
September 24, 2019

Governor Mike L. Parson
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 720
Jefferson City, MO 65102

RE: Russell Bucklew
Case 12.958
United States
Compliance with recommendations

Excellency:

I have the honor to address you in my capacity as President of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

On September 24th, 2019, the IACHR held a public hearing regarding the Case 12.958 Russell Bucklew between the United States and the petitioners, during the 173rd Period of Sessions of the Commission in Washington D.C. During the hearing, the IACHR received updated information regarding the case of Mr. Bucklew.

On May 10, 2018, the Commission adopted [Merits Report No. 71/18](#) in which it concluded that the United States was responsible for violating Russell Bucklew's rights to life, liberty and security of the person, to a fair trial, to protection from arbitrary arrest, and to due process of law. In that report, the Inter-American Commission concluded that the United States failed to provide him with effective access to judicial protection regarding his right to be free from cruel and inhuman punishment and torture in the context of the application of lethal injection as the method of execution and further, that the amount of time that he had spent on death row, over 20 years, greatly exceeded the length of time that international and domestic courts have characterized as cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

I am aware that your Excellency is currently considering Mr. Bucklew's clemency petition, and that an execution date has been set for October 1st, 2019 has been set. I call upon your Excellency as matter of urgency to halt Mr. Russell Bucklew execution and to comply with the recommendations of the IACHR.

1. Grant Russell Bucklew effective relief. Taking into account the conclusions of the IACHR on the lack of an effective remedy to challenge the method of execution, the time Russell Bucklew has already been held on death row, his rare medical condition and the significant risk, due to that condition, that his execution would cause excessive suffering incompatible with the American Declaration, the Commission recommends that his sentence be commuted, that he be transferred out of death row, and that the State ensure that his conditions of detention are compatible with his human dignity.

2. Review its laws, procedures, and practices to ensure that the persons sentenced to the death penalty have access to effective judicial remedies to challenge the possible impact of the method of execution on their fundamental rights in accordance with the standards set forth in this merits report.

3. Given the violations of the American Declaration the IACHR has established in the present case and in others involving application of the death penalty, the Inter-American Commission also recommends to the United States that it adopt a moratorium on the execution of persons sentenced to death.

I remind your Excellency that carrying out the execution of Mr. Bucklew would constitute a grave and irreparable violation of the fundamental right to life under Inter-American human rights standards.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Commissioner Esmeralda Arosemena de Troitiño
President of the IACHR