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S T A T E M E N T

by the Spokespersons of EU High Representative Catherine Ashton and Commissioner Kristalina Georgieva on the kidnapping of ICRC and SARC staff and volunteers in Syria

The Spokespersons of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Commissioner responsible for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response made today the following statement:

"The High Representative and the Commissioner condemn the kidnapping of six ICRC staff members and one SARC volunteer near Sareqeb in Idlib but are pleased to learn that 4 have been released.

The High Representative and the Commissioner call for an immediate and unconditional release of the remaining kidnapped humanitarian workers. Staff and volunteers of humanitarian aid organisations are at the forefront of delivering aid and assistance to areas most affected by the conflict in Syria. More than 2 million Syrians inside Syria do not have access to any form of assistance. Such acts have no justification.

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The High Representative and the Commissioner remind the warring parties of the recent UN Security Council Presidential Statement, which strongly insists that the provision of humanitarian aid must be facilitated by all, and that IHL must be respected.

The High Representative and the Commissioner also reiterate their call to release all kidnapped civilians including religious figures and journalists."