STATEMENT

by the Spokesperson of EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the activation of the death penalty in the Maldives

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 is deeply concerned about the recent adoption of implementing regulations for the death penalty in the Maldives.

Implementing the death penalty now would break the de facto moratorium which has been in place since 1953 when the last execution took place.

The High Representative holds a strong and principled position against the death penalty. The abolition of the death penalty is one of the key objectives of the European Union’s human rights policy worldwide. It is essential for the protection of human dignity, as well as for the progressive development of human rights. The death penalty is cruel and inhumane, and has not been shown in any way to act as a deterrent to crime.

The High Representative urges the Government to retain the moratorium on the use of the death penalty in all circumstances, including in cases that involve juvenile offenders, and to work towards abolishing the practice altogether"