

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Brussels, 31 December 1998

14461/98 (Presse 465)
P 162/98

Statement by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
regarding capital punishment in Kyrgyzstan

The EU believes that abolishing the death penalty contributes to enhancing the dignity of the person and to the progressive development of human rights.

Holding the abolition of the death penalty as a firm objective, the EU welcomes very warmly the two-year moratorium on capital punishment announced by President Akayev, which entered into force on 4 December 1998.

This decision, which was announced on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is regarded by the EU as a gesture on the part of the authorities in Kyrgyzstan in favour of the promotion of human rights.

The Kyrgyz authorities' decision is, indeed, an important first step toward the abolition of capital punishment.

The EU encourages the Kyrgyz authorities to further their commitment and efforts with the aim of definitively abolishing the death penalty.