



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1353 Vienna, 3 February 2022

EU Statement on the Execution of Matthew Reeves in the US State of Alabama

1. It is with deep regret that the European Union has learnt of the execution of Matthew Reeves, carried out by the US State of Alabama on 27th January 2022, despite strong evidence indicating that he was mentally impaired.
2. The European Union believes that the execution of persons suffering from mental illness or intellectual disability is particularly regrettable. It is contrary to widely accepted human rights norms and the minimum standards set forth in international human rights instruments. In jurisdictions where capital punishment has not been abolished, we call on authorities to, at least, ensure that the death penalty is not imposed on individuals suffering from mental illness or intellectual disability.
3. Matthew Reeves was sentenced to death following a non-unanimous jury decision. He was executed for a crime committed when he was merely 18 years old, in 1996.
4. The EU again 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.
5. 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 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, the REPUBLIC of MOLDOVA, 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.