

**P R E S S   R E L E A S E**

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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union  
on the abolition of the death penalty in Lithuania**

The European Union welcomes the adoption of amendments to the Lithuanian Criminal Code by the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania on 21 December abolishing the death penalty and notes that an overwhelming majority of parliamentarians voted in favour of these amendments.

This step reinforces Lithuania's commitment to the promotion of human rights. In this context, the European Union calls upon Lithuania to sign and become party to the 6th Protocol of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights Concerning the Abolition of the Death Penalty as soon as possible.

The European Union reaffirms once again its support for the Council of Europe's position calling for the universal abolition of the death penalty and insisting on the maintenance, in the meantime, of existing moratoria on executions in Europe.