

EUROPEAN UNION



Brussels, 22 March 2011 8103/1/11 REV 1 PRESSE 78

Declaration by High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on behalf of the EU on the violent crackdown on peaceful demonstrators in Syria

The EU expresses its profound concern and strongly condemns the violent repression, including through the use of live ammunition, of peaceful protests in various locations across Syria in recent days resulting in the death of several demonstrators, wounded persons and arbitrary detentions, which is unacceptable.

The EU calls on the Syrian authorities to refrain from using violence and to listen to the legitimate aspirations of the people and address them through inclusive political dialogue and genuine reforms and not through repression.

The EU expects that the Investigation Committee created by the Ministry of Interior after the violent repression in the city of Daraa will ensure that those responsible for the death and injury of peaceful protestors are held accountable.

The EU calls on the Syrian authorities to respect its international commitments to human rights and fundamental freedoms.

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

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

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⁺ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.