



Brussels, 06 May 2014
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STATEMENT

by the Spokesperson of the EEAS on the situation in Ethiopia

"One year before the general elections in Ethiopia, the European Union reiterates the importance of protecting space for genuine political dialogue and creating an environment in which divergent voices from all parts of society can express their views freely in a constructive manner, be it through internet and other media, or public demonstrations and associations, as assured by the Ethiopian Constitution.

Ethiopia plays an important role throughout the region. We believe that the stability and economic growth of the region will be enhanced by strengthened human and political rights.

In this context, we are concerned about the recent arrests of bloggers, journalists and opposition members and call on the Ethiopian authorities to ensure that proceedings are carried out according to Ethiopian law and respecting international and regional norms, including granting access to legal counsel and family, as well as the right to apply for bail. In addition, we seek clarity on the circumstances surrounding the arrests and the charges involved.

The European Union also firmly believes that peaceful protest is part of a normal democratic discourse and that excessive force in response should be avoided. Dialogue is always the best way to address differences."

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

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