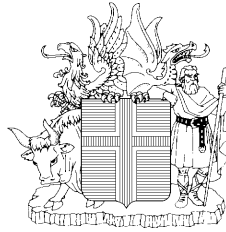


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**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Iceland,  
H.E. Ambassador Gréta Gunnarsdóttir**

**at the 1115<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Plenary Permanent Council of 13 October 2016.**

Thank you, Mr Chair,

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

Mr Chair,

The World Day against the Death Penalty this year focuses on death penalty for terrorism-related offences. Our countries oppose the death penalty in all cases and without exceptions, including for the most serious crimes and even if the most stringent fair trial standards are respected. Death penalty violates the right to life and undermines human dignity. Capital punishment is not a deterrent against crime and makes miscarriage of justice irreversible.

Mr Chair,

At the sixth World Congress against the Death Penalty, held in Oslo in June this year, several countries announced steps to move towards abolition.

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. In this context, we welcome the recently published background paper by ODIHR on the death penalty in the OSCE area, focusing on the relationship between capital punishment and the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. As UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Juan Mendez, highlights in his introductory essay, the harshness of the death penalty goes beyond the execution itself. Physical or mental torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment may be inflicted on a convict and his relatives awaiting execution at different stages of her or his time in detention.

We strongly urge all participating States to abolish the death penalty in law and in practice.

Thank you, Mr Chair

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