by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the executions in Japan

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

"I deeply regret the execution in Japan of two death row inmates, Messrs Ryouji Kagayama and Mitsuo Fujishima today. This makes a total of eight executions this year and fifteen executions since September 2012. While recognising the serious nature of the crimes involved, the European Union is opposed to the use of capital punishment in all cases and under any circumstances, based on the conviction that the death penalty is cruel, inhumane and irreversible, and its abolition essential to protect human dignity.

Therefore, I reiterate my call on the Japanese authorities to consider seriously a moratorium on executions and call for a thorough review of capital punishment, to promote a sincere public debate on moving away from capital punishment, in line with the worldwide trend."

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