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S T A T E M E N T

by the Spokesperson of EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the announcement of the date of presidential elections 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 deeply regrets the official declaration by the Syrian authorities that presidential elections will be held in Syria on 3 June 2014.

The High Representative recalls the EU position that any elections in Syria should only take place within the framework of the Geneva Communique of 2012. Elections organised by the regime outside this framework, conducted in the midst of conflict, only in regime-controlled areas and with millions of Syrians displaced from their homes would ignore the basic principles of democracy, be devoid of credibility, and undermine all efforts to reach a political solution.

The High Representative reiterates her call on all parties to stop all violence and human rights abuses and to declare their intention to re-engage in the next rounds of Geneva 2 peace talks based on the Geneva Communique under conditions specified by the Joint Special Representative Lakhdar Brahimi."

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