

# Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on the situation in Bolivia

Recent events in Bolivia where irregularities in the elections, as demonstrated by the audit of the Organisation of the American States, led to popular protest, to calls from various sectors of society such as the trade unions, armed forces, police, and key political actors for President Morales to leave power and finally to the resignation of the President, are putting in question the country's stability and social peace.

It is of vital importance to return to constitutional normality so that the rule of law, democratic principles and civil rights are respected. In this context, the European Union supports an institutional solution that allows for a caretaking interim leadership to prepare for new elections, and to avoid a power vacuum, which could have dire consequences for the entire country. The immediate objective of the transitional authorities should be to ensure peace and security in the country and bring it to swift elections, where the will of the people can be freely expressed.

We urge all political and social actors to support such an institutional path and work for a peaceful reconciliation. Violence and political retribution are unacceptable and will only aggravate the social divide. We call on the law enforcement bodies to guarantee security for the Bolivian people, while respecting human rights at all times. Bolivia's future stability depends on it upholding democratic values and rule of law, while keeping the country united and inclusive.

The European Union has been a major cooperation partner of Bolivia and will continue supporting the strengthening of its democratic institutions and its economic and social development.