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To the signatories of the letter of 23 October addressed to HRVP Catherine Ashton concerning the case of Ms Nasrin Sotoudeh

Dear colleagues,

Thank you for your letter of 23 October 2014 on the decision of the Iranian Bar Association to ban human rights lawyer and Sakharov Prize laureate Ms Nasrin Sotoudeh to practise law for a period of three years.

I share your concerns over the suspension of Ms Nasrin Sotoudeh's law permit which could also have implications for other human rights lawyers in Iran and their ability to work. The EU is concerned about the declining independence of the Bar Association and undue influence from the Judiciary and possibly other Iranian authorities. Contacts with Ms Nasrin Sotoudeh have been established through appropriate channels and Ms Sotoudeh warmly thanked the EU and the Member States for all the support she has received. She also decided not to file an appeal but to pressure the Bar Association to reverse its own decision.

I will continue to closely monitor the situation and look forward to working with you on the protection of human defenders across the globe.

Yours sincerely



Federica Mogherini