Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the Sotoudeh and Ahari case

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

“I am deeply disturbed to hear that a court in Iran has sentenced Ms Nasrin Sotoudeh to 11 years in prison. Ms Sotoudeh has stood in defence of human rights activists for many years. I was also dismayed to learn that journalist Ms Shiva Nazar Ahari has received a sentence of 4 years in prison, together with corporal punishment.

Both of these women have worked – in conditions of great difficulty - to secure and promote the constitutionally guaranteed rights of Iranian citizens. The Islamic Republic of Iran was recently elected to the membership of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. These are two women who have been deprived of the very rights they were fighting to protect.”