STATEMENT

Statement by the Spokesperson on the latest developments in Area C of the occupied Palestinian territory

06/02/2016

In the past weeks there have been a number of developments in Area C of the West Bank, which risk undermining the viability of a future Palestinian state and driving the parties yet further apart.

On 25 January Israel decided to declare 154 hectares of land near Jericho in the West Bank as state land, and according to the latest reports, decisions have been taken to permit further settlement expansion, involving more than 150 new residential units. On 3 February several Palestinian residential structures in the south Hebron hills were demolished. This is particularly concerning both because of the extent of the demolitions and also the number of vulnerable individuals affected, including children who need support.

Demolitions included EU funded structures. EU humanitarian activities are carried out in full accordance with international humanitarian law, with the sole aim of providing humanitarian support to most vulnerable people. We call on the Israeli authorities to reverse the decisions taken and to halt further demolitions.

On 18 January Foreign Ministers in the Council conclusions confirmed the EU's firm opposition to Israel's settlement policy and actions taken in this context, including demolitions and confiscation, evictions, forced transfers or restrictions of movement and access.