgent humanitarian appeal on behalf of Mr. Wood on the grounds of evidence of his mental disability.

The EU is opposed to the use of capital punishment under all circumstances and accordingly aims at its universal abolition, seeking a global moratorium on the death penalty as a first step. We believe that the elimination of the death penalty is fundamental to the protection of human dignity, and to the progressive development of human rights. By its very nature, the execution of the death penalty means that any miscarriage of justice or failure in its application cannot be reversed. No legal system is immune from error, nor is there any reliable evidence to support the argument that death penalty is deterrent to serious crime.

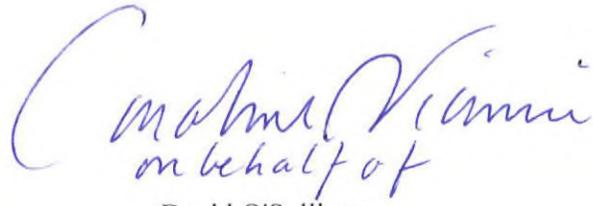
The EU considers that in countries which have not yet abolished the death penalty, this penalty should not be imposed on persons suffering from mental disorder, or mental illness or deficiency. We note with concern that there is evidence to show that Mr. Wood is suffering from a mental disability and has stayed in a mental hospital.

The EU strongly believes that the execution of persons suffering from mental illness or mental disorder is contrary to widely accepted human rights norms and is in contradiction to the minimum standards of human rights set forth in several international human rights instruments as well as prohibited in the U.S. Constitution. Among them are United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution 1989/64 of 24 May, 1989, on the implementation of the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, as well as relevant Resolutions urging all States still maintaining the death penalty 'not to impose the death penalty on a person suffering from any form of mental disorder or to execute any such person'. The EU would also like to point out that there is growing international consensus against the execution of persons with mental illness.

The EU recognises the serious nature of the crime involved, and wishes to express its sincere sympathy to the family and friends of the victim, but we do not believe that the use of the death penalty could bring relief to their suffering.

The European Union respectfully requests your assistance to ensure that Mr. Wood's case is reconsidered in the light of his mental disability.

Yours sincerely,


on behalf of
David O'Sullivan
Ambassador