

# THE EUROPEAN UNION OPPOSES THE DEATH PENALTY

The European Union opposes the death penalty in all cases and all circumstances. It is a cruel, inhumane and degrading punishment. All 27 Member States of the European Union have fully abolished the death penalty in law and practice while continuing to effectively punish the most serious criminal offenders.

Of the 193 UN Member States, 112 have abolished the death penalty and an additional 50 countries have not had executions for at least 10 years. Moreover, in 2019 no executions took place in 173 countries.



As the EU we say NO to the death penalty and we look forward to the day when we will hear a resounding NO to the death penalty from all U.S. States.

*EU Ambassador Stauros Lambrinidis*



## WHY

### THE DEATH PENALTY IS SOCIALLY UNJUST



The death penalty is discriminatory. It disproportionately affects minorities, the poor, and the most vulnerable. The majority of those charged with capital crimes cannot afford qualified and dedicated representation.

Throughout the modern era of capital punishment, people of color have been overrepresented on death row.

*Death Penalty Information Center 2020 Report, Enduring Injustice: The persistence of racial discrimination in the U.S. death penalty*



### EXECUTIONS ARE IRREVERSIBLE



For every nine executions in America, one person sentenced to death has been proven innocent. Nearly 200 wrongly convicted people have been released from death row in the United States since 1973 after proving their innocence.



You can free an innocent man from prison, but you can't free him from the grave.

*Freddie Lee Pitts, exonerated from Florida Death Row in 1975*



## HOW

### BANNING THE TRADE OF DRUGS USED IN EXECUTIONS



The European Union has banned the export of drugs used in lethal injections. In 2017, the EU co-founded the Alliance for Torture-Free Trade, which seeks to ban trade in goods that can be used for torture or capital punishment.

The EU embargo banning the export of execution drugs has slowed U.S. executions and greatly helped the public understand that medicines are for saving lives, not taking lives.

*Robert Dunham, Executive Director, Death Penalty Information Center*



### WORKING WITH ADVOCATES



**Equal in rights worldwide**  
EUROPEAN INSTRUMENT FOR DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The EU is a leading supporter of abolitionist civil society organizations around the world through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). In the U.S., the EU works to raise public awareness, support national networks, monitor the use of the death penalty, and advocate for legal reform and for the stay of executions.



The European Union has provided tremendous support to our efforts to expose new audiences to death penalty issues in Texas.

*Kristin Houle Cuellar, Executive Director, The Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty*

