Declaration by the High Representative Catherine Ashton on behalf of the European Union on the Legislative Elections in Bangladesh

The High Representative has taken note of the preliminary results and of reports of low turnout for the 10th Parliamentary elections held in Bangladesh on 5 January.

The High Representative strongly condemns the acts of violence which occurred in the run-up to and during the elections and particularly attacks against the most vulnerable populations, including women and children as well as religious and ethnic minorities. She regrets the loss of life and extends her condolences to the families of the victims.

As part of our bilateral relations, the EU has consistently engaged with Bangladesh to support the consolidation of democracy. In this context, the EU has repeatedly called on all parties to create favourable conditions for transparent, inclusive and credible elections. The High Representative, therefore, regrets the fact that such conditions did not materialise and that the people of Bangladesh were not given an opportunity to express fully their democratic choice.

The EU urges all parties to refrain from violence and to engage in genuine dialogue to agree on a mutually acceptable way forward to strengthen democratic accountability and to hold transparent, inclusive and credible elections, putting the interests of the people of Bangladesh first.
The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Iceland† and Serbia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova and Armenia align themselves with this declaration.

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
† Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.