



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1273 Vienna, 2 July 2020

EU Statement on the Federal Death Penalty in the United States of America

Last year, the European Union delivered a statement in the Permanent Council regretting the announcement by the US Federal Government of its intention to resume capital punishment, after a de facto moratorium of 16 years. This decision runs counter the growing trend to abolish the death penalty in the United States and in the world.

On 15 June 2020, the US Justice Department set new dates for the execution of four death-penalty inmates - Daniel Lewis Lee (13 July), Wesley Ira Purkey (15 July), Dustin Lee Honken (17 July) and Keith Dwayne Nelson (28 August).

The EU is deeply concerned that the Federal Government plans to proceed with the executions and reaffirms its strong opposition to the use of the death penalty at all times and in all circumstances. The death penalty violates the inalienable right to life enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment. Miscarriages of justice, inevitable in any judicial system, are irreversible. Capital punishment also fails to act as a deterrent to crime.

The EU will continue its long-standing campaign against the death penalty, including within the OSCE. We call on the two participating states that still maintain the death penalty in law and in practice, as well as on relevant OSCE Partners for Cooperation, to introduce a moratorium on executions as a first step towards full abolition.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

