EUROPEAN UNION

Brussels, 3 August 2012
A 360/12

Statement by the Spokesperson of High Representative Catherine Ashton on two recent executions in Japan

The spokesperson of Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the Commission, issued the following statement today:

"The High Representative deeply regrets the execution today in Japan of two death row inmates, Junya Hattori and Kyozo Matsumura. This brings the number of people executed this year in Japan to five, following a period of nearly two years during which no execution had taken place. In March, the HR/VP issued a statement condemning the resumption of executions and calling for Japan to seriously consider a moratorium to allow for a thorough public debate on the death penalty.

The EU and Japan are close, like-minded partners. The EU hopes that Japan will join the community of states that have abolished the death penalty. The EU organises regular seminars with parliamentarians and civil society stakeholders in Japan to contribute to the public debate on death penalty, and holds regular consultations with the Japanese authorities to explain its position.
The European Union is opposed to capital punishment in all cases and without exception, and has consistently called for its universal abolition. The EU believes that the death penalty is cruel and inhuman and that its abolition is essential to protect human dignity.."

P R E S S

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