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## **Council takes steps to limit arms deliveries to Syria**

In response to the ever increasing violence in Syria, the Council today strengthened the enforcement of the EU arms embargo against Syria.

EU countries will be obliged to inspect vessels and aircraft heading to Syria if they suspect the cargo contains arms or equipment for internal repression. This obligation applies in member states' seaports and airports as well as in their territorial sea, in accordance with international law. Items that may not be exported to Syria under EU law must be seized. In addition, aircraft and vessels heading to Syria will have to provide additional pre-arrival and pre-departure information on their cargo.

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton said: *I am deeply concerned at the escalating violence and its tragic consequences for the Syrian population. The EU has warned against a further militarisation of the conflict. Today we are taking practical steps towards limiting the supplies that fuel the fighting.*"

The EU embargo on exporting arms and equipment for internal repression to Syria has been in force since May 2011. It is also prohibited to provide grants, loans, export credit insurance, technical assistance, insurance and reinsurance for exports of arms and of equipment for internal repression to Syria.

# **P R E S S**

The Council today also froze the assets of three entities supporting the regime. It also targeted 26 persons responsible for the violent repression with a travel ban and an asset freeze. This brings the total number of persons subject to sanctions to 155 whereas 52 entities are now affected by an EU asset freeze.

The Council also approved an exemption to the existing EU asset freeze: Member states may authorise payments through banks subject to sanctions if the transfers constitute financial support to Syrian students or researchers in the EU.

This is the seventeenth round of EU sanctions against the Syrian regime since the outbreak of the violent repression. Today's decisions, including the list of additional designations, will be published in the EU Official Journal of 24 July 2012.

See also: [\*Council conclusions on Syria\*](#)

For more information about EU restrictive measures against the Syria regime, see [\*factsheet European Union and Syria\*](#).