Statement by the Spokesperson of the EU High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on arrests of opposition leaders in Moscow

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

“The High Representative is concerned about the arrests of opposition leaders in Moscow and the 15-day prison sentence imposed on some of them on 9 May 2012. The freedoms of expression and of assembly, and participation in peaceful demonstrations, are fundamental rights in democratic states and are indeed enshrined in the Russian Constitution.

The High Representative calls on Russia to respect these rights, also in light of Russia’s international commitments taken as a member of the Council of Europe and the OSCE. She encourages Russian authorities to further develop democratic institutions in a constructive dialogue with civil society and its representatives.”