

Brussels, 15 May 2014 140515/01

## STATEMENT

## by the Spokesperson on the death sentence passed for apostasy in Sudan

"We are dismayed by the sentencing of Meriam Yahya Ibrahim, a pregnant Sudanese mother, to flogging and capital punishment on charges of adultery and apostasy.

Freedom of religion or belief is a universal human right that needs to be protected everywhere and for everyone. Sudan has ratified the relevant UN and African Union conventions and thereby has an international obligation to defend and promote freedom of religion or belief, which notably includes the right to adopt, change or abandon one's religion or belief of one's own free will.

The EU welcomes the fact that the diverse identity of Sudan was praised during the recent Government announcement of the national dialogue process and calls for promotion of religious tolerance as a stepping stone to national unity and reconciliation.

The EU has been calling on all countries to repeal legal provisions that penalize or discriminate against individuals for leaving or changing their religion or belief or for inducing others to change a religion or belief, especially when cases of apostasy, heterodoxy, or conversion are punishable by the death penalty."

## FOR FURTHER DETAILS: