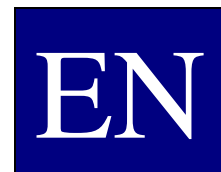




**COUNCIL OF
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Human rights and democracy in the world

Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, today launched **Human Rights and Democracy in the World - a Report on EU action between July 2008 and December 2009**. On presenting the report she said:

"Human rights, democracy and the rule of law are the basic values on which EU foreign policy is built. They are a silver thread running through all that we do.

I personally am fully committed to the effective promotion of human rights. My interest is in outcomes, achieving fair results for people who look to the EU to defend fundamental principles.

Measuring outcomes can be hard, especially when it comes to human rights, but this report shows just how much the EU is doing. Over the past decade the EU has equipped itself with a formidable set of tools to promote respect for human rights. I look forward to taking this work forward through the European External Action Service."

P R E S S

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The report was adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council, which is chaired by Catherine Ashton.

The report documents the great range of the EU's activities through its external policies in the field of human rights from development cooperation to deployment of security operations. It covers thematic issues as well as the EU's action on human rights situation in various countries.

For example, during the period of the report the EU:

- Provided over € 235 million in funding for 900 NGO projects in some 100 countries;
- Multiplied the number of dialogues with foreign governments devoted to human rights;
- Spoke out for the protection and promotion of human rights at the UN and in other forums;
- Developed tailored strategies, to advance issues of key concern to the EU;
- Made numerous approaches to foreign governments on behalf of human rights defenders;
- Made frequent public statements in support of upholding human rights worldwide.
- Sent election observation missions to 16 different countries

The Report itself is an important way for raising awareness of human rights. As well as drawing attention to the plight of individuals who still in 2010 live in fear of repression, the report aims to improve understanding of the EU's work to address issues of injustice, encouraging citizens to feel part of this work, and play their part in ensuring that everyone is able to exercise their human rights.

The report covers the period up to and around the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty (December 2009), which ushered in a new institutional framework for the EU. As a stocktaking of work done under previous arrangements, the report also provides a chance to look ahead. The next edition, due to appear in 2011, will provide a snapshot of the first full year of work under the new system.

The whole text of the interactive report can be found at: eeas.europa.eu

The full report will be available online in all EU languages at:

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=1689&lang=EN>

A short overview of the report is also available as a booklet.
