



EUROPEAN UNION

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Statement by HR Catherine Ashton, on Iranian nuclear activities

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

"I want to underline the concern of the EU at the announcement by the Iranian President on 7 February and the notification made to the IAEA on 8 February of the Iranian plan to enrich uranium up to the level of 20%.

Iran's enrichment activity is contrary to several Security Council Resolutions. Taking enrichment to the level of 20% adds to the deficit of confidence in the nature of Iran's nuclear programme. This has already been aggravated by Iran's unwillingness to engage in meaningful talks.

Enriching uranium to the level of 20% does not in itself provide fuel for the Tehran Research Reactor. This requires construction of fuel assemblies for which we do not believe that Iran has either the technical knowledge or the intellectual property rights. As things stand it seems unlikely that on its own Iran will be able to refuel the Tehran Research Reactor and to continue production of medical isotopes for which, as Iran has insisted, there is an important need. We continue to find it difficult to understand why Iran has not taken up the proposed agreement with the IAEA which would have solved all these problems.

The EU will continue to review all aspects of the Iranian nuclear issue on the basis of its dual-track approach and, as the European Council stated in its declaration of December 2009, stands ready to take the necessary steps to accompany the UNSC process."

P R E S S

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

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