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**Statement by the spokesperson of EU High Representative
Catherine Ashton on the application of the Vienna Convention related
to the case of Italian Marines in India**

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:

"High Representative Catherine Ashton notes with concern the Orders of 14 and 18 of March 2013 of the Supreme Court of India to the Ambassador of Italy to India, in relation to the case of the two Italian marines, requiring the Ambassador to seek permission of the Court to leave the country until further orders.

She recalls that the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic relations is a cornerstone of the international legal order and should be respected at all times. Any limitations to the freedom of movement of the Ambassador of Italy to India would be contrary to the international obligations established under this Convention.

The High Representative continues to hope that a mutually acceptable solution can be found through dialogue and in respect of international rules and encourages the parties to explore all avenues to that effect."

P R E S S

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