Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Mogherini on the 30th Anniversary of Tiananmen Square event

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Today marks the 30th anniversary of the violent suppression of the peaceful Tiananmen Square democracy protests of 1989. At that time the European Council, meeting in Madrid on 26-27 June 1989, strongly condemned the brutal repression that ensued. Thirty years later, the European Union continues to mourn the victims and offers its condolences to their families.

The exact numbers of those who died and were detained on 4 June and in the subsequent crackdown have never been confirmed, and may never be known. Acknowledgement of these events, and of those killed, detained or missing in connection with the Tiananmen Square protests, is important for future generations and for the collective memory. We expect the legal safeguards and due process rights of those detained in connection with the 1989 events, or with current activities to commemorate it, to be respected.

The European Union also expects the immediate release of the human rights defenders and lawyers detained and convicted in connection with these events or with their activities protecting the rule of law and democracy, including Huang Qi, Gao Zhisheng, Ge Jueping, pastor Wang Yi, Xu Lin, and Chen Jiahong.

The UN Committee Against Torture issued on 3 February 2016 a number of recommendations related to the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989, following China's fifth periodic report. We expect these recommendations to be fully implemented by the Chinese authorities.

Today, we continue to observe a crackdown on freedom of expression and assembly, and freedom of the press in China. Human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent. International laws and standard foresee the respect of fundamental freedoms.

Engagement on human rights with China is, and will remain, a fundamental pillar of the EU-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.
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