

Press Release

Parliamentary Assembly Communication Unit

Ref: 550a07

Tel: +33 3 88 41 31 93

Fax :+33 3 90 21 41 34

pace.com@coe.int

internet: www.coe.int/press



47 members

Albania
Andorra
Armenia
Austria
Azerbaijan
Belgium
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Bulgaria
Croatia
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Georgia
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Iceland
Ireland
Italy
Latvia
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Moldova
Monaco
Montenegro
Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Russia
San Marino
Serbia
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
"The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"
Turkey
Ukraine
United Kingdom

Execution of Johnny Ray Conner in Texas a 'macabre milestone', says PACE President

Strasbourg, 23.08.2007 – René van der Linden, President of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE), and as such representing a 47-nation "death-penalty-free zone" in Europe, strongly condemned today's execution of Johnny Ray Conner in Texas.

"This 400th execution since Texas resumed the death penalty in 1982, after an 18-year moratorium, is a macabre milestone in the state's history," Mr van der Linden said.

Texas Governor Rick Perry's reply to the EU appeal to halt executions and consider a moratorium on the death penalty was unacceptable, he said. "The death penalty is not, as Governor Perry put it, 'a just and appropriate punishment'. Death is not justice and never will be."

"Despite the potential unpopularity of the measure, capital punishment must be totally removed in all countries which strive to uphold democracy, the rule of law and human rights", he added.

Mr van der Linden finally recalled that, as a country with observer status in the Council of Europe, the United States is violating the commitment of all observers to share the Council's basic values.

Note to editors

The Assembly President will participate, on 9 October in Lisbon (Portugal), in an international conference marking the establishment of an annual European Day against the Death Penalty on 10 October. The conference is jointly organised by the Council of Europe, the European Union and its Portuguese Presidency.

The Parliamentary Assembly brings together 318 members from the national parliaments of the 47 member states.

President: René van der Linden (Netherlands, EPP/CD); Secretary General of the Assembly: Mateo Sorinas.

Political Groups: SOC (Socialist Group); EPP/CD (Group of the European People's Party); ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe); EDG (European Democratic Group); UEL (Group of the Unified European Left).