



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the deteriorating situation of the religious minority Baha'i
in Iran**

The EU expresses its serious concern at the worsening situation of ethnic and religious minorities in Iran, in particular to the plight of the Baha'i. According to reliable reports, the Iranian Judiciary confirmed that 54 Baha'is were sentenced by a court in Shiraz for 'propaganda against the regime'. Three of the convicted Baha'is were sentenced to four years in prison, while 51 were given one year suspended prison terms.

The EU is concerned about the ongoing systematic discrimination and harassment of Baha'is in Iran, including the expulsion of university and high school students, restrictions on employment and anti-Baha'i propaganda campaigns in the Iranian media.

The EU wishes to express its firm opposition to all forms of discrimination, in particular regarding freedom of religion. In this context, the EU urges the Islamic Republic of Iran to release the Baha'i prisoners and stop prosecuting members of the Baha'i minority due to their belief and practice of the Baha'i Faith.

P R E S S

The Candidate Countries Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
