



European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)
Confédération européenne des syndicats (CES)

Brussels, 11 March 2011
JM/TJ/JJ

Baroness Catherine Ashton
High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy;
Vice President of the Commission

Copy to Mr Lazlo Andor Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

[Sent by email]

Europe's Southern Neighbourhood

Dear Cathy,

Our Executive Committee earlier this week discussed developments in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries, expressing deep hopes for moves towards democracy at the same time as extreme concerns at the use of state violence against the people, particularly in Libya.

I am attaching the resolution they adopted which stresses in particular the need for the EU as a whole to take a lead in finding solutions based on our commitment to freedom, democracy and the rule of law enshrined in the Treaties. We are concerned that various initiatives of individual Member States detract from, and undermine, the key role that the EU should play.

Massive unemployment among young people in the region is a central issue that Europe must help resolve, responding to the needs expressed by the peoples concerned. I am copying this letter to László Andor to pledge the ETUC's support for initiatives that DG Employment is undertaking in the area of social dialogue. I take this opportunity to remind him, and you, of the ETUC request that Labour and Social Affairs Attachés be included in EEAS delegations. This should start with Tunis and Cairo. It may be that the EU (among others) would have not been taken so much by surprise by developments if close monitoring and dialogue with the economic and social actors in the countries concerned had been maintained by EU representatives drawn from among people with the relevant expertise.

Yours Sincerely

John Monks
General Secretary
ETUC