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S T A T E M E N T

by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the situation in Egypt ahead of the constitutional referendum

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

“Ahead of the constitutional referendum on 14-15 January 2014, I would like to reassure the Egyptian people that the EU continues to support them in fulfilling the aspirations of the January 2011 revolution. Dignity, social justice, security, democracy, human rights, and a better economy remain the goals the EU stands by Egypt to achieve. The constitutional process – both before and following the referendum – could offer a chance for a new political dialogue and interaction leading to democratic elections, a fair representation of different political views in the future parliament, accountability for the government and state institutions, and greater security and prosperity for all.

It is therefore with great concern that I have followed the recent violent events that have led to a high number of casualties. I extend my sincere condolences to the families of victims and hope for a speedy recovery for those injured.

In the recent past, I have unequivocally condemned terrorist attacks against Egypt and its people, and will continue to do so and to offer Egypt our full support.

At the same time, I am equally convinced that heavy-handed responses to the present crisis will not help in securing Egypt's future and can hamper seriously the freedoms of expression and association.

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The EU wishes to see Egypt as a partner sharing democratic values, respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights, and as a neighbour with whom we share a common destiny and can face together the many challenges of our time. Only confidence in the shared belief that Egypt is for all Egyptians working peacefully for the country's future can bring about a strong, vibrant and sustainable democracy and economy."
