



## EUROPEAN UNION

**Brussels, 21 February 2012**

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PRESSE 61

Declaration on behalf of the EU by High Representative Catherine Ashton on the situation in Maldives

**“Following the transfer of power on 7 February, I have been following recent events in the Maldives closely and EU Heads of Mission have visited Male for discussions with major political actors.**

**The EU calls on all parties to refrain from violence, inflammatory rhetoric and any provocative actions which could threaten the future of democracy in the Maldives. The police and army should exercise maximum restraint in the execution of their duties which must remain strictly within their constitutional mandate. The EU further calls on all political parties to immediately engage in dialogue, to commit themselves to early presidential elections and to determine the legislative and constitutional measures required to ensure that these are free and fair.**

**The EU is of the view that the legitimacy and legality of the transfer of presidential power in the Maldives should be determined by an impartial, independent investigation as agreed by all parties in the Maldives.**

**The EU is ready to offer further assistance in the field of governance, including in the justice sector, in conjunction with existing actions financed by Member States.**

**The EU will support engagement by relevant international organisations in the interim.**

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