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**Declaration by High Representative Catherine Ashton on
behalf of the European Union on the reintroduction of the
death penalty in Papua New Guinea**

The EU regrets the adoption of amendments to the Criminal Code Act (Amendment Bill 2013) on 28 May 2013 which pave the way for the application of the death penalty in Papua New Guinea, extend the death penalty to new categories of offence such as robbery with violence and introduce new methods of execution such as suffocation and electrocution.

Papua New Guinea has observed a moratorium on the death penalty since 1954. Breaking such a long-standing moratorium would be profoundly regrettable and inconsistent with the growing worldwide trend in favour of abolition of the death penalty, which has been demonstrated by repeated resolutions of the UN General Assembly calling upon all States to establish a moratorium.

The EU is conscious that the Government of Papua New Guinea is endeavouring to fight rising criminality and, in this context, welcomes the fact that the Parliament has repealed sorcery as a defence to murder. However, numerous studies have demonstrated that capital punishment does not act as a deterrent to crime. Moreover, miscarriages of justice, which occur in any judicial system, are irreversible in death penalty cases.

The EU is opposed to the use of the death penalty in all cases and under any circumstances and calls on the authorities of Papua New Guinea to maintain the existing moratorium.

P R E S S

Rue de la Loi 175 B – 1048 BRUSSELS Tel.: +32 (0)2 281 6319 Fax: +32 (0)2 281 8026
press.office@consilium.europa.eu <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/press>

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