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

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

"I learnt with regret that four convicted prisoners, Naw Kham, Hsang Kham, Yi Lai, and Zha Xika, were executed on 1st March in China. The European Union is opposed to the use of capital punishment in all cases and under all circumstances and has consistently called for its universal abolition. The EU believes that the death penalty is cruel and inhumane and that its abolition is essential to protect human dignity.

While recognising the serious nature of the crimes involved and expressing sincere sympathy to the bereaved family and friends of the victims, the European Union does not believe that their loss will be mitigated by these executions.

I have consistently called on the Chinese Government to re-consider the continued use of the death penalty and I reiterate my call on China to review its current practice and move away from capital punishment, in line with the worldwide trend.”