Statement by
EU High Representative Catherine Ashton
on the lifting of the emergency regulations
in Sri Lanka

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

"The announcement by President Mahinda Rajapaksa in Parliament on Thursday 25th August that his government does not intend to prolong further the Emergency Regulations in force for many years in Sri Lanka is a welcome move. This development is a significant step on Sri Lanka's path towards a return to normality following decades of conflict. The proposal to lift the Emergency Regulations would remove important restrictions on the exercise of civil and political rights which are the cornerstone of a democratic society.

The European Union has consistently held the view that the elimination of the Emergency Regulations is a necessary step to ensure a democratic and stable future for Sri Lanka and would also welcome further initiatives by the Sri Lankan Government in that direction."

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