



EUROPEAN UNION

Brussels, 12 September 2011
A 356/11

**Statement by the spokesperson of EU High Representative
Catherine Ashton on the killing of Ghiath Matar by Syrian security
forces and on the detention of other human rights activists in Syria**

The spokesperson of Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the Commission, issued the following statement today:

"The EU condemns in the strongest terms the killing of human rights activist Ghiath Matar while detained by the Syrian security forces. He was killed for his resolve to stand up peacefully to the brutal repression perpetrated by the Syrian regime. We express our condolences to his family and all those who will miss him as a friend, leader, and example.

Ghiath Matar's death adds to the great number of people who have fallen victim to the Syrian regime's policy of arbitrary killing, injury, detention, torture and abuse of peaceful protesters, and other widespread violations of human rights. It is yet another sign of the brutality with which the regime responds to the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people. All perpetrators of such acts must be held to account.

The EU salutes the courage and determination of the Syrian people which they continue to demonstrate every day despite the repression. The EU demands that Bashar al-Assad and his regime stop their violent campaign without delay and release all detained protesters, in particular Yahya Sharbaji, Amer Matar, Najati Tayara, Shadi Abu Fagher and Omar al-Assad who were illegally arrested during the past weeks. The EU reiterates that the regime must clear the way towards a peaceful transition to democracy in Syria."

P R E S S

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

Michael Mann +32 498 999 780 - +32 2 299 97 80 - Michael.Mann@eeas.europa.eu
Maja Kocijancic +32 498 984 425 - +32 2 298 65 70 - Maja.Kocijancic@ec.europa.eu
COMM-SPP-HRVP-ASHTON@ec.europa.eu
www.eeas.europa.eu

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