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Statement by HR Catherine Ashton on imminent executions in Iran

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

"I am deeply concerned by reports that the executions of Mr Mohammad Reza Haddadi and Ms Sakineh Mohammadi-Ashtiani may be imminent. I call on Iran to halt these executions and convert the sentences, as well as that of Ms Zeynab Jalalian, a Kurdish political prisoner sentenced to death for 'mohareb' whose case the EU already mentioned in a public declaration on 12 May.

Mr Reza Haddadi was sentenced to death for a crime he allegedly committed while below eighteen years of age. Ms Mohammadi-Ashtiani faces death by stoning for adultery, a particularly cruel method of execution which amounts to torture. Both these sentences are in clear violation of Iran's international obligations under the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights and, in the case of Mr Haddadi, of Iran's obligation under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Only recently Iran accepted, during its Universal Periodic Review at the UN Human Rights Council, to respect at least the minimum standards and the provisions of ICCPR and CRC concerning the death penalty, for as long as it is maintained.

I reaffirm the EU's opposition to the death penalty under all circumstances and call on Iran to consider a moratorium on executions pending the abolition of the death penalty in accordance with UN General Assembly resolutions 62/149 and 63/168."

P R E S S

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