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**EU Statement on the 1000th execution in the US since the
reinstatement of the death penalty**

The EU would like to draw attention to the Statement made on 2 December on the 1000th execution in the US since the reinstatement of the death penalty:

“The European Union notes with deep regret that, with the execution of Kenneth Lee Boyd by the State of North Carolina on 2 December 2005, the US has carried out its 1000th execution since the reinstatement of the death penalty in 1976.

The European Union is opposed to the death penalty in all cases and has consistently called for its universal abolition. We believe 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.

In countries that maintain the death penalty, the EU seeks the progressive restriction of its scope and respect for the conditions under which capital punishment may be used, which are set out in several international human rights instruments.

In this regard, the EU welcomes the US Supreme Court rulings of June 2002 and March 2005 declaring the execution of persons with mental retardation and the execution of juveniles respectively, to be unconstitutional. The EU urges the US authorities to extend these restrictions, in particular to the execution of persons with severe mental illness. The EU regrets the US decision to withdraw from the Optional Protocol of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (VCCR), which gives the right to consular assistance in death penalty cases, and urges the US to continue to adhere to the VCCR.

The EU warmly welcomes and values its co-operation with the US on a wide range of human rights concerns around the world. The European Union therefore takes this

opportunity to renew its call to the US federal and state authorities for a moratorium on the application of the death penalty, pending its legal abolition”.

The EU notes that since this statement was made, further executions have taken place. The EU would be grateful if this statement could be drawn to the attention of the relevant state authorities.