

Federica Mogherini
High Representative of the Union
for Foreign Affairs & Security Policy
Vice-President of the European Commission

Brussels, 20 February 2018

Dear High Representative, dear Federica,

The so-called “Girls of Revolution Street” or anti-hijab protest began in Iran in late December, when Vida Movahed removed her white hijab and waved it like a flag for an hour while on a busy street in Tehran. Ms Movahed was arrested and released a month later. Dozens of brave women have since followed in protesting against the mandatory hijab by removing their headscarves in public places and posting images on social media. At least 29 of these women have been arrested. Some have since been released, but certainly not all.

President Rouhani has responded to the anti-hijab protests by releasing a report from three years ago which found that 49.8 percent of Iranians, both women and men, consider the Islamic veil a private matter and think the government should have no say in it. He has signalled in the past that he is against religious interference in people’s private lives. Meanwhile Tehran police said last week that the campaign is instigated from outside Iran through illegal satellite channels. We reject this accusation. The anti-hijab protests are Iranian and overlapped with protests against the regime over price hikes, unemployment and corruption.

We noted the [statement](#) you made on January 2nd of this year in response to the widespread protests in Iran, in which you said that the EU is closely following the ongoing demonstrations and the unacceptable loss of lives. We welcome the fact that you emphasise that peaceful demonstration and freedom of expression are fundamental rights that apply to every country, including Iran.

We now ask you to publicly support the women who have been arrested by the Iranian authorities, by joining us in calling on Iranian officials to immediate and unconditionally release these women. These names include but are by no means limited to, Shima Babaei and Nargess Hosseini.

Sincerely,

Marietje Schaake (ALDE)

Petras Austrevicius (ALDE)

Beatriz Becerra (ALDE)

Bas Belder (ECR)

Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)

Nessa Childers (S&D)

Mark Demesmaeker (ECR)

Stefan Eck (GUE/NGL)

José Inácio Faria (EPP)

Fredrick Federley (ALDE)

Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)

Teresa Gimenez Barbat (ALDE)

Ana Maria Gomes (S&D)

Jytte Guteland (S&D)

Anna Hedh (S&D)

Tunne Kelam (EPP)

Jude Kirton-Darling (S&D)

Dietmar Köster (S&D)

Stelios Kouloglou (GUE/NGL)

Olle Ludvigsson (S&D)

Monica Macovei (ECR)

António Marinho e Pinto (ALDE)

Anthea McIntyre (ECR)

Matthijs van Miltenburg (ALDE)

Angelika Mlinar (ALDE)

Maria Noichl (S&D)

Soraya Post (S&D)

Julia Reda (Greens/ EFA)

Liliana Rodrigues (S&D)

Bronis Ropé (Greens/ EFA)

Petri Sarvamaa (EPP)

Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL)

Helga Stevens (ECR)

Dubravka Šuica (EPP)

Pavel Telicka (ALDE)

Helga Trüpel (Greens/ EFA)

Marita Ulvskog (S&D)

Elena Valenciano (S&D)

Bodil Valero (Greens/ EFA)

Hilde Vautmans (ALDE)

Sophie in 't Veld (ALDE)

Julie Ward (S&D)

Lieve Wierinck (ALDE)

Kristina Winberg (EFDD)

Maria Gabriela Zoaň (S&D)