

Joint statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton and Mr Sergey Lavrov, Foreign Minister of Russia on the situation in North Africa and the Middle East

The EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation share concern over developments in a number of countries of North Africa and the Middle East.

Reaffirming the positions set forth by Brussels and Moscow in recent days, as well as expressing support for the statement by the Council of the Arab League and the United Nations Security Council press statement issued on 22 February 2011, the High Representative and the Minister declare the following.

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As members of the Middle East Quartet of international mediators, the European Union and Russia will seek at its Ministerial meeting in Paris in mid-March the adoption of effective decisions encouraging the parties to resume Palestinian-Israeli dialogue and opening the way to a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East within the existing international legal framework without any attempts to prejudge the final status issues through unilateral actions, first of all through settlement activities.

The High Representative and the Minister reaffirm their support for the efforts to re-establish Palestinian unity on the basis of principles enshrined in the Arab Peace initiative.