



European Union Presidency

Governor Mitch Daniels  
Office of the Governor  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2797

2200 Massachusetts Ave. NW  
Washington DC, 20008

March 24, 2005

Dear Governor Daniels,

The European Union has learned that Mr. Bill Benefiel is to be executed in the State of Indiana on 21 April, 2005. On behalf of the European Union, Luxembourg, as the current Presidency, together with the United Kingdom, the subsequent Presidency, and the European Commission would like to make an urgent humanitarian appeal to spare the life of Mr. Bill Benefiel.

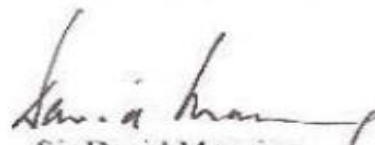
The European Union opposes the death penalty under all circumstances and accordingly aims at its universal abolition, seeking a global moratorium on the death penalty as a first step towards that goal. The European Union considers that in those countries which have not yet abolished capital punishment, this penalty should not be imposed on persons suffering from a mental disorder. Mr. Benefiel has a long history of severe mental illness. He has been diagnosed with schizotypal personality disorder and has undergone a number of evaluations prior to his arrest for capital murder.

The EU strongly believes that the execution of persons suffering from a mental disorder is contrary to widely accepted human rights norms and in contradiction to the minimum standards of human rights set forth in several international human rights instruments. 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 Resolution 2004/94 adopted at the last session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. This resolution specifically urges 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."

We therefore respectfully urge you, Governor, as we have also urged the members of the Parole Board of Indiana, to take these factors into account and to exercise all the powers vested in your office to grant Mr. Bill Benefiel relief from the death penalty.

Sincerely,

  
Arlette Conzemius  
Ambassador of  
Luxembourg

  
Sir David Manning  
Ambassador of  
The United Kingdom

  
John Bruton  
Ambassador of  
European Commission  
Delegation