



## 11<sup>th</sup> UN CONGRESS ON CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

### DEFENCE FOR CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL (DCI)

#### NO CHILDREN ON DEATH ROW!

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of *Defence for Children International*, a children's rights organization, we want to publicly welcome the decision of the US Supreme Court to abolish the death penalty for juveniles below the age of 18.

We have three reasons to positively react to the verdict in the *Roper v. Simmons* case of March 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year:

1. It brings the world closer not only to the universal abolition of the death penalty for juveniles but also the general abolition of capital punishment for human beings. *Defence for Children International* emphasizes the need for States to continue making progress in an attempt to abolish capital punishment for children.
2. It is also a step towards the full acceptance by the United States of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its provisions related to juvenile justice.
3. The arguments brought up by the Supreme Court are based on applicable international human rights standards including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the recognition that juveniles are entitled to a special approach when in conflict with the law. These arguments support the idea of a juvenile justice system which incorporates a restorative justice approach.

Furthermore, we call upon States to abolish life imprisonment of juveniles, as enshrined in article 37 a) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child: we don't want a child to spend the rest of his life in prison! A child should never die in detention!

Thank you

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