



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Brussels, 12 January 2010
5217/10 (Presse 2)
P 2/10

**Declaration of the High Representative on behalf of the
European Union on the trial against seven Baha'i leaders in
Iran**

The European Union expresses its serious concern about the start today of the trial against seven Baha'i leaders in Iran, as the charges against them appear to be motivated by their belonging to a minority faith.

The EU recalls that freedom of thought, conscience and religion is a fundamental and undeniable right which shall be guaranteed in every circumstance, in accordance with article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which the Islamic Republic of Iran has signed and ratified.

The EU calls for a just, fair and open trial respecting all international standards and obligations under the ICCPR. The EU reiterates its request to the Islamic Republic of Iran to allow independent observation of the judicial proceedings.

P R E S S

The EU also expresses its deep concern about the recent detention of another 13 members of the Baha'i community for alleged involvement in anti-government protests. The EU calls on Iran to end the persecution of the Baha'i community and to release the detained individuals.

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, Montenegro, 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.
