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EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council 894
Vienna, 15 December 2011**

EU statement on the death sentences in Belarus

The European Union would like to draw the attention of the Permanent Council to the statement by the EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the death sentences in Belarus, issued on 1 December, in which she stated:

"I condemn absolutely all acts of terrorism, and my thoughts and sympathy are with the victims of the terrible attacks in Belarus and with their families.

Nevertheless, I regret that the Supreme Court decided yesterday to sentence Dzmitry Kanavalaw and Uladzislaw Kavalyow to death. I hope that their right to appeal can be fully exercised.

The European Union opposes capital punishment under all circumstances. The death penalty is considered to be a cruel and inhuman punishment, which fails to act as a deterrent and represents an unacceptable denial of human dignity and integrity. I therefore urge Belarus, the only country in Europe still applying it, to join a global moratorium on the death penalty as a first step towards its universal abolition."