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S T A T E M E N T

by the Spokesperson of EU High Representative Catherine Ashton

on the kidnapping of four human rights activists in Syria

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

"The High Representative has learned with great concern about the abduction on 11 December of four human rights activists including Razan Zeitouneh from the Damascus suburb of Douma.

Razan Zeitouneh, the winner of the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize, is a courageous Syrian human rights activist instrumental in organising civil society structures, Local Coordination Committees and the documentation centre that monitors the atrocities committed inside Syria. The High Representative finds it unacceptable that peaceful activists, journalists and other members of civil society committed to improving Syria's future are targeted.

The High Representative calls for the immediate and unconditional release of detained human rights activists and their safe return to their communities. She also calls for the release of all other peaceful civilian and religious figures abducted in Syria."

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