

Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the situation in Venezuela

The massive, popular demonstrations which have taken place in Venezuela over the last days have been met with indiscriminate violence from the authorities, leading to the tragic death of numerous people and many more injured and arrested.

The European Union firmly condemns these actions and offers its deep condolences to the families of the deceased.

The EU reiterates that the presidential elections last May in Venezuela were neither free, fair, nor credible, lacking democratic legitimacy. The country urgently needs a government that truly represents the will of the Venezuelan people.

The EU reiterates its full support to the National Assembly, which is the democratic legitimate body of Venezuela, and whose powers need to be restored and respected, including the prerogatives and safety of its members. We reaffirm our deep belief that a peaceful and inclusive democratic solution is the only sustainable way out of the current political impasse and the severe social crisis it has provoked.

The EU strongly calls for the urgent holding of free, transparent and credible presidential elections in accordance with internationally democratic standards and the Venezuelan constitutional order. In the absence of an announcement on the organisation of fresh elections with the necessary guarantees over the next days, the EU will take further actions, including on the issue of recognition of the country's leadership in line with article 233 of the Venezuelan constitution.

The EU stands with the Venezuelan people in this critical hour, and will continue follow events closely, including at the next Foreign Ministers meeting next Thursday. The EU stands ready to act in support of an immediate and credible process of engagement, including through the immediate establishment of an International Contact Group. Contacts and coordination with regional and international partners are ongoing, and will be intensified in the coming hours.

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