STATEMENT

by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on
Israel's announcement of further settlements

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

"I was deeply concerned to hear the latest announcement by the Israeli authorities to
advance settlement plans once more in the West Bank including East Jerusalem.

The settlements are illegal under international law, constitute an obstacle to peace and
threaten to make the two-State solution impossible. On 16 December, the 28 Foreign
Ministers of the Member States of the European Union unanimously warned against actions
that undermine the current negotiations and deplored Israel's continuous expansion of
settlements. I call on Israel to stop all settlement activities.

The current peace talks represent a unique opportunity for both Israelis and Palestinians. The
EU is ready to provide its full support to a peace agreement. At this delicate moment of the
negotiation, I call on all the parties to act now to build trust – not undermine it – and to work
together for a lasting, just and final settlement of the conflict."

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