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S T A T E M E N T

Statement by the Spokesperson of the High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on recent developments in the West Bank

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 has followed with concern the recent events in the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem, which are not conducive to the climate of trust and cooperation needed for the current peace negotiations to succeed.

The High Representative condemns the recent killing of an Israeli man in the West Bank and calls for an immediate end to all acts of violence.

The High Representative also sees with great concern the recent announcement that nearly one square kilometre near the Gush Etzion settlement has been declared as "state land" by the Israeli Defence Ministry, that the latter has authorized a new settlement in Hebron, that demolitions of Palestinian property are continuing in Area C and East Jerusalem with resulting displacement of vulnerable populations. She also deplores in particular the recent confiscation of EU Humanitarian Assistance provided to vulnerable civilians in the Jabal Al Baba Community in the E1 area. The EU calls on the Israeli authorities to reverse these decisions.

The High Representative calls on the parties to show utmost restraint and responsibility in order not to jeopardize the current negotiation process, and to refrain from any steps which could undermine trust and threaten these negotiations.

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The High Representative fully supports the tireless efforts of U.S. Secretary of State Kerry in pursuing peace and trusts that both Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas are committed to finding ways to continue negotiations."

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