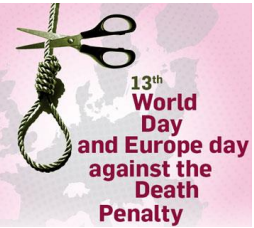


“The Death Penalty: European Union and International Perspectives” A Panel Discussion with European Consuls and FIU College of Law Experts Oct. 8th, 2015-FIU



In commemoration of the 13th World Day and Europe day against the Death Penalty – Oct. 10th

PRESS RELEASE



The EU has abolished the death penalty among its member states, and is collectively opposed to capital punishment. On occasion of the World Day against the Death Penalty (October 10), the Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence (MF-JMCE) assembled five European consuls (of France, Germany, the UK, Spain, and the Netherlands) as well as two legal experts from FIU's School of Law on October 8 to present their stances and discuss the subject. Moderated by Professor of Law Noah Weisbord, the European consuls and law school professors demonstrated not only their collective opposition to this form of punishment, but each also provided a slightly different reasoning for its abolition, and connected their own national histories to the topic at hand. Many reasons were listed why the death penalty is unacceptable for EU member states: an increasing international consensus that it should be abolished, possible violations of international human rights conventions, a statistically proven ineffectiveness as deterrent with studies showing that having it actually goes hand in hand with increased murder rates, as well as racial justice considerations. The second part of the evening was filled with questions by the audience, and a discussion that revolved around different political-legal cultures worldwide, and religious justifications, as a possible reason why it still persists. It was highlighted that the U.S. finds itself in the company of non-liberal states such as China, Iran, Yemen, etc., and that more than 50% of executions stem from only 2% of states, raising a number of problematic questions. But there were also reason brought for how the abolition of the death penalty in many US states could be advanced: from highlighting the racial injustice that condemns proportionately more African-American than Caucasians, to using a cost-argument as capital punishment trials cost significantly more than a prison sentence. A lively debate ensued with the audience that saw arguments made for keeping it, as well as for its abolishment. Even if not everyone in the audience may have been convinced of the merits of abolishing capital punishment, the evening certainly was successful in gathering and diffusing arguments against it, and to show European unity on this issue.

By Markus Thiel

► To view video, click here:

<http://lawmediasite.fiu.edu/Mediasite/Play/067d4263c40143daacf5fb2cf3ad94831d>

► To view pictures, click here:

https://picasaweb.google.com/101832858099366193320/October82015_PanelDiscussionTheDeathPenaltyEuropeanUnionAndInternationalPerspectives