Statement by the Spokesperson of EU High Representative
Catherine Ashton on the sentencing of bloggers in Vietnam

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 expresses her serious concern over the sentencing of bloggers Nguyen Van Hai, Ta Phong Tan and Phan Thanh Hai, to 12, 10 and 4 years of imprisonment respectively followed by 5, 3 and 3 years of probation, at the recent trial in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

The EU recalls the fundamental right of all persons to hold and freely express their opinions in a peaceful manner, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Vietnam is a party.

The sentences in this case appear to be particularly severe. While expressing goodwill and her appreciation of the increasingly positive EU-Vietnam partnership, the High Representative calls on Vietnam to respect its international obligations and to release the convicted bloggers immediately."

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:
Michael Mann +32 498 999 780 - Michael.Mann@eeas.europa.eu
Maja Kocijancic +32 498 984 425 - +32 2 298 65 70 - Maja.Kocijancic@ec.europa.eu
Sebastien Brabant +32 460 75 09 98 - Sebastien.Brabant@ec.europa.eu
COMM-SPP-HRVP-ASHTON@ec.europa.eu
www.eeas.europa.eu
www.ec.europa.eu