

## **Declaration by the High Representative, Federica Mogherini, on behalf of the European Union on the occasion of the Day of International Criminal Justice, 17 July 2017**

The 17th of July marks the date of the adoption of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in 1998. This day is dedicated to celebrating the developments and achievements of international criminal justice institutions and to remind us that we need to continue working, at both national and international levels, to ensure that the perpetrators of the most serious crimes are brought to justice and held to account.

On this occasion, the European Union and its Member States reaffirm their full support to the International Criminal Court and to the strengthening of an international criminal justice system committed to deter the commission of crimes, to fight impunity and to ensure the protection of the victims' rights.

Justice is one of the core elements towards reconciliation and sustainable peace. Without justice, the most heinous crimes go unpunished, victims are unable to obtain redress and peace remains an elusive goal, since impunity generates more hatred, leading to acts of revenge and more suffering.

The European Union is one of the main donors in support of justice sector reform worldwide, strengthening law enforcement and justice institutions, promoting independent and impartial justice, and supporting access to justice for all. Since 2000, we have committed €37 million in direct support of the International Criminal Court.

The European Union has been also supporting transitional justice initiatives and international justice mechanisms related to specific countries. In the case of Syria, the EU has recently allocated funding amounting to €1,5 million to the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in Syria. The EU calls on the international community to support to the Mechanism, including through adequate financial means, to ensure that it would be able to start work as soon as possible and fulfil its mandate, in line with the principles of universality and at the highest level of professionalism.

The European Union will continue to fully support multilateral global governance, based on international law, human rights and strong international institutions. In this regard, we remain committed to advance our fight against impunity, and to promote the universal ratification of the Rome Statute.

The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, Montenegro, Serbia\* and Albania\*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this Declaration.

\*The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

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