



EUROPEAN UNION



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**Declaration by the High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on behalf of the European Union concerning the case of Robert Gattis in Delaware, United States**

The EU welcomes the decision taken on 17 January by the Governor of Delaware, Jack Markell, to commute the death sentence of Robert Gattis to life in prison, in light of concerns about Mr Gattis' alleged treatment during his childhood. This is a welcome decision as this is the first time that clemency has been granted in Delaware in recent years.

The EU opposes the use of capital punishment in all circumstances, and calls for a global moratorium as a first step towards its universal abolition. The EU believes that the abolition of the death penalty is essential to protect human dignity and to the progressive development of human rights. Furthermore the death penalty has not been found to act as a deterrent and any miscarriage of justice is irreversible and irreparable.

The EU recognises that until 29 July 2011, the state of Delaware had observed a de facto moratorium on the use of capital punishment since November 2005. Following this decision to grant clemency, the EU urges Delaware to formally establish a moratorium, with a view to abolition of the death penalty.

The Acceding Country Croatia\*, the Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, Montenegro\* and Iceland<sup>†</sup>, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, and the EFTA countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Azerbaijan align themselves with this declaration.”

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

<sup>†</sup> Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

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