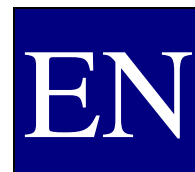




**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council declaration on free access to information in Iran

*3005th FOREIGN AFFAIRS Council meeting
Brussels, 22 March 2010*

The Council adopted the following declaration:

“1. Recalling its conclusions of December 2009 on human rights and democratisation in third countries, the Council reiterates its commitment to stepping up EU action on the relationship between freedom of expression and new technologies. The EU stresses that freedom of expression throughout the world is a universal right which includes the right of individuals to seek, receive and impart information regardless of frontiers. Restrictions and limitations on the use of new technologies have emerged as a key challenge to the respect for human rights in many parts of the world, undermining the potential the technologies have in promoting freedom of expression.

2. In this context, the European Union expresses its grave concern over measures taken by the Iranian authorities to prevent its citizens from freely communicating and receiving information through TV, radio satellite broadcasting and the internet. Deliberate interference by jamming of satellite broadcasting has affected numerous radio and TV services, including European services, transmitted by EUTELSAT. In addition, the Iranian authorities regularly prevent their citizens from freely accessing, communicating and receiving information on the internet, and restrict or block mobile telecommunications.

3. The jamming of TV and radio satellite broadcasting runs counter to the undertakings given by the Islamic Republic of Iran itself in the context of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). Despite complaints made to the Iranian authorities through the ITU they have not put an end to this jamming, which originates on Iranian territory.

P R E S S

4. The EU therefore calls on the Iranian authorities to stop the jamming of satellite broadcasting and internet censorship and to put an end to this electronic interference immediately. The EU is determined to pursue these issues and to act with a view to putting an end to this unacceptable situation.

5. The EU calls on Iran to ensure the right to freedom of expression as set out in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights that the Islamic Republic of Iran has signed and ratified.”
