STATEMENT

by the Spokesperson on the executions in Japan

“We deeply regret the execution in Japan of two death row inmates, Mitsuhiro Kobayashi and Tsutomu Takamizawa, today. Since the end of a de facto moratorium of 20 months in March 2012, eighteen persons have been executed in Japan.

While recognising the serious nature of the crimes involved, the EU 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 and inhumane and its abolition essential to protect human dignity.

We welcome the announcement that a parliamentary group for the abolition of the death penalty that had suspended its activities following the December 2012 Lower House elections will resume its deliberations in the autumn.

In the meantime, we reiterate our call on the Japanese authorities to consider seriously a moratorium on executions. Taking into account the voices of those who, in Japan and abroad, call for a thorough review of capital punishment, we invite the Government to promote a sincere public debate on moving away from capital punishment, in line with the worldwide trend.”