

**News from the Group of the Progressive Alliance of  
Socialists & Democrats  
in the European Parliament**

17 March 2011

**ASHTON URGED TO PLAN USE OF EU'S SECURITY AND  
DEFENCE ASSETS IN LIBYA**

Senior members of the European Parliament's main progressive group, the 186-strong Socialists and Democrats, today issued a joint statement calling for EU action to enforce the embargo on Libya and provide humanitarian aid to Benghazi.

Group vice-president Hannes Swoboda, group coordinator for security and defence policy Roberto Gualtieri and the author of a European Parliament report on Libya, Ana Gomes, said:

"As the UNSC is meeting once again to discuss further measures on Libya amid continuing unrest, the international community is growing seriously concerned about the latest developments.

"We express deep concerns about the worsening situation in and around the city of Benghazi including the rapid deterioration of secure channels to deliver humanitarian aid.

"While continuing to assert that any further action by the international community should be legitimised by the UNSC, we call on the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, and the competent services within the EEAS to urgently explore multiple ways, by using CSDP assets, of contributing to enforcement of UNSC resolutions and ensuring continuing humanitarian assistance as Benghazi braces itself for a fierce battle that could see the restoration of the Gaddafi regime.

"Current events make us acutely conscious of the urgent need to begin the necessary preparations to address any developments in Libya."