

**Question for oral answer O-000103/2015
to the Council**

Rule 128

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on behalf of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

Subject: The death penalty

The 13th World Day Against the Death Penalty will take place on 10 October 2015. This occasion provides the European Union with an opportunity to reaffirm its leading role in the drive for the abolition of the death penalty and a moratorium on executions.

While substantial progress has been made in a number of countries, there is still a long way to go before the death penalty is abolished worldwide, and efforts to support the initiative must continue. In 1977, only 16 countries had abolished the death penalty in law or practice. Today, there are 140.

Of the 58 countries and territories that retain the death penalty, 22 saw executions carried out in 2014. In some of these, unfortunately, the number of executions either remains high or has risen significantly in recent years.

The theme of this year's international day focuses attention on death penalty sentences for drug-related crimes. Contrary to the general trend of recent decades, an increasing number of countries have enacted laws permitting the death penalty for drug-related offences. This development also needs to be addressed by the European Union. The EU Guidelines on the death penalty, revised in 2013, state clearly that the death penalty 'shall also not be imposed for drug-related crimes.'

Considering this context, the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Subcommittee on Human Rights ask the Council to respond to the following questions:

1. What measures have been taken to mainstream the campaign to abolish the death penalty in EU foreign policy and external relations, specifically with respect to bilateral relations with countries that still retain the death penalty?
2. What actions is the Council ready to take in situations in which third countries are responsible for a significant rise in the number of executions or for restarting executions?
3. Considering the unequivocal ban in the EU Guidelines regarding the death penalty for drug-related crimes, what measures are being taken to ensure that EU cooperation with third countries in the fight against drugs does not contribute to death sentences levied against those suspected of crimes in that context?

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Deadline for reply: 8.10.2015