



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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## **Declaration by the High Representative Catherine Ashton on behalf of the European Union on Iran**

Since the Presidential elections of June 2009, the human rights situation in Iran has gravely deteriorated. Many Iranians have suffered violence, imprisonment and repression at the hands of the Iranian authorities over the last year. We note the ongoing climate of fear in Iran, arising from the continued intimidation of journalists, human rights defenders, students and all those who try to speak up in defence of their legitimate rights.

The EU calls on Iran to respect freedom of expression, not least by allowing its citizens to freely communicate and receive information through TV, radio satellite broadcasting and the internet. We are disturbed by serious reports of ill-treatment and torture of those detained and imprisoned as well as allegations of forced confessions. We call on Iran to respect fair trial rights as enshrined in article 14 of the ICCPR. Discrimination against religious and ethnic minorities and women are other areas of concern. The EU will be closely monitoring the ongoing trial of Baha'i leaders in this regard.

The EU firmly condemns Iran's increasing use of the death penalty as a means to intimidate the political opposition and in cases where its use is prohibited under international law.

We take this opportunity to reassure the people of Iran that they have not been forgotten: the EU will continue to speak out and to call on the Iranian authorities to respect the rights of their citizens in accordance with the international obligations to which they have committed under the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights and other human rights treaties.

# **P R E S S**

The Candidate Countries Croatia\* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

\* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

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