

**STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE
736th MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

23 October 2008

**Declaration by the European Union on the death penalty in the
United States of America**

The European Union would like to draw the attention of the Permanent Council to the declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union, of 22 October 2008, concerning the death penalty in the United States of America.

“The European Union deeply regrets the rejection by the United States Supreme Court of the appeal by Mr. Troy Davis, a US citizen who was sentenced to death in 1991 in the state of Georgia, and the fact that, as a result of that decision, the competent authorities have set a new execution date of 27 October 2008.

The EU believes that the doubts which emerged throughout proceedings as to Mr. Troy Davis’ guilt must be taken into account. In these circumstances, there is a serious risk of a miscarriage of justice, with irreparable consequences.

The EU would point out that Mr. Troy Davis’ situation has aroused intense emotion and large-scale mobilization of the press, public opinion, community groups and eminent figures in the United States and across the world. None of these calls for clemency, with which the European Union has associated itself on several occasions, has yet been heeded. The EU strongly urges the competent authorities to respond positively.

The EU reaffirms its opposition to imposition of the death penalty anywhere, whatever the circumstances. It considers that abolition of the death penalty is essential for the protection of human dignity and respect for human rights.

The European Union therefore renews its solemn call to the Parole Board to reconsider its position and suspend the execution procedure in relation to Mr. Troy Davis, and commute his sentence.”

The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Montenegro and Serbia; the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Liechtenstein; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Armenia align themselves with this statement.

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