Statement by the High Representative Catherine Ashton on the situation in Bahrain

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

"I am very concerned about reports of serious violence in the streets of Bahrain and the signs of increasing sectarian tension.

I take note that security forces belonging to Gulf Cooperation Council countries have been deployed in Bahrain, following the request of the Government of Bahrain, and of the declaration of a state of emergency.

As I have stated in the past, dialogue is the only way to solve the current crisis. I reiterate my call on all sides to exercise the utmost restraint and calm in order to avoid further casualties and turmoil. I call on all the security forces present to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

I urge all sides to take the necessary steps to create the conditions to allow serious, comprehensive and constructive dialogue to proceed without delay."

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