

COMMUNIQUÉ DE PRESSE

619/19

27/09/2019

## Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on Venezuela

The people of Venezuela continue to face a dramatic situation. The regional impact of the crisis is unprecedented, with severe risks for regional stability. On the political front, the dismantlement of institutional checks and balances has eroded democracy and the rule of law, while repression, including against members of the National Assembly, and serious human rights violations take place with impunity. This grave situation, as reported by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN HCHR), cannot be ignored.

In this context, and as stated in its Declaration of 16 July, the EU has decided to apply additional targeted measures against seven members of the security and intelligence forces involved in torture and other serious human rights violations. The EU reaffirms its backing for the UN HCHR in her efforts to protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Venezuelans. In this respect it supports the steps taken towards ensuring a permanent presence of OHCHR in Venezuela and the free access of UN Special procedures to the country. The EU underlines the need to fully implement the totality of the recommendations from the UN HCHR report.

The EU expresses its concern at the temporary suspension of the Oslo facilitated talks and calls on the parties to return to an inclusive, credible and serious negotiation on the basis of the previously agreed agenda. The EU reiterates its willingness to contribute to promote the enabling conditions for such a process, through the International Contact Group, including by working with other relevant actors in the international community to provide a supporting framework.

A negotiated transition leading to transparent and internationally monitored presidential elections, the reinstitution of the public powers and a package of guarantees enabling political coexistence are essential elements to overcome the crisis.

The EU confirms its readiness to work on further targeted measures to foster such a negotiated transition. At the same time it recalls that its targeted restrictive measures do not affect the population and can be reversed in light of progress made towards the restoration of democracy, rule of law and human rights in Venezuela.

In the meantime, addressing the humanitarian and social emergency in Venezuela is urgent and long overdue. The EU considers vital the increase and acceleration of a coordinated assistance, both inside and outside the country. In this context, the EU will hold an International Solidarity Conference on the Venezuelan Refugee and Migrant Crisis in Brussels end of October. This initiative will be co-hosted with UNHCR and IOM, in close articulation with the Quito process.

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