

November 19, 2004

Mr. Edward G. Rendell
Governor Edward G. Rendell's Office
225 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

Dear Governor Rendell,

The European Union has learned that Mr. George Banks is to be executed in the State of Pennsylvania on 2 December, 2004. On behalf of the European Union, The Netherlands, as the current Presidency, together with Luxembourg, the subsequent Presidency, and the European Commission would like to make an urgent humanitarian appeal to spare the life of Mr. George Banks.

The European Union opposes 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. 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. Banks has a long history of severe mental illness. He has been diagnosed with paranoid psychosis and was hospitalised for evaluation prior to his arrest for capital murder.

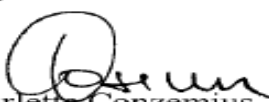
The EU strongly believes that the execution of persons suffering from a mental disorder is contrary to widely accepted human rights norms and in contradiction to the minimum standards of human rights set forth in several international human rights instruments. Among them are United Nations Economic and 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 2004/67 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."

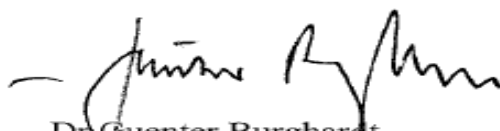
The European Union appreciates that the State of Pennsylvania upheld a *de facto* moratorium for more than 5 years. We would regret if this moratorium were terminated with the execution of Mr. George Banks.

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

Sincerely,


Boudewijn Van Eenennaam
Ambassador of
the Netherlands


Arlette Conzemius
Ambassador of
Luxembourg


Dr. Guenter Burghardt
Ambassador, Head of Delegation
of the European Commission

CC: Governor's legal Council Leslie Anne Miller