

# Press Release

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## Council of Europe Secretary General Terry Davis condemns executions in Japan and the United States

Strasbourg, 29.01.2009 - Yesterday four people were hanged in Japan and one person was put to death in Texas, with several more executions expected in the next few days.

In Europe the death penalty is outlawed by two protocols to the European Convention on Human Rights. We reject this form of punishment because it is barbaric, irreversible and ineffective as a deterrent against violent crime. Death does not mean that anyone is any safer.

There is no doubt that Japan and the United States will sooner or later follow the example of the overwhelming majority of democratic countries across the world which have already abolished capital punishment. For the sake of the international reputation of these two observer states of the Council of Europe, I hope that this will happen sooner rather than later.

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A political organisation set up in 1949, the Council of Europe works to promote democracy and human rights continent-wide. It also develops common responses to social, cultural and legal challenges in its 47 member states.