

# Press Release

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## **"Do not execute Troy Davis", says Secretary General of the Council of Europe**

"The execution of Troy Davis, scheduled for 17 July, could become famous as an irreversible mistake and a tragic miscarriage of justice," said Terry Davis, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, in Strasbourg on Saturday 14 July.

"The conviction of Mr Troy Davis for murder and assault in 1991 was entirely based on witness testimony. The weapon of the crime was never found, and there was no other physical evidence in the case.

"Several of the witnesses have since retracted or changed their testimony. Anyone reading these statements made after the trial was over and after Troy Davis has spent years in death row is bound to be concerned about his pending execution, and I understand that there is new evidence against an alternative suspect in the same case.

"I do not understand how a man can be executed, 16 years after his conviction, when all the developments related one way or another to his case cast more and more doubt on the validity of the judgment.

"Killing Troy Davis will not do justice to the memory of Officer Mark Allen McPhail, who was shot and killed on 19 August 1989. It will not alleviate in any way the suffering of his family and friends. It will not be justice.

"I appeal to the Georgia Board of Pardons and Paroles to commute the death sentence of Troy Davis," said the Secretary General of the Council of Europe. "This will be in line with the position of our organisation which has 47 member States and the USA as an observer. We in the Council of Europe believe that the abolition of the death penalty today is what the abolition of slavery was two centuries ago."

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