Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the violence in and out of Gaza

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 strongly condemn yesterday’s mortar and rocket attacks out of the Gaza strip, which once again hit the innocent civilian population and which must stop immediately.

I am deeply concerned by the current escalation of violence.

I also deplore the loss of civilian life in Gaza and call on Israel to show restraint. The lives of civilians must be spared everywhere and in all circumstances. Only an immediate cessation of all violence can bring back the calm necessary to allow for a lasting truce in the Gaza strip."