



EU Presidency

EMBASSY OF GREECE
Washington D.C.

20 May, 2003

Governor Mark R. Warner
State Capitol, 3rd Floor
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Governor Warner,

The European Union has learned that Mr. Percy Walton is facing imminent execution in the State of Virginia. On behalf of the European Union, Greece, as current president, together with Italy, the subsequent President, and the European Commission would like to make an urgent humanitarian appeal to spare the life of Mr. Percy Walton.

As stated in the EU Memorandum on the Death Penalty which has been shared with you on previous occasions (it can also be found on the web page <http://www.eurounion.org/legislat/DeathPenalty/eumemorandum.htm>) the European Union is opposed to the death penalty in all cases and accordingly aims at its universal abolition, seeking a global moratorium on the death penalty as a first step.

The European Union considers that in those countries, which have not yet abolished the death penalty, this penalty should not be imposed on persons suffering from a mental disorder. Mr. Walton suffers from severe chronic schizophrenia and apparently suffered from this mental illness at the time of the crime.

The EU strongly believes that the execution of persons suffering from a mental disorder is contrary to widely accepted human rights norms and in contradiction to the minimum standards of human rights set forth in several international human rights instruments. Among them are United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution 1989/64 of 24 May 1989 on the implementation of the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty as well as Resolution 2003/67 adopted at the last session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. This resolution specifically urges all states still maintaining the death penalty “not to impose the death penalty on a person suffering from any form of mental disorder or to execute any such person”.

We therefore respectfully urge you, Mr. Governor, to take these factors into account and exercise all the powers vested in your office, to grant Mr. Walton relief from the death penalty.

Sincerely,

*George Savvaides
Ambassador of Greece*

*Sergio Vento
Ambassador of Italy*

*Gunter Burghardt
Ambassador, Head of the
Delegation of the European
Commission*