REMARKS

by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton during the EuroChanukah4peace ceremony celebrating Chanukah

"Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great honour and privilege to be able to host this important celebration. It is one of my favourite celebrations. I have the best of memories of my children visiting friends who would invite us to watch the lighting of the candles. And for many children it is also an opportunity to receive the presents that I know come for them as part of this celebration.

It is a moment to remember family, tradition, values and home. And the lighting of the candles plays such an important part in shining the light of home across the world.

As millions upon millions of Jewish families begin their celebrations, we stand with them and we believe in freedom for all people, to be who they are, to be of the faith and grace they wish to be. We stand for peace and security, knowing that they fit together. In order to have peace you need security. And in order to have security you need peace.

The European Union is founded on the ashes of what happened in Second World War. We have built a community of nations who stand together in real values and tradition, not just for the people in Europe, but to send the light across the world.
And I hope that in this generation, you - and those of us who have the privilege to serve the cause of the European Union -, can make common cause with all those who seek the light, who seek peace, who seek freedom and security. Our thoughts are with the Jewish people everywhere and no more so than the people in Israel.

I had the pleasure to speak with my friend Tzipi Livni, the Minister of Justice yesterday, and before this day is out I will text her two words that I send to all people who are celebrating today: Happy Chanukah!"