Statement by the spokesperson of EU High Representative
Catherine Ashton on the suspension of political dialogue
with the Gambia

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 regrets that the political dialogue with the Gambia has been suspended by the Government of the Gambia until further notice. The EU underlines its continuing availability to discuss with the Gambian authorities on all aspects of EU-Gambia relations in a constructive dialogue based on shared commitments made under the Cotonou Agreement.

The High Representative remains concerned about the deterioration of the human rights situation in the Gambia, including the whereabouts of Imam Baba Leigh. She urges the Gambia to respect its international commitments, including those made towards the EU. The EU attaches importance to its partnership with the Gambia and hopes that the Government will allow the resumption of the political dialogue as soon as possible. If it is not possible to discuss the issues with the Gambian authorities, there are other provisions of the Cotonou Agreement, which apply to situations where dialogue on important commitments is no longer possible."