



EUROPEAN UNION

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## Remarks by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton during her visit in Egypt

I came to Egypt at the request of several interlocutors we have here and elsewhere, because there was a feeling that the European Union might be able to engage with people from different political parties and with those who have the responsibility of trying to move things forward.

I came because we have relationships with many different groups with whom we can sit and talk and listen to how they see possibilities going forward. It is about trying to help find elements to build some confidence and to be able to go forward.

I have met in the course of my visit here with a range of different people: the acting President, Vice President, and Prime Minister, with General Al-Sisi, with the al-Nour party, with the April 6 movement, with the Tamarod, with the Freedom and Justice Party.

And of course, as you know, I saw Mohamed Morsi last night. He's well and we had a friendly and open and very frank discussion for the 2 hours I saw him. I saw where he was, I don't know where he is but I saw the facilities he has, and we had a long discussion. You know I met with him many times before. I sent him good wishes from people here and he asked me to pass on wishes back, and of course I tried to make sure that his family know that he's well.

## P R E S S

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In all of my conversations, I have emphasised a few things. First of all, we are here to help. We are not here to impose. The people of Egypt will determine their own future and those who have the privilege to be in leadership positions have the responsibility to ensure that that happens. We have some experience that might be of value and we can help by having conversations with everyone, to listen, and to be able to offer some thoughts. And that includes elections in the future that we said we would be very happy to observe. And help with the process. And we recognize the importance of what is going to happen in terms of the constitution and the people working on that. I will be talking later this morning with Mohamed ElBaradei again and I will of course stand ready to come back to Egypt if I can be of further service.

I think all of the people that I've been talking with are absolutely aware that this great country has to move forward and has to do so in an inclusive way. I urge everyone to think very carefully about how you include everybody in the process because it's of enormous importance that what I call building deep democracy continues: civilian government going forward, elections, everyone participating and building the institutions that will ensure a deeper democracy for the country for the future. And that means having to think about the different positions, starting points that understandably people have.

What we also said to everyone is that you need to find a calm resolution to the situation on the ground. We have made it clear that there is no place for violence in this and that peaceful demonstration is important but also ensuring that it is done in a proper way and that the authorities have a huge responsibility to make sure that happens.

I am not here to ask people to do things. I am here to find out where the common ground might be, what the confidence building measures could be that can help everybody move forward. This is your country, this is the Egyptian people's country and they must decide together how to go forward.

But what we know is that sometimes you can offer a little bit of help, and that is all we are here to do. But I cannot emphasize enough: the solutions are for the Egyptian people, the solutions must be found by those who are in the position to be able to lead from the different aspects of the political spectrum. It is very very important.

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