STATEMENT

by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the Elections to the Constituent Assembly of Nepal

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 welcome the successful poll of 19 November 2013 in Nepal which marks a further step in the consolidation of its democratic transition. I congratulate the people of Nepal for having exercised their right to vote in large numbers, despite attempts to prevent them from doing so.

With these elections, the people of Nepal have now given a clear mandate to the new Constituent Assembly to complete the drafting of the Constitution. I am confident that the Constituent Assembly will assume its responsibility and promptly deliver on this crucial task, so that the political stalemate can be overcome, legitimate and effective institutions put in place and local elections held as soon as possible. I encourage all political stakeholders to make this possible by adopting a constructive role in this historic moment.

As a close and long-standing partner, the EU looks forward to continuing its strong partnership with Nepal with the aim of supporting the country's social, economic and democratic development.

I commend the role played by the Interim Election Council of Ministers, the Election Commission of Nepal and participating parties, as well as the valuable contributions by
national and international observing organizations and in particular, by the EU Election Observation Mission headed by the European Parliament Member Mrs Eva Joly."