Remarks

by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton following the conference: A New Deal for Somalia

"Thank you very much indeed everyone.

Can I begin by saying to you, Mr President, what a great honour it is to welcome you to Brussels today for this extraordinary meeting that we have just had.

You know, in the European Union we are very proud of what we have achieved together with over 20 years of support from the European Union to the people of Somalia.

Our assistance has of course focused on strong political support for Somalia's transition, from a fragile country to stability, to peace and to reconstruction.

And I believe that today's meeting has taken that support to another level.

It has been a day where I hope we can make real and tangible progress.

We have highlighted, based on your compelling political vision, Mr President, this new political dimension in Somalia.

We had an unprecedented representative delegation around the table: the Federal Government, Parliament, regions and civil society all came together to back a Compact for Somalia that will benefit all the people of the country.

They have shown unity of purpose to rebuild the sovereign nation.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:
Michael Mann +32 498 999 780 - +32 2 584 9780 - Michael.Mann@eeas.europa.eu @EUHighRepSpox
Maja Kocijancic +32 498 984 425 - +32 2 298 65 70 - Maja.Kocijancic@ec.europa.eu @AshtonSpox_Maja
Sebastien Brabant +32 460 75 09 98 - Sebastien.Brabant@ec.europa.eu
Iulia Costea +32 460 750 7 17 - +32 2 297 68 55 – Iulia.Costea@ec.europa.eu
Follow us on Twitter @eu_e eas
www.facebook.com/EuropeanExternalActionService
www.eeas.europa.eu
Today we have discussed all the elements that are vital to make that rebuilding a reality.

I want to highlight the importance of inclusive politics, rebuilding security, establishing justice institutions. These are fundamental building blocks that will regain the trust of the people, and strengthen the social and economic foundations of the country.

I and many other speakers also highlighted the vital role that Somali women must play in this process.

We know that lists of needs remains long and the challenges are multiple.

But clear priorities have emerged as a result of the work undertaken by a wide range of Somali stakeholders on what is really needed to move forward.

Together, today, we have set in motion a process that can continue long into the future.

I am also pleased to report that the international community put its weight behind this efforts, offering 1.8 billion euros to support the process.

Mr President, all of this demonstrates the commitment on both sides to complete Somalia's transformation.

What is crucial now is that we use this conference not just to mark a moment in time, but to really enable us to move further ahead, an opportunity for future action.

So in the months ahead, it is our responsibility to put our pledges into practice, to make sure that we deliver on what we have said and that we provide for the people of Somalia, that more than anything deserve this support.

Thank you Mr President."