

# EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE



MD.V. Americas  
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Brussels, **18 JAN. 2013**  
EEAS.V.A.4/AK

Dear Petitioner,

Thank you for email, addressed to the High Representative and Vice President Catherine Ashton, support UN Watch's campaign to remove the government of Hugo Chavez from the U.N. Human Rights Council.

Having taken note of your message, I would like to inform you that the EU does not coordinate on elections to the Human Rights Council, which is the Member States' competence.

Nevertheless, the EU attaches great importance to the principles set out in the founding resolution (UNGA 60/251) of the Human Rights Council regarding quality membership. Articles 8 and 9 stipulate that *"when electing members of the Council, Member States shall take into account the contribution of candidates to the promotion and protection of human rights and their voluntary pledges and commitments made thereto; the General Assembly, by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting, may suspend the rights of membership in the Council of a member of the Council that commits gross and systematic violations of human rights"*. It further *"decides that members elected to the Council shall uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights, shall fully cooperate with the Council"*.

The EU and its Member States have always recalled these criteria that should be taken into account when a country casts its vote at the UN General Assembly for the elections to the Human Rights Council.

The EU will continue following the developments in Venezuela very closely.

Adrianus Koetsenruijter

Service Européen pour l'Action Extérieure, B-1046 Bruxelles / Europese dienst voor extern optreden, B-1046 Brussel - Belgium.  
Telephone: (32-2) 584 11 11.

<http://eeas.europa.eu/>  
E-mail: [adrianus.koetsenruijter@eeas.europa.eu](mailto:adrianus.koetsenruijter@eeas.europa.eu)