EUROPEAN UNION

Brussels, 1 March 2012
A 94/12

Statement by High Representative Catherine Ashton after her meeting with His Excellency Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassim Bin Jabr Al Thani, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the State of Qatar

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:

"Today, I met His Excellency Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassim Bin Jabr Al Thani, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the State of Qatar, with whom I had an extensive exchange of views on matters of common interest.

We shared our grave concern about the situation in Syria, where the regime continues its outrageous campaign of repression against the Syrian people. I repeated the EU's call for an immediate end to violence, and underlined our support to the Arab League's leadership and plan to halt the crisis. All members of the UNSC should work together and assume their responsibilities. We both stressed that the appointment of former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan as the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and League of Arab States on the Syrian crisis is an excellent choice.

I informed the Prime Minister on the latest developments concerning Iran, including the recent EU decision to impose additional restrictive measures against Iran, notably in the energy sector. On the basis on our dual track approach, I reiterated that the door remains open for meaningful negotiations on the nuclear issue.

We also focused on the growing importance of EU-Qatar relations and I emphasized the EU's special relations with the Gulf countries. Since I took office I have been determined to intensify our dialogue and cooperation with the GCC on many matters of common interest."

P R E S S

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:
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
Sebastien Brabant +32 498 986 433 - Sebastien.Brabant@ec.europa.eu
COMM-SPP-HRVP-ASHTON@ec.europa.eu
www.eeas.europa.eu

EN