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

"I strongly condemn the horrible bomb attack in 'Finest' the supermarket in the district of Wazir Akbar Khan in Kabul on Friday that claimed the lives of number of people including Hamida Barmaki, a member of the Independent Human Rights Commission of Afghanistan who had special responsibility for children's rights, and her entire family. Commissioner Hamida Barmaki was a role model for Afghan women and I pay tribute to her courageous fight for human rights, especially those of women and children.

The following day saw the assassination of Abdul Latif Ashna, Deputy Governor of Kandahar province, again by a suicide bomber. I send my deepest sympathies to the bereaved families.

The murders of people who had made it their life's work to fight for a better future of Afghanistan is particularly tragic and senseless.

Such horrendous attacks only strengthen the resolve of the EU to continue to support the Afghan people to face the numerous challenges ahead and to fight for fundamental rights, in particular those of the most vulnerable groups like women and children."

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