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S T A T E M E N T

**by the Spokespersons of the EU High Representative/Vice President and
Štefan Füle, European Commissioner for Enlargement and European
Neighbourhood Policy, on the arrest of Leyla Yunus in Azerbaijan**

"We are very concerned that Dr Leyla Yunus, leader of a respected NGO, the Institute for Peace and Democracy in Azerbaijan, and a prominent human rights defender, has been arrested, charged with serious crimes including high treason, and sentenced to pre-trial detention on 30 July 2014.

The arrest of Dr Yunus seems to be part of a wider picture of mounting restrictions targeting civil society in Azerbaijan. The EU has repeatedly made its serious concerns known to the Azerbaijan government, both in public and in private, including during the recent visit of European Commission President Barroso to Azerbaijan on 14 June 2014.

The EU values its relationship with Azerbaijan. This relationship cannot achieve its full potential unless Azerbaijan fully respects its international commitments including those deriving from its membership of the Council of Europe, where Azerbaijan currently chairs the Committee of Ministers."

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

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