

The OSCE Secretariat bears no responsibility for the content of this document and circulates it without altering its content. The distribution by OSCE Conference Services of this document is without prejudice to OSCE decisions, as set out in documents agreed by OSCE participating States.

PC.DEL/1031/19
9 September 2019

ENGLISH only



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1239 Vienna, 5 September 2019

EU Statement on the Death Penalty in the OSCE Area

The EU is deeply concerned by the latest developments regarding the death penalty in the OSCE area.

After a de facto moratorium of 16 years, the US Department of Justice announced on 25 July, that the Federal Government will resume capital punishment. Five executions have been scheduled for December 2019 and January 2020.

The EU regrets this decision, which contradicts the growing trend to abolish the death penalty both in the United States and in the world.

On 30 July, the Vitebsk Regional Court in Belarus sentenced to death Viktor Paulau after finding him guilty of a double murder.

Belarus is the only Country in Europe that still implements the death penalty, and the EU is deeply concerned about the lack of transparency which has surrounded its use in Belarus.

The EU again reaffirms its strong and unequivocal opposition to the use of the death penalty at all times and in all circumstances. The death penalty runs counter to the inalienable right to life enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and is cruel, inhuman and degrading in nature and makes any miscarriage of justice irreversible and fatal. Furthermore, the death penalty does not 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, as well as UKRAINE, GEORGIA, 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.