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EUROPEAN UNION
DELEGATION TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Head of Delegation

Washington, 16 January 2016

FAX

To:	Governor Nikki Haley	From Telephone:	202-862-9552
		From Fax:	202-429-1766
From:	David O'Sullivan Ambassador	Telephone:	
		To Fax:	803-734-5167
Number of pages:	TOTAL – 3		
Subject:	TRANSMISSION LETTER – Death Penalty Case – Charles Christopher Walker, SC		

Constituent Services – URGENT



EUROPEAN UNION
DELEGATION TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Deputy Head of Delegation

Washington, 16 March 2016
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HB/BW/st

The Honorable
Nikki R. Haley
Governor
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Fax 803 734 5167

Subject: Death Penalty Case – Charles Christopher Walker SC

Dear Governor Haley,

I am writing to you in relation of the case of Mr. Charles Christopher Williams of dual nationality of U.S. and Germany who has been sentenced to death in South Carolina. The European Union, represented by its Delegation to the United States, wishes to make a humanitarian appeal on behalf of Mr. Williams on the grounds of the evidence of his mental illness, namely suffering from Foetal Alcohol Syndrome.

The EU is opposed to the use of capital punishment under all circumstances and accordingly aims at its universal abolition, seeking a global moratorium on the death penalty as a first step. We believe that the elimination of the death penalty is fundamental to the protection of human dignity, and to the progressive development of human rights. By its very nature, the execution of the death penalty means that any miscarriage of justice or failure in its application cannot be reversed. No legal system is immune from error, nor is there any reliable evidence to support the argument that death penalty is deterrent to serious crime.

The EU considers that in countries which have not yet abolished the death penalty, this penalty should not be imposed on persons suffering from mental disorder or mental illness or deficiency. We note with concern that there is evidence to suggest that Mr. Williams suffers from mental illness that has been insufficiently taken into account during the proceedings due to the failure of the counsel to present evidence of his condition. In this context, we point out the limitations of the U.S. Supreme Court on applying the death penalty to individuals with mental illness. We understand that Mr. Williams is now in post-conviction relief proceedings in connection with mitigating Foetal Alcohol Syndrome whereas a final hearing will be heard by the South Carolina Supreme Court in March.

The EU strongly believes that the execution of persons suffering from mental illness or mental disorder is contrary to widely accepted human rights norms and is in contradiction to the minimum standards of human rights set forth in several international human rights instruments as well as prohibited in the U.S. Constitution. The EU would also like to

point out that there is growing international consensus against the execution of persons with mental retardation.

The EU recognises the serious nature of the crime involved, and wishes to express its sincere sympathy to the family and friends of the victim, but we do not believe that the use of the death penalty could bring relief to their suffering.

The European Union respectfully requests your assistance to ensure that Mr. Williams's case is reconsidered in the light of his mental disability.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Caroline Vicini', written in a cursive style.

Caroline Vicini
Chargé d'Affaires