

16 October 2007

**Further information on UA 254/07 (AMR 51/150/2007, 3 October 2007) – Death penalty
USA (Nevada) William Patrick Castillo (m), white, aged 34**

An hour and a half before William Castillo was to be put to death in Nevada on the evening of 15 October, the state Supreme Court issued a stay, to give it more time to consider questions surrounding Nevada's use of lethal injection.

On 25 September, the US Supreme Court agreed to consider a challenge brought against Kentucky's three-chemical lethal injection process, which is the same as used in most of the death penalty states in the USA. That case will be heard in early 2008 and a decision issued before the end of June 2008. The decision has the potential to affect all states that use lethal injection.

William Castillo, who was sentenced to death in 1996 for the murder in 1995 of Isabelle Berndt in Las Vegas, has given up appeals against his conviction and death sentence, and was himself not challenging Nevada's lethal injection protocol. However, the Nevada Coalition Against the Death Penalty and the Nevada branch of the American Civil Liberties Union filed a challenge on the grounds that Nevada uses the same method of execution that the Supreme Court is due to review. It argued that all executions, whether "voluntary" or not, should be stopped pending the Court's decision, which will likely set the standard for states' lethal injection protocols.

The decision to stay William Castillo's execution came after an emergency hearing in the Nevada Supreme Court, in which the judges questioned what harm delaying the execution, would do to the state.

No further action is requested a present. Many thanks to all who sent appeals. *****