Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the situation in the Central African Republic

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

"I have been following the latest events in the Central African Republic with great concern.

I urge all parties to cease hostilities immediately, to show restraint and to contribute to the re-establishment of civil order, especially to prevent looting.

I am concerned about a possible deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the country. I call on all armed groups to respect and protect the civilian population as well as to respect international humanitarian law and the activities of humanitarian organisations. Those responsible for human rights abuses will be held to account.

Violent or unconstitutional changes of Government remain unacceptable. I call once more on all parties to engage in talks and to work within the framework of the Libreville Agreement of 11 January 2013 to find a peaceful way forward.

The European Union has underlined the importance of the Libreville Agreement to overcome recurrent crises in the Central African Republic. I call on all parties to respect it and to cooperate closely with the Government of National Unity as the single, representative entity agreed to by all parties in the Libreville Agreements to govern the country. I call also on the Economic Community of Central African States and the African Union, in close consultations with the international community, to urgently engage with all parties to overcome the current crisis."

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FOR FURTHER DETAILS:
Michael Mann +32 498 999 780 - +32 2 584 9780- Michael.Mann@eeas.europa.eu
Maja Kocijancic +32 498 984 425 - +32 2 298 65 70 - Maja.Kocijancic@ec.europa.eu
Sebastien Brabant +32 460 75 09 98 - Sebastien.Brabant@ec.europa.eu
Follow us on Twitter@eu_eeas
www.eeas.europa.eu