

Brussels, 11 January 2014 140111/02

STATEMENT

by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on

Israel's announcement of further settlements

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

"I was deeply concerned to hear the latest announcement by the Israeli authorities to advance settlement plans once more in the West Bank including East Jerusalem.

The settlements are illegal under international law, constitute an obstacle to peace and threaten to make the two-State solution impossible. On 16 December, the 28 Foreign Ministers of the Member States of the European Union unanimously warned against actions that undermine the current negotiations and deplored Israel's continuous expansion of settlements. I call on Israel to stop all settlement activities.

The current peace talks represent a unique opportunity for both Israelis and Palestinians. The EU is ready to provide its full support to a peace agreement. At this delicate moment of the negotiation, I call on all the parties to act now to build trust – not undermine it – and to work together for a lasting, just and final settlement of the conflict."

FOR FURTHER DETAILS: