

ROYAL DANISH EMBASSY

Washington, DC

EU Presidency

Governor Ronnie Musgrove
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Enclosure

File

27.USA.1

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Dear Governor Musgrove,

The European Union has learnt that Mr. Ronald Chris Foster is to be executed in the State of Mississippi on January 8, 2003. On behalf of the European Union, Denmark, as current President, together with Greece, the subsequent President, and the European Commission would like to make an urgent humanitarian appeal to spare the life of Mr. Foster.

Mr. Foster was 17 years old at the time of the crime, for which he has been sentenced to death. The European Union considers that in those countries, which have not yet abolished the death penalty, this penalty should not be imposed on persons under the age of 18 at the time of the crime.

The European Union opposes 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, as explained in the EU memorandum on the Death Penalty (it can be found on the web page: www.eurunion.org/legislat/deathpenalty/eumemorandum.htm). In countries that maintain the death penalty, the EU aims at the progressive restriction of its scope and respect for the strict conditions set forth in several international human rights instruments, under which the capital punishment may be used.

The EU strongly believes that the execution of juvenile offenders is contrary to widely accepted human rights norms and the minimum standards of human rights set forth by the United Nations. A significant number of treaties, including treaties signed and ratified by the United States, prohibit such executions, specifically the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the American Convention on



Human Rights. Article 6 of the ICCPR – to which the United States is a party – explicitly forbids the execution of juvenile offenders.

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

Sincerely,



Ulrik Federspiel
Ambassador of Denmark



Georges Savvaides
Ambassador of Greece



Günter Burghardt
Ambassador, Head of the
Delegation of the European
Commission