Statement by the spokesperson of EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on violence in Bangladesh

“The High Representative is distressed by the deaths of so many people during demonstrations following the announcement of the death sentence on Mr Sayeedi, one of the senior leaders of the Jamaat-i-Islami party, pronounced by the International Crimes Tribunal in Bangladesh. Political violence of this kind can have no justification and can only damage the country's development, causing immense suffering to ordinary law-abiding people.

The High Representative calls on all political actors in the country to exercise maximum restraint, use their influence to put an end to these violent incidents, and do all in their power to avoid exacerbating the divisions in society which have been brought to a head by recent events.

The High Representative understands the strength of public sentiment on both sides in Bangladesh about the trials. For its part, the EU continues to oppose the use of capital punishment in all cases and under all circumstances and has consistently called for its universal abolition.”