

## Joint Statement of European Human Rights Ambassadors on Cao Shunli and other Human Rights Defenders victims of deadly reprisals

The ability for human rights defenders, NGOs and other civil society actors to safely and freely engage with the United Nations is indispensable to the protection of human rights everywhere. Yet, human rights defenders still pay a high price, sometimes even with their lives, for engaging with the United Nations.

Ten years ago today, Chinese lawyer and human rights activist Cao Shunli died after months in detention. She had been detained by the Chinese authorities as she boarded a flight to Geneva, where she was due to participate in civil society briefings ahead of China's Universal Periodic Review.

We call on all States to stop engaging in acts of reprisals, and to allow for safe and unhindered access to, and communication with, the UN. Today we honour Cao's legacy by renewing our shared commitment to prevent and address reprisals.

