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Statement by High Representative Catherine Ashton on behalf of the E3+3 following the talks with Iran, Istanbul, 14 April 2012

The EU High Representative Catherine Ashton, together with the Political Directors of China, France, Germany, Russian Federation, United States and the United Kingdom, met on 14 April 2012 in Istanbul with the Iranian nuclear negotiator Dr. Saed Jalili in order to address the international community's concerns on the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme.

"The parties would, first of all, like to thank the Turkish government for hosting the talks.

The discussions on the Iranian nuclear issue have been constructive and useful, reflecting the terms and spirit of our recent exchange of letters with Iran. We have agreed that the NPT forms a key basis for what must be serious engagement, to ensure all the obligations under the NPT are met by Iran while fully respecting Iran's right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

We want now to move to a sustained process of serious dialogue, where we can take urgent practical steps to build confidence and lead on to compliance by Iran with all its international obligations. In our efforts to do so, we will be guided by the principle of the step-by-step approach and reciprocity.

We expect that subsequent meetings will lead to concrete steps towards a comprehensive negotiated solution which restores international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme. This is why we will meet again soon, on 23 May in Baghdad, preceded by a preparatory meeting of deputies."

P R E S S

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