

Steve Long, Chairman,
Board of Probation and Parole,
1511 Christy Drive,
Jefferson City, MO 65101

April 30, 2009

Dear Mr. Chairman,

The European Union takes note of the fact that Dennis J. Skillicorn is to be executed in the State of Missouri on May 20, 2009. Representing the European Union, the Czech Republic, as the current Presidency of the Council of the European Union, together with Sweden, the incoming Presidency, and the European Commission, would like to make an urgent humanitarian appeal on behalf of Mr. Dennis J. Skillicorn.

The European Union 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.

The European Union considers that nations, which have not as yet abolished the death penalty, should not impose this punishment when a de facto moratorium has been in place for an extended period. The execution of Mr. Skillicorn would break the de facto moratorium in the State of Missouri, where the last execution took place on October 26 2005.

The European Union also notes that on November 20, 2008, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution on the death penalty, which reaffirms its Resolution adopted in December 2007, expressly asking all nations that still use the death penalty to institute a moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the practice.

Furthermore, the European Union considers that in nations, which still employ capital punishment, its use should be restricted to the "most serious crimes". The death penalty must be limited to cases where it can be shown that there was an intention to kill which resulted in the loss of life.

The EU strongly believes that the execution of a person for a crime in which the intention to kill is in question, or indeed absent, is contrary to widely accepted human rights norms and is in contradiction of the minimum standard of human rights set forth in several international human rights instruments. Among them is the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Article 6(2) specifies that, "In countries which have not abolished the death penalty, sentence of death may be imposed only for the most serious crimes..."

Furthermore, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution 1996/15 on the implementation of the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, as well as Resolution 2005/59, adopted by the United Nations Commissions on Human Rights, reiterate this norm. Resolution 2005/59 states that "The

Commission on Human Rights...Urges all states that still maintain the death penalty...d) not to impose the death penalty for any but the most serious crimes...f) to ensure also that the notion of "most serious crimes" does not go beyond intentional crimes with lethal or extremely grave consequences..."

Finally, we would like to draw your attention to considerable efforts made by Mr. Skillicorn to aid his and other's rehabilitation whilst on death row and his attempts to contribute to society.

We therefore respectfully urge you, Mr. Chairman, to take these factors into account and advise the Governor of Missouri to grant Mr. Dennis J. Skillicorn relief from the death penalty.

Sincerely,



Petr Kolář

Ambassador of the Czech
Republic



Jonas Hafström

Ambassador of Sweden



John Bruton

Ambassador for the
Delegation of the European
Commission