



EUROPEAN UNION

**Permanent Council Nr 882
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EU statement on the violence in Egypt

The European Union would like to draw the attention of the Permanent Council to the statement of the EU High Representative, Catherine Ashton, of 10 October on the violence in Egypt, in which she stated the following:

"I am extremely concerned by the large number of deaths and injuries among the Coptic Christian community, resulting from the violent clashes in Egypt. My thoughts are with the families of the victims, including those from the security forces.

I support the Prime Minister's call for calm and restraint. An investigation is necessary so that those responsible for the violence can be brought to justice. The authorities must protect the right to demonstrate peacefully. Freedom of religion or belief is a universal human right, which needs to be protected everywhere and for everybody. It must be an essential part of the transition to democracy as Egypt builds a free and democratic society.

The interim authorities have the crucial task of bringing Egypt to the polls, in the first democratic and transparent elections, while ensuring law and order in a manner respectful of human rights.

The EU has supported the Egyptian people's democratic uprising from the start and offers its support and assistance to the process of democracy building."