



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the
Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR aiming at the abolition
of the death penalty**

Today the European Union recalls the adoption, on 15 December 1989, of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the principal universal instrument aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.

The Protocol marks an important milestone on the path towards the worldwide abolition of the death penalty, a cause the European Union has embraced as a strongly held policy view and an integral objective of its human rights policy.

P R E S S

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The adoption of EU Guidelines on the death penalty in 1998 and the cross-regional UN resolution calling for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty, first adopted in 2007, are testimony to the EU's efforts to work towards abolition in close cooperation with countries around the world.

The EU firmly believes that the abolition of the death penalty contributes to the enhancement of human dignity and the progressive development of human rights, and calls on the governments of all countries which still retain the death penalty to abolish the death penalty under all circumstances.

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the EU calls on all State Parties to the ICCPR to ratify and promote the Protocol.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan 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.