



EUROPEAN UNION

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Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the situation in Turkey

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

"I continue to be concerned by the situation in Turkey and to follow developments very closely. I am deeply saddened by the deaths and many injuries that have occurred, and I send my sympathies and condolences to all those who have been hurt or bereaved. It is essential that all violence stops and that all cases of excessive use of force by the police are recognised as such and investigated promptly, and that those responsible are held fully accountable.

The continuing tensions underline the need for restraint on all sides and the importance of finding a quick solution based on dialogue, mutual respect, understanding and inclusiveness. Open and sustained engagement of the authorities is essential to reinforcing democracy, building confidence and avoiding escalation.

Turkey's EU accession negotiations and commitment to the Copenhagen criteria provide the framework for ensuring full commitment to and guarantee of human rights and fundamental freedoms for the benefit of all citizens of the country, without discrimination. These include freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, belief and thought and freedom of the media, including the responsibility to exercise it actively. Social media must not come under arbitrary pressure. Any limitations should be strictly within the limits defined by the ECHR and the jurisprudence of the ECtHR. The EU is fully committed to reinforcing dialogue with Turkey on these important issues and so to making further progress within Turkey's EU accession process."

P R E S S

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