Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the latest developments in Egypt

“I strongly condemn the violence that has erupted in Cairo and throughout Egypt. I extend my condolences for the many dead and my deepest sympathy for the injured and victims of violence.

I also condemn the attacks on churches and offices that have taken place in the course of what has been a violent day, leaving the country in a state of emergency and heading into an uncertain future.

A future that could be different if all sides embark on a political process that will restore democratic structures through elections and allows for the peaceful participation of all political forces.

Today's violence, the declaration of the state of emergency, and the decision by Vice-President Mohammed ElBaradei to resign will not create the right environment for this to happen. Only a concerted effort by all Egyptians and the international community might lead the country back on a path to inclusive democracy, and overcome Egypt's challenges.

I call on the security forces to exercise utmost restraint and on the interim government to end the state of emergency as soon as possible, to allow the resumption of normal life.”