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Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the recent executions in Japan

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

"I deplore the execution in Japan of two death row inmates, Yukinori Matsuda and Sachiko Eto on 27 September 2012. This execution took place only a few weeks after the execution of two other death row inmates in August. This brings the number of people executed this year in Japan to seven, a worrying trend following a period of nearly two years during which no executions took place.

I reiterate my call for Japan to consider seriously a moratorium, to allow a thorough public debate on the death penalty, pending its complete legal abolition. This would bring Japan into line with the worldwide trend away from the death penalty. More than two-thirds of countries around the world have formally abolished or ceased to apply the death penalty, as called for by the UN General Assembly."

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