



Brussels, 12 March 2014
140312/02

S T A T E M E N T

by the spokesperson of EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the political situation in Burundi

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:

"The High Representative notes with concern the heightened political tension in Burundi which has given rise to a growing number of incidents and acts of intimidation which run counter to freedom of expression, freedom of association and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The European Union has a strong commitment to Burundi and is determined to accompany Burundi in its efforts to leave behind its situation as a fragile State and advance towards development. With this in mind, the organisation of transparent, inclusive and credible elections is a major goal for democratic consolidation and the stability of the country.

The High Representative calls on the entire Burundi political class to engage in dialogue and to maintain national cohesion. She also calls on the authorities to respect the mutual commitments entered into, in particular in the fields of governance, the opening up of the political space, the rule of law and inclusiveness."

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