



## World and European Day Against the Death Penalty

*Just Mercy* Virtual Screening and Panel Discussion

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

### 11:00 am Welcoming Remarks

- **Ambassador Stavros Lambrinidis**, Delegation of the European Union to the U.S.

### 11:05 am Opening Keynote

- **Ambassador Emily Haber**, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany to the U.S., Presidency of the Council of the European Union

### 11:10 am Panel Discussion

A discussion of the film *Just Mercy* and the state of capital punishment in the United States, featuring voices from the exoneree community, the European Union, and US death penalty policy experts, followed by audience Q&A.

- **Paul Bottei**, Assistant Federal Public Defender, Columbus, Ohio
- **Shareef Cousin**, Louisiana Death Row Exoneree, Witness to Innocence
- **Robert Dunham**, Executive Director, Death Penalty Information Center
- **Ruth Friedman**, Director, Federal Capital Habeas Project
- **Paula Redondo Alvarez-Palencia**, Political Officer, Delegation of the European Union to the U.S. (Moderator)

### 12:00 pm Conclusion

# Speaker Biographies



**Stavros Lambrinidis**

@EUAmbUS

Ambassador of the European Union to the U.S.

Stavros Lambrinidis is the Ambassador of the European Union to the United States, as of March 1, 2019. From 2012 to February 2019, he served as the European Union Special Representative for Human Rights. In 2011, he was Foreign Affairs Minister of Greece. Between 2004 and 2011, he was twice elected Member of the European Parliament (MEP) with the Greek Social Democratic Party (PASOK). He served as Vice-President of the European Parliament (2009-11), Vice-President of the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee (2004-09), and Head of the PASOK Delegation (2005-11). Between 2000 and 2004, he was Director-General of the International Olympic Truce Centre, an International Olympic Committee organization. He served as Ambassador ad personam of the Hellenic Republic (1999-2004); Secretary-General of the Greek Foreign Ministry, responsible for Expatriate Greeks (1996-99); and Chief of Staff to the Greek Foreign Minister (1996). Between 1988 and 1993 he worked as an Attorney at Wilmer, Cutler & Pickering in Washington, D.C., specializing in international trade, transactions, and arbitration. Mr. Lambrinidis was born in Athens, Greece in 1962. He studied Economics and Political Science at Amherst College (Bachelor of Arts degree, 1984) and Law at Yale Law School (Juris Doctor degree, 1988), where he was also Managing Editor of The Yale Journal of International Law.



**Emily Haber**

@GermanAmbUSA

Ambassador of Germany to the U.S.

Emily Margarethe Haber has been German Ambassador to the United States since June 2018. Prior to her transfer to Washington, DC, she served in various leadership functions at the Foreign Office in Berlin. In 2009, she was appointed Political Director and, in 2011, State Secretary, the first woman to hold either post. Thereafter, she was deployed to the Federal Ministry of the Interior, serving as State Secretary in charge of homeland security and migration policy from 2014 until 2018. Emily Haber has many years of experience with Russia and the former Soviet Union. She held various posts at the German Embassy in Moscow, including Head of the Political Department. At the Foreign Office in Berlin, she served as Head of the OSCE Division and as Deputy Director-General for the Western Balkans, among other positions. Emily Haber holds a PhD in history and is married to former diplomat Hansjörg Haber. The couple has two sons.



### **Paul Bottei**

Assistant Federal Public Defender  
Columbus, Ohio

Paul Bottei is an Assistant Federal Public Defender who represents death row inmates in federal habeas corpus proceedings. For over three decades, he has been counsel for death row inmates in Texas, Tennessee, and Ohio.



### **Shareef Cousin**

Louisiana Death Row Exoneree  
Witness to Innocence

@WTIUSA

Shareef Cousin spent three years on death row in Louisiana for the murder of Alred Michael Gerardi in a street robbery outside a French Quarter restaurant in New Orleans. Shareef was 16 at the time of the crime and 17 when he was sentenced to death, making him the youngest person ever sent to death row in Louisiana. In 1998, the Louisiana Supreme Court ordered a new trial on the grounds that evidence in the case had been mishandled and improperly used. A few months later, the district attorney of Jefferson County Parish decided to drop the case, citing a lack of evidence to pursue it further. In 2005, prosecutor Roger Jordan was disciplined by the Louisiana Supreme Court for his misconduct in Shareef's case. Shareef still resides in New Orleans, where he is active with John Thompson's Resurrection After Exoneration project, and working to empower other wrongfully convicted people, at-risk youth, and other marginalized communities. He is also a member of Witness to Innocence's Justice After Exoneration Committee, where he fights for compensation for the wrongfully incarcerated.



### **Robert Dunham**

Executive Director  
Death Penalty Information Center

@RDunhamDPIC

@DPInfoCtr

Robert Dunham is an attorney and a nationally recognized expert on the death penalty. Before becoming the Executive Director of the Death Penalty Information Center in March 2015, he was one of the leading capital appellate lawyers in Pennsylvania, arguing on behalf of the Commonwealth's death-row inmates in its state and federal courts and in the United States Supreme Court. From 2009 until March 2015 he was an assistant federal defender in the Harrisburg federal defender's capital habeas unit. Mr. Dunham has 25 years of experience as a capital litigator and teacher of death penalty law, including eleven years as an adjunct professor of law at Villanova Law School. He holds a B.A. in Philosophy from the University of Pennsylvania and is a graduate of the Georgetown University Law Center, where he served as managing editor of the Georgetown Law Journal.



## **Ruth Friedman**

Director

Federal Capital Habeas Project

Ruth E. Friedman has been the Director of the Federal Capital Habeas Project (the “§ 2255 Project”) since its inception in 2006. The Project was created to recruit, train and consult with qualified counsel and otherwise improve representation in post-conviction for the growing number of men and women on the federal death row. Until 2002, Ruth served as Senior Counsel at the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Alabama, where she represented capital defendants in federal habeas corpus, state post-conviction, direct appeal, and trial proceedings. Ruth started her career at the Southern Center for Human Rights in Atlanta. While in private practice prior to starting the § 2255 Project, Ruth served as a consultant to the Office of Defender Services of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts in Washington, D.C., devising strategies to improve capital habeas corpus services to condemned inmates in underserved jurisdictions around the country. Ruth received her J.D. from Yale Law School and her undergraduate degree from Harvard University.



## **Paula Redondo Alvarez-Palencia (Moderator)**

Political Officer

Delegation of the European Union to the U.S.

@EUintheUS

Paula Redondo Alvarez-Palencia is a Policy Officer at the Delegation of the European Union to the United States, where she covers human rights, migration and multilateral issues. As part of her portfolio, she covers foreign policy and domestic issues, including the death penalty. Prior to that, Ms. Redondo worked on human rights issues at the US-based non-profit organization Freedom House, and at the OSCE Mission to Moldova. Ms. Redondo holds a M.A. in European Studies from the College of Europe and a M.A. and B.A. in Russian and Eastern European Studies from the Universidad Complutense of Madrid.