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S T A T E M E N T

by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the death sentences against 529 members of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt

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

"It was with utmost concern that I learnt that the court in Minya in southern Egypt sentenced 529 Muslim Brotherhood supporters to death. Notwithstanding the serious nature of the crimes for which they were convicted, capital punishment can never be justified.

The EU opposes capital punishment under all circumstances. The death penalty is cruel and inhuman, fails to act as a deterrent and represents an unacceptable denial of human dignity and integrity.

I reiterate the EU's call on the Egyptian interim authorities to ensure, in line with international standards, the defendants' rights to a fair and timely trial based on clear charges and proper and independent investigations, as well as the right of access and contact to lawyers and family members.

This is particularly important for the credibility of Egypt's transition towards democracy."

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

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