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Delegation of Switzerland

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF SWITZERLAND AT THE
945th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

21 March 2013

**Regarding the abolition of the death penalty in the state of Maryland,
United States of America**

Mr. Chairperson,

I am speaking on behalf of Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, San Marino and Switzerland.

We welcome the adoption by the Maryland state legislature of a law abolishing the death penalty. Maryland is the 18th state of the United States of America to abolish the death penalty and, what is more, the 6th state to do so in the last six years. These facts show that the trend is not about to stop. We should like to commend the debate taking place in the United States on this issue and the progress achieved and we hope that other states will follow Maryland's example.

We congratulate the state of Maryland and the political figures involved for the leadership they have shown. The main arguments that have been put forward against the death penalty are its irreversible nature, the lack of a deterrent effect and the fact that it costs much more than life imprisonment because of the lengthy procedure involved and the numerous appeals allowed by the judicial system.

We are now waiting for the governor of the state of Maryland to sign this new law without delay. We also ask that the five persons sentenced to death in the state of Maryland and currently awaiting their execution have their sentences commuted. Our countries are opposed to the use of capital punishment in all circumstances. Capital punishment constitutes a form of cruel and inhuman punishment regardless of the crime committed.

Thank you.