REMARKS

by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on arrival at the Brussels conference: A New Deal for Somalia

"Good Morning everyone. I am absolutely delighted that we have my dear friend, the President of Somalia, with us today. I hope it will be a really significant moment in the development of not only our relationship with Somalia but also for the future of Somalia and its people.

Mr President, you have been given one of the most difficult challenges in the world. You have already made significant progress and I hope that the outcome of today will be that you see the support of the European Union, of your friends and also of many countries and partners across the world. I am so delighted we have so many ministers and representatives here. And it's wonderful to welcome you.

We need to ensure security for the people, and that includes economic security, the growth of businesses, the opportunities for people, for education, all of the things that are so crucial for Somalia's recovery and for it to move forward. That is linked to the kind of political development that you want to see, the building of a democracy that is deep and secure. And within that overall framework that the President has talked about we'll work through all of the details, so that we can get people here committed to supporting Somalia. But it will be for the Somalia people to decide. It will be their country we will support.

It is going to be long-term investment that is going to make the biggest difference. And that's what this is all about: it's about moving from a situation of crisis for people, whose lives have been put in terrible jeopardy, to a position of long-term investment by the
international community that will enable Somalia to become the country that the President - and all the people I have had the privilege of meeting - want it to be.

Thank you."