



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Brussels, 26 July 2010
12623/10
PRESSE 222

Declaration by the European Union¹ following the death of Michel Germaneau

We have just learnt with horror of the death of the Frenchman Michel Germaneau who was being held hostage by the Al-Qaïda Organisation in the Islamic Maghreb (AQMI).

We condemn this foul assassination in the strongest possible terms. We express our solidarity with the victim's relatives and with the French authorities, and we lend them our full support in these tragic circumstances.

The deterioration in the situation in the Sahel-Saharan strip constitutes a growing security issue for this region at the gateway to Europe.

The threat posed by AQIM expressly targets European nationals. In under 18 months over a dozen people have been taken hostage, all of them Europeans. The murder of Michel Germaneau is in addition to that of UK national Edwin Dyer in 2009.

However, the growth of terrorism and organised crime in the Sahel-Saharan strip also directly affects the local populations and States of the region.

We cannot turn our backs on this reality. This new assassination shows the necessity of mobilising all international and regional actors to step up the fight against terrorism and reinforce security in the Sahel-Saharan strip.

The European Union and the Member States are already supporting measures to strengthen the capacities of the States of the region. We must go further and mobilise all the resources at our disposal to promote the security and development of the Sahel-Saharan strip, in cooperation with the States of the region, the United Nations and other international partners.

¹ Adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council on 26 July

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