Statement by the spokesperson of EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the arrest of journalists in Iran

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

"The High Representative is concerned by reports of a recent wave of arrests of journalists and news editors in Iran, as well as the reported raids on five newspaper offices. She has also been informed that Iran-based family members of BBC-Farsi journalists based in London have been harassed and that defamatory material about these journalists is circulating in Iran. Such actions would constitute acts of politically motivated intimidation, particularly worrying in light of the approaching Presidential elections in Iran.

The right to freedom of expression, including the right of any individual to seek, receive and share information, is an internationally enshrined fundamental human right, which Iran itself has freely signed up to respect and protect.

The High Representative calls upon the Iranian authorities to thoroughly investigate these cases and clarify the charges that have been brought against the journalists."

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P R E S S

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