Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini and Commissioner Johannes Hahn on the latest developments in Albania

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In view of the protests in Albania today, we reaffirm the right of citizens to engage in peaceful demonstrations as an essential feature and a core value of democracy, but we strongly denounce any rhetoric by political leaders calling for violence.

Furthermore, the decision by the opposition to relinquish their mandates seriously hinders the functioning of democracy in Albania. The Parliament is the place where reforms and relevant developments should be discussed and taken forward, not boycotted.

These decisions and acts are counterproductive, go against the democratic choice of Albanian citizens and undermine the progress the country has made on the European Union path.

The European Union expects all Members of the Albanian Parliament to defend the ideals and principles of democracy, to continue serving in the Parliament, and to take any necessary measure to avoid violent acts and incendiary statements.

We equally expect the Government and the opposition to engage in constructive discussions with a view to overcoming the current political situation to the benefit of Albania and its citizens.

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