



EUROPEAN UNION  
DELEGATION TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Head of Delegation

Washington, 26 April, 2017  
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The Honorable  
Asa Hutchinson  
Governor, State of Arkansas  
State Capitol Room 250  
500 Woodlane Avenue  
Little Rock, AR 72201

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Dear Governor Hutchinson,

The European Union notes with concern the fact that Mr Kenneth D. Williams is scheduled to be executed on Thursday 27 April. The European Union, represented by the Delegation of the European Union in the United States, wishes to make an urgent humanitarian appeal on his behalf.

It is my understanding that evidence was introduced at trial to show that Mr Williams was intellectually disabled. While at the time there was no categorical exclusion for the execution of the intellectually disabled, this is now the case. I also understand that three doctors have submitted reports to the courts this week finding that Mr. Williams meets the definition of intellectual disability. I believe this evidence should be heard and that Mr Williams should not be executed.

His execution would follow the executions of Mr Ledell Lee, Mr Jack H. Jones and Mr Marcel W. Williams which took place over the last week. Those have regrettably put an end to the de facto moratorium on the death penalty in place in Arkansas since the execution of Mr Eric Randall Nance on 28 November 2005.

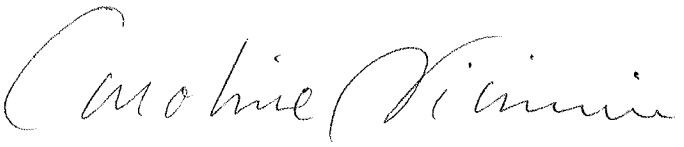
The European Union is opposed to the use of capital punishment under all circumstances and accordingly aims at its universal abolition, seeking a global moratorium on the death penalty as a first step. We believe that the elimination of the death penalty is fundamental to the protection of human dignity, and to the progressive development of human rights on a global scale. Furthermore, we are convinced that applying the death penalty will have no deterrent effect.

The European Union recognises the serious nature of the crimes involved, and wishes to express its sincere sympathies to the surviving families and friends of the victims. However, the European Union does not believe that their loss will be mitigated by the death of Mr Williams.

This unprecedented pace of carrying out those sentences has been justified by the urge to use some of the execution drugs before their expiry date. We also note with concern that other drugs used for executions were reportedly acquired by circumventing the policies of the company who sold them. Proceeding with Mr Williams' execution would therefore be a very concerning precedent.

The European Union respectfully urges you, Governor, to take these factors into account and to commute the sentence of Mr Kenneth D. Williams and grant him relief from the death penalty.

Yours sincerely,

  
*on behalf of* David O'Sullivan  
Ambassador