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Statement by the High Representative, Catherine Ashton on the ongoing violence and necessity for credible reform in Syria

Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the Commission, issued the following statement today:

"I condemn the continued brutality and violence in Syria. I deplore the increasing loss of life caused by the Syrian authorities' policy of repression rather than dialogue. I am gravely concerned about reports of torture and other violence being used against family members, including children, as a means to silence activists. I urge the Syrian leadership to fulfil its commitments and responsibilities to halt violence and intimidation against the Syrian people.

I note the announcement of a presidential amnesty for political prisoners. I reiterate that the EU will assess the sincerity of the measures taken by the Syrian authorities by the extent of their implementation which is the only way to make announced reforms credible. I emphasise that all those detained in connection with the protests must be released without delay.

I again call on the Syrian authorities to meet all their human rights obligations and to engage in genuine and inclusive dialogue and fundamental reforms in response to the demands of the Syrian people."

P R E S S

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:
Michael Mann +32 498 999 780 - +32 2 299 97 80 - Michael.Mann@eeas.europa.eu
Maja Kocijancic +32 498 984 425 - +32 2 298 65 70 - Maja.Kocijancic@ec.europa.eu
COMM-SPP-HRVP-ASHTON@ec.europa.eu
www.eeas.europa.eu

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