



EUROPEAN UNION

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**Remarks by the EU High Representative Catherine Ashton  
on the situation in Egypt ahead of the Foreign Affairs Council,  
31 January 2011**

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

*"Obviously we have been monitoring very closely events in Egypt over the last few days and been in close contact with our delegation on the ground (who I spoke to this morning), Member States, international partners.*

*Ambassadors met here in Brussels this morning at my request to prepare for the discussion which we will be having shortly in the Foreign Affairs Council.*

*I believe it is important that the European Union stands ready to assist Egypt now and, of course, into the future.*

*But let me say I deeply regret the loss of life and the high number of injuries. It is essential that everyone – and this includes, of course, especially the police forces – to show restraint so that further violence can be avoided.*

*We urge the authorities to release, immediately, all peaceful demonstrators who are in detention.*

*You know the European Union has, at its heart, democracy, the rule of law, human rights – these are our values and we believe these must be respected by the Egyptian authorities.*

*And the legitimate grievances of the Egyptian people should be responded to – their aspirations for a just, for a better future should be met with urgent, concrete and decisive answers and with real steps.*

*There needs to be a peaceful way forward based on an open and serious dialogue with the opposition parties and all parts of civil society, and we believe it needs to happen now."*

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**P R E S S**

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