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ENGLISH only

PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT ON CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IN THE USA

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council
Vienna, 7 April 2016

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

I am also speaking on behalf of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Mongolia, San Marino and Switzerland.

We strongly condemn the executions of Mr. Coy Westbrook in Texas on the 9th of March, Mr. Adam Ward in Texas on the 22th of March, Mr. Joshua Bishop in Georgia on the 31th of March and of Mr. Pablo Vasquez in Texas on the 6th of April.

Mr. Chairman,

Death penalty undermines human dignity. Our countries oppose the death penalty in all cases and without exceptions, and we are constantly calling for its abolition. Capital punishment is not a deterrent against crime and makes miscarriage of justice irreversible.

Mr. Chairman,

In the international community there is an increasing support for the view that the death penalty constitutes a violation of the prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment. There is a growing momentum towards the abolishment of the death penalty.

We strongly urge all OSCE participating States to jointly close the chapter on the death penalty in our region.

In December 2014 a record number of 117 UN member states supported the fifth UN General Assembly resolution calling for a global moratorium on the use of the death penalty.

We would like to see a universal abolition, seeking a global moratorium on the death penalty as a first step.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr Chairman,

These were the points I wanted to make on behalf of a group of participating States. Before I conclude, and on behalf of my own authorities only, I would like to add a point on a matter related to our remarks on recent executions in the United States:

Mr Chairman,

Norway will be hosting the sixth World Congress Against the Death Penalty, in Oslo in June this year. The responsible organizations, namely *Ensemble contre la peine de mort* and the umbrella organization *World Coalition Against the Death Penalty* have invited representatives, including on political level, from both abolitionist and retentionist countries. The objective of the Congress will be to create a platform for open and constructive discussions on various aspects of the death penalty.

Thank you.