



European Union

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

15th Special Session

(25 February 2011)

Situation of Human Rights in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

Statement by

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**Permanent Representative of Hungary
to the United Nations Office in Geneva**

on behalf of the European Union

Geneva, 25 February 2011

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Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the EU.

The Candidate Countries Croatia*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro*¹ and Iceland**², the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, as well as Armenia align themselves with this declaration.

The whole world has been following with shock and growing dismay the events unfolding in Libya: the reported deaths of a very high number of demonstrators and other civilians, the use of live ammunition and heavy weaponry against peaceful demonstrators exercising their right to freedom of assembly. The violent repression of civilians is ongoing, including the reported persecution and arbitrary arrests of lawyers, human rights defenders, journalists and peaceful demonstrators. The blocking of the internet and telecommunication networks strongly undermines the freedom of expression, including the freedom of the press. Access is not guaranteed for human rights monitors and humanitarian agencies, the safe passage of humanitarian and medical supplies and humanitarian workers into the country is not ensured.

Governments and civil society have not been silent on the human rights emergency in Libya. The urgency and the seriousness of the situation have been underlined by the EU, the UN Security Council, the OIC, the AU, the Arab League, UN Special Rapporteurs, and a wide range of international actors, as well as the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The EU is pleased to see that many regional organizations condemned in strong terms the crimes committed against the peaceful popular demonstrations.

The High Commissioner for Human Rights made it clear that the state has an obligation to protect the rights to life, liberty and security of the person. The EU endorses and fully supports this position and underlines that each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

A group of Special Procedure mandate-holders of the Human Rights Council issued a joint statement on the 22nd of February, calling for a stop to the massacre and warning that gross violations of human rights committed in the past few days could amount to crimes against humanity. They also welcomed the call made by the High Commissioner for Human Rights for an international inquiry into the violence, while offering their expertise to ensure that the interests of the justice are served.

¹ *Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

² **Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

Council to take immediate action. We warmly welcome their support and that of other delegations. This cross-regional initiative sends a strong message about the need for the Council to take prompt and meaningful action in response to urgent human rights situations. It is the inherent task of the Council to address urgent country situations like the one in Libya.

Mr. President, the Council must act and must act urgently. We have therefore decided to submit a draft resolution on the situation of human rights in Libya. It is our sincere hope that it will enjoy the universal support of this Council.

Thank you.