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Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the de facto moratorium on the death penalty introduced in Oregon, USA

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

"I wish to salute the principled stance adopted by Governor John Kitzhaber of Oregon, in announcing a de facto moratorium on the use of the death penalty, and issuing a reprieve to an individual scheduled to be killed by lethal injection.

Where the death penalty is involved, any miscarriage of justice or failure of the judicial system can lead to the irreparable loss of human life.

This is why the EU opposes capital punishment in all circumstances. The elimination of the death penalty is fundamental to the protection of human dignity. I welcome the courageous step by Governor Kitzhaber, and urge others to follow his example."

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P R E S S

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:
Michael Mann +32 498 999 780 - +32 2 299 97 80 - Michael.Mann@eeas.europa.eu
Maja Kocijancic +32 498 984 425 - +32 2 298 65 70 - Maja.Kocijancic@ec.europa.eu
Sebastien Brabant +32 498 986 433 - Sebastien.Brabant@ec.europa.eu
COMM-SPP-HRVP-ASHTON@ec.europa.eu
www.eeas.europa.eu

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