Jerusalem
21 March 2019

Local EU statement on the the arrests and violence used by Hamas security forces against protesters in Gaza

The European Union Representative issues the following statement in agreement with the EU Heads of Mission in Jerusalem and Ramallah.

The EU Missions in Jerusalem and Ramallah are very concerned about the arrests and violence used by Hamas security forces against protesters, including journalists, staff from the Independent Commission of Human Rights and human rights defenders, in Gaza over the past days.

The right to peaceful protest and to freedom of expression in Gaza must be respected. Violent suppression of the demonstrations is unacceptable and must stop. The de-facto authorities in Gaza must ensure that peaceful demonstrations can continue and avoid any further actions that would contribute to the escalation of the situation.

In line with Council Conclusions, the EU Missions call for all parties to take swift steps to produce a fundamental change to the political, security and economic situation in the Gaza Strip, including the end of the closure and a full opening of the crossing points, while addressing Israel's legitimate security concerns.

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