



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union  
on the occasion of the World Day against the Death Penalty  
(10 October)**

Today, 10 October, the European Union celebrates the sixth World Day and the second European Day against the Death Penalty.

The EU applauds the decisions taken by Albania, Argentina, the Cook Islands and Uzbekistan to abolish the death penalty completely.

It notes that Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have decided to abolish the death penalty for ordinary crimes; it encourages the authorities of both of these States to extend abolition to all crimes.

It is very concerned at the reintroduction of the death penalty in Liberia.

**P R E S S**

The EU reaffirms its absolute opposition to the use of the death penalty. The EU is convinced that its abolition is an integral part of respect for human rights and confirms its dignity. The EU encourages all measures taken with a view to its abolition. A large number of executions are the consequences of irreparable miscarriages of justice. The EU deplores the fact that minors and mentally handicapped persons are still too often condemned to death. It also deplores the practices of executions carried out in public and in inhumane fashions.

An increasing number of States, now more than one hundred and thirty, have renounced capital punishment. For the first time, in December 2007 the United Nations General Assembly gave a clear signal in favour of abolition when it adopted a resolution calling for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty. The adoption of that resolution was the result of determined efforts and cooperation with partners from all regions of the world. The EU applauds the adoption of the resolution, which marks a turning point on the path towards universal abolition of the death penalty.

The EU also continues to support the initiatives of civil society organisations which bolster the abolitionist movement throughout the world. It salutes human rights defenders who, with courage and determination, are campaigning on the ground and grouping together initiatives in order to create a mass movement of conscience.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia\* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Albania and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this declaration.

\* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.