



EMBASSY OF GREECE
Washington, DC

EU Presidency

4 March, 2003

Chairman Gerald Garrett
Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles
Executive Clemency Section
P.O. Box 13401
Capital Section

Austin, TX 78711

Dear Mr. Chairman,

Following up on the letter sent to you on [October 24, 2002](#), under the Danish Presidency of the European Union, Greece, as current [president](#), would like to convey to you on behalf of the European Union an urgent humanitarian appeal to spare the life of James B. Colburn, who has been sentenced to death and is scheduled to be executed on March 26, 2003.

As stated in the EU Memorandum on the Death Penalty which has been shared with you on previous occasions (it can also be found on the web page <http://www.eurunion.org/legislat/deathpenalty/eumemorandum.htm>), the European Union is opposed to the death penalty in all cases and accordingly aims at its universal abolition, seeking a global moratorium on the death penalty as a first step.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to remind you of the arguments presented in the letter of October 24, 2002 which led the European Union to believe that, in the case of Mr. Colburn, several elements contradict the minimum standards set forth in several international instruments.


The European Union considers that in those countries, which have not yet abolished the death penalty, this penalty should not be imposed on persons suffering from a mental disorder. Mr. Colburn has a long history of severe mental illness from the period before the crime. He has been diagnosed with chronic paranoid schizophrenia characterized by hallucinations and delusions.

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 2002/77](#)

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, Mr. Chairman, and your fellow board members, to take all the aforementioned factors into account and to exercise all powers vested in your office, to commute Mr. Colburn’s sentence to any penalty other than capital punishment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Savvaides". The signature is written over a horizontal line.

*George Savvaides
Ambassador of Greece*

[Letter to Texas Governor Perry.](#)

[2002 Danish Presidency Letter to Governor Perry.](#)

[2002 Danish Presidency Letter to Board of Pardons and Paroles.](#)

Embassy of Greece

2221 Massachusetts Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20008

(202) 939-5800 Fax (202) 939-5824

E-mail: greece@greekembassy.org

Website: <http://www.greekembassy.org/Embassy/content/en/Root.aspx>