

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
concerning the arrest of former Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim**

The EU expresses its deep concern about reports of physical mistreatment of former Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Anwar Ibrahim. The EU notes that this mistreatment, was confirmed by a doctor appointed by the government and was suffered while being detained under the provisions of the Internal Security Act which allows for indefinitely renewable detention without trial.

The EU notes that a commission has been appointed to investigate this incident. The EU hopes that appropriate action will be taken against any individuals, including officials, found responsible for such mistreatment. The EU urges the Malaysian authorities to ensure that similar incidents will not occur again in the future and that Anwar Ibrahim be assured correct treatment while in custody. The EU calls upon the Malaysian authorities to guarantee the rule of law and to respect the human rights of Anwar Ibrahim and other detainees, including their right to a fair and public trial and to timely access to legal advisers and medical treatment.

The EU welcomes the release of seven youth leaders who had been arrested in connection with demonstrations in favour of Anwar Ibrahim under the provisions of the Internal Security Act. The EU expresses its hope that the other political demonstrators still detained under the ISA will also be released or charged soon.

Furthermore, the EU remains concerned that continued restrictions of fundamental human rights such as the rights of peaceful assembly, free speech and opinion should not lead to a political climate of instability and social unrest.