

Statement by the High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the situation in Palmyra

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With the reported occupation of the ancient city of Palmyra by Da'esh, yet again hundreds of people have been killed and thousands more risk to be exposed to arbitrary violent actions and more destructions of cultural sites might be perpetrated.

Palmyra is a symbol of Syria's rich cultural heritage and has been a crossroad of civilisation throughout history.

Da'esh's mass killings and deliberate destruction of archaeological and cultural heritage in Syria and Iraq amount to a war crime according to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

The EU has taken all the appropriate steps in accordance with UNSCR 2199 to prevent the illegal trade of cultural property; such illicit traffic of cultural artefacts, directly contributes to the financing of ISIL/Da'esh and other terrorist organizations.

We support the United Nations efforts to find a political solution that could bring an end to a 4 years conflict in Syria and the efforts of the anti-Daesh coalition to stop the spreading of the terrorist organization.