



Swedish Presidency
of the European Union

Press Release

Tokyo, 31 July 2009

**Embassy of Sweden
Press & Information
Section**

tel +81 3-5562-5060

fax +81 3-5562-0977

Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union concerning the execution of three persons in Japan on 28 July 2009

The European Union notes with deep regret the execution by hanging of Messrs. Yukio Yamaji, Chen Detong and Hiroshi Maeue on 28 July 2009.

The European Union is opposed to the use of capital punishment in all cases and under all circumstances and has consistently called for its universal abolition. We believe that the abolition of the death penalty is essential to protect human dignity, and to the progressive development of human rights. The European Union considers this punishment cruel and inhuman. It has not been found to act as a deterrent, and any miscarriage of justice – which is inevitable in any legal system – is irreversible. Consequently, the death penalty has been abolished throughout the European Union.

The European Union also recalls that, on December 18 2008, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a Resolution on the death penalty, reaffirming its Resolution adopted in December 2007, which calls upon all nations that still use the death penalty to institute a moratorium on executions, with a view to abolishing the practice.

The European Union warmly welcomes and values its cooperation with Japan on a wide range of human rights concerns around the world. The European Union takes this opportunity to renew its call to the Japanese authorities for a moratorium on the application of the death penalty, pending its complete legal abolition.

The European Union intends to call on the new Japanese Government after the elections to express the European Union's view as regards the use of capital punishment in Japan.

Postal Address:
1-10-3-100, Roppongi
Minato-ku
Tokyo 106-0032, Japan

Telephone:
+81(03)5562 50 50
Press Counsellor's Office:
+81(03)5562 50 60

Fax:
+81(03)5562 90 95

E-mail:
ambassaden.tokyo@foreign.ministry.se

Telegram
Svensk Tokyo