

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the Seventh Anniversary of the Iranian Fatwa Against Salman Rushdie**

On the seventh anniversary of the publication of the fatwa condemning the British author Salman Rushdie to death and calling for his assassination, the European Union recalls and repeats the solemn affirmation it made on 13 February 1995 according to which the fatwa, decided in defiance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the principle of the sovereignty of States, in particular regarding the protection by the latter of their nationals, remains null and void.

The European Union will continue to take advantage of its Critical Dialogue with Iran to defend fundamental rights and freedom of expression. Recalling the conclusions of the European Council in Madrid on 15 and 16 December 1995, the European Union renews its demand that Iran abide by international law and calls upon the Iranian authorities to join the EU's efforts to obtain a satisfactory solution in respect of Salman Rushdie.