STATEMENT

by the Spokesperson of EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on
the new sentence to death penalty in Belarus

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

"The High Representative regrets the death sentence recently handed down to an
individual by the Minsk Regional Court. She hopes that his right to appeal will be fully
exercised.

She is conscious of the serious nature of the crimes for which he has been convicted. However, capital punishment can never be justified. The European Union opposes capital
punishment under all circumstances. The death penalty is cruel and inhuman punishment,
which fails to act as a deterrent and represents an unacceptable denial of human dignity
and integrity.

The High Representative urges Belarus, the only country in Europe still applying capital
punishment, to join a global moratorium on the death penalty as a first step towards its
universal abolition."

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