Statement by the High Representative on the Referendum in Egypt

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

"I have closely followed the unfolding events in Egypt since the popular uprising started on 25 January. I have visited Egypt twice, on 22 February and 14 March, engaging closely with the interim leadership, political parties, civil society and young people, and conveying the EU's support to Egypt's democratic transition. The referendum on the Constitutional amendments, organised on 19 March, is a first step in Egypt's path to an open, democratic and pluralistic society.

I welcome the smooth conduct of the referendum which was generally held in a constructive and friendly atmosphere. It shows Egypt is making good progress towards a more open political system.

Egypt's future lies in the hands of the Egyptians and it is the Egyptian people alone who can establish and maintain a stable and democratic society. However, the EU, as a neighbour and partner, stands ready to lend support in this crucial and irreversible process."

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