



**EUROPEAN COUNCIL
THE PRESIDENT**



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**Joint statement by President of the European Council
Herman Van Rompuy and President of the European
Commission José Manuel Barroso on Egypt**

Recent developments in Egypt, and more particularly the violence of the last days, are extremely worrying. We are distressed at the loss of lives and we offer our sincere condolences to the families of the victims.

Egypt is a key partner of the European Union. We share interests in and responsibility for the maintenance of peace and stability in a strategic region. Further escalation must be prevented. It could have unpredictable consequences for Egypt and for its broader neighbourhood.

We regret deeply that international efforts and proposals for building bridges and establishing an inclusive political process, to which the EU contributed actively, were set aside and a course of confrontation was instead pursued. This path will not succeed. It is crucial that violence ends immediately.

While all should exert maximum restraint, we underline the particular responsibility of the interim authorities and of the army in bringing clashes to a halt. The violence and the killings of these last days cannot be justified nor condoned. Human rights must be respected and upheld. Political prisoners should be released.

There is no alternative to dialogue. All the Egyptian political forces must recommit to the country's democratic future and engage in a political process leading to the early holding of elections and the establishment of a civilian government. This was also the commitment proclaimed by the interim Government when it assumed power. The Egyptian Army must respect and support such a political process.

P R E S S

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The EU has been at Egypt's side in the last two years while it has moved towards democracy. We have met frequently and engaged actively Egypt's leaders and the new political forces that have emerged. The calls for democracy and fundamental freedoms from the Egyptian population cannot be disregarded, much less washed away in blood.

In cooperation with its international and regional partners, the EU will remain firmly engaged in efforts to promote an end to violence, resumption of political dialogue and return to a democratic process. To this effect, together with its Member States, the EU will urgently review in the coming days its relations with Egypt and adopt measures aimed at pursuing these goals.
