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EU POLICY & ACTION ON THE DEATH PENALTY

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The European Union (EU) is opposed to the death penalty in all cases and has consistently espoused its universal abolition, working towards this goal. In countries that maintain the death penalty, the EU aims at the progressive restriction of its scope and respect for the strict conditions set forth in several international human rights instruments, under which the capital punishment may be used, as well as at the establishment of a moratorium on executions so as to eliminate the death penalty completely.

The EU is deeply concerned about the increasing number of executions in the United States of America (USA), all the more since the great majority of executions since reinstatement of the death penalty in 1976 have been carried out in the 1990s.

The following collection of documents includes key policy statements by the EU, actions on specific death row cases in the US and links to international and other agreements cited in the various documents.

EU Policy Documents:

- Declaration by the Presidency on Behalf of the European Union to Mark the Entry into Force of Protocol No. 13 to the European Convention on Human Rights, Concerning the Abolition of the Death Penalty in All Circumstances, July 14, 2003
- First World Congress Against the Death Penalty: Intervention at the Council of Europe, on Behalf of External Relations Commissioner Chris Patten, Delivered by Angel Viñas, Director for Multilateral Relations and Human Rights, External Relations Directorate General, European Commission, Strasbourg, June 21, 2001
- EU Demarche on the Death Penalty, Presented to the US Administration on May 10, 2001
- EU Demarche on the Death Penalty, Presented to United States Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, Frank Loy, on February 25, 2000
- EU Memorandum on the Death Penalty, February 25, 2000
- Excerpts from a Statement Delivered by the Rt. Hon Christopher Patten, EU Commissioner for External Relations to the European Parliament, 16 February 2000
- Guidelines to EU Policy Toward Third Countries on the Death Penalty, Council of the European Union, June 3, 1998

Action in the United Nations

- 54th UN General Assembly, Excerpt from the Speech by Minister for Foreign Affairs Tarja Halonen, Presidency of the European Union, September 21, 1999

- 54th UN General Assembly, Excerpts from the Memorandum by the European Union, September 21, 1999
 - 56th Session, UN Commission on Human Rights, Resolution on the Death Penalty Sponsored by the European Union, April 2000
 - 55th Session, UN Commission on Human Rights, Resolution on the Death Penalty, Sponsored by the European Union, April 1999
 - 55th Session, UN Commission on Human Rights, Resolution on the Rights of the Child, Sponsored by the Group of the Latin American and the Caribbean States and the European Union, April 1999
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Action on US Death Row Cases:

2006

Earlier Actions: 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001, 2000, 1998-1999

- **Paul Reid v. Tennessee:** Letter to Governor Phil Bredesen and Letter to Tennessee Board of Probation and Parole; EU Austrian Presidency Statement at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), June 15, 2006
- **Angel Resendiz v. Texas:** Letter to Governor Rick Perry and Letter to Texas Board of Pardons & Paroles; EU Austrian Presidency Statement at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), June 15, 2006
- **Alabama Death Penalty Moratorium Recommended,** June 11, 2006 (Click on Alabama on map)
- **Krishna Maharaj v. Florida:** Brief of Amici Curiae: The European Union and Members of the International Community in Support of Petitioner
- **Percy Levar Walton v. Virginia:** EU Austrian Presidency Statement at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), May 25, 2006; EU Austrian Presidency Letter to Virginia Governor Tim Kaine, May 24, 2006; 2003 Letter
- **Sedley Alley v. Tennessee:** EU Austrian Presidency Statement, at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), May 4, 2006

- **Steven Staley v. Texas:** EU Austrian Presidency Statement, at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), February 9, 2006; Letter to Texas Governor Rick Perry; Letter to Texas Board of Pardons & Paroles, February 3, 2006
 - **Georgia Death Penalty Moratorium Proposed**, January 30, 2006 (Click on Georgia on map)
 - EU Recognizes **New Jersey Death Penalty Moratorium**, January 25, 2006
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European and International Agreements:

Council of Europe, Protocol No. 6 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms Concerning the Abolition of the Death Penalty, as Amended by Protocol No. 11

Organization of American States, Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights to Abolish the Death Penalty

United Nations

- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
 - Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
 - Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty
- Commission on Human Rights Resolution 2002/77: The Question of the Death Penalty
- Resolution on the Question of the Death Penalty 2001/68, April 25, 2001
- Safeguards Guaranteeing Protection of the Rights of Those Facing the Death Penalty, Economic and Social Council Resolution

- [Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Person in Time of War and Protocol 1](#)
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Related Links:

- [Council of the European Union](#)
- [European Parliament documents](#)
- [European Union Member State US Embassies](#)
- [Council of Europe, Human Rights](#)
- [American Bar Association Death Penalty Moratorium Project](#)
- [American Bar Association Death Penalty Representation Project](#)
- [Death Penalty Information Center](#)
- [International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights](#)
- [International Justice Project](#)
- [Organization of American States](#)
- [United Nations Commission on Human Rights](#)
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