STATEMENT

by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the Criminal Procedure Code in Afghanistan

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 am very concerned that this new law would restrict prosecutions for domestic violence and child abuse in Afghanistan. If the draft law is passed, it could be used to stop the relatives of alleged abusers from appearing as prosecution witnesses in court. This would be a serious backward step in the justified and legitimate struggle for the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan.

I urge the Afghan Government to amend the language of Article 26 of the Criminal Procedure Code to avoid any misinterpretation, clarify their commitment to human rights and ensure consistency with international standards."

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