Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton
on the occasion of the United Nations International Day in Support of
Victims of Torture, 26 June 2013

Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, made today the following statement:

“Today, on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, I reaffirm the European Union's commitment to the prevention and eradication of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, which are among the most abhorrent violations of human rights and human dignity.

I pay tribute to the efforts of civil society organisations and individual human rights defenders who work courageously to prevent torture, and to alleviate the profound damage that is done to victims of torture and ill-treatment. The EU offers substantial support to civil society organisations that strive for the eradication of torture and work to ensure accountability.

The EU calls upon all States to accede to the UN Convention against Torture and to its Optional Protocol and to recognise the competence of the Committee against Torture to receive and consider individual communications. We have given every support to the December 2012 UN General Assembly resolution, as well as the March 2013 UN Human Rights Council resolution, stressing the importance of providing redress to victims of torture, with specific focus on the right to rehabilitation.

The EU continues to attach the highest importance to eradicating torture wherever it may occur.”