STATEMENT

by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton during her visit to Thailand

The High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the Commission, issued the following statement today:

"I am delighted to be back in Thailand, where I met today Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra.

We took stock of our bilateral relations and discussed our common objectives. We welcomed the recent initialling of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between the EU and Thailand, a tangible expression of our mutual trust and the value we attach to our bilateral relationship. The PCA will be complemented by a Free Trade Agreement, for which negotiations were launched in March 2013.

The EU and Thailand have been working closely together, both bilaterally and in regional and international fora. The EU values the close cooperation with Thailand in ASEAN and Thailand’s driving role on the connectivity agenda.

The Prime Minister and I also discussed the recent ruling by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) that brought clarity on the sovereignty over the area around the Preah Vihear Temple. I warmly welcome the commitment of Thailand and Cambodia to continue their close and constructive dialogue on border cooperation in the region of Preah Vihear and I call upon them to work together to protect this World Heritage Site.

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On the domestic political situation, I conveyed to the Prime Minister that the EU supports national reconciliation in Thailand. I called upon all parties to abide by democratic principles, avoid escalation and resolve their differences through peaceful means.

Finally, I have used the opportunity to thank the Prime Minister for her strong personal commitment towards reinforcing the positive momentum in EU-Thailand relations in recent years."