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PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT ON THE OCCASION OF THE WORLD DAY AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY

As delivered by Ambassador Ellen Svendsen at the Permanent Council, on behalf of the Permanent Delegations of Andorra, Canada, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and the United Kingdom

Vienna, 15 October 2026

Mr. Chair,

I am speaking on behalf of Andorra, Canada, Iceland, Liechtenstein, the United Kingdom and my own country Norway.

The 10th of October marked the 24th World Day against the Death Penalty.

We categorically oppose the death penalty under all circumstances, as we firmly believe that its use leads to violations of the human rights of the persons facing the death penalty and of other affected persons, and that it is contrary to human dignity. Today, nearly three-quarters of states have abolished it in law or practice, reinforcing the universal recognition of the right to life. However, we are deeply concerned by the global trend witnessed last year: a rise in executions and a renewed use of the death penalty by a few states.

This underscores the ongoing urgency of abolition efforts.

In light of this, it is important to emphasize that the death penalty neither makes communities safer nor serves as a deterrent to crime. Instead, it exacerbates cycles of violence and is often used as a tool of repression.

We urge all remaining countries across the OSCE region to abolish the death penalty.

Regarding Belarus, we deeply deplore the extension of the death penalty to additional categories of crime in recent years. We urge the Belarusian authorities to reverse this trend and establish a moratorium on executions as a first step towards abolition.

We also remain concerned that the United States continues to carry out executions, having lifted its federal moratorium. We call on the US to reinstate this moratorium.

Mr. Chair,

Our countries are committed to the universal abolition of the death penalty and call on all states, both within and beyond the OSCE, to fully abolish it or, at minimum, establish an immediate moratorium, in accordance with the right to life. We also encourage all

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participating States to support the UN General Assembly moratorium resolution later this year.

Furthermore, the Warsaw Human Dimension Conference once again demonstrated the important contribution of civil society actors in the campaign for the universal abolition of the death penalty. Their work has been crucial to the progress made so far.

Thank you, Mr. Chair