

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

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## **Council of Europe: Entry into force of treaty banning the death penalty in all circumstances welcomed**

Amnesty International welcomes the entry into force tomorrow of Protocol No. 13 to the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR), which bans the death penalty in all circumstances.

"The entry into force of Protocol No. 13 sends a clear political message that the death penalty is completely unacceptable at all times", the organization said.

Protocol No. 13 bans the death penalty in all circumstances, including for crimes committed in times of war or imminent danger of war. It closes the gap left under Protocol No. 6 which prohibits the death penalty except for acts committed in times of war or imminent danger of war in all states which are party to it.

"The 26 Council of Europe member states that have signed but not yet ratified Protocol No. 13 must do so as soon as possible", Amnesty International said.

The organization urges the four Council of Europe member states that have neither signed nor ratified Protocol No. 13 -- Armenia, Azerbaijan, the Russian Federation and Turkey -- to do so without delay. Amnesty International also notes with concern that four others -- Armenia, the Russian Federation, Serbia & Montenegro and Turkey -- have yet to ratify Protocol No. 6.

Protocol No. 13 was opened for signature to Council of Europe member states on 3 May 2002 and is entering into force three months after the date on which the tenth member state agreed to be bound by it.

### **Background**

Protocol No. 13 has been ratified by the following 15 Council of Europe member states: Andorra, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Georgia, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Malta, Romania, San Marino, Sweden, Switzerland and Ukraine.

It has been signed but not yet ratified by Albania, Austria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Moldova, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Serbia & Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the United Kingdom.

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