Catherine Ashton holds a high level meeting on Ukraine

Catherine Ashton, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission, today called a high level meeting to mobilise European Union support for Ukraine.

The meeting was attended by Vice President/Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs Olli Rehn, Commissioner for Trade Karel De Gucht, Commissioner for Budget Janusz Lewandowski, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid Kristalina Georgieva and Commissioner for Development Andris Piebalgs. Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle, Commissioner for Home Affairs Cecilia Malmström and Commissioner for Energy Günther Oettinger were represented by senior staff as were the Presidents of the Commission and the European Council.

In briefing the meeting Catherine Ashton made it clear that the immediate priority must be to support the stability of Ukraine, both economically and politically.

The meeting discussed economic support - both short and medium term - and, in line with the mandate given to her by President Barroso to coordinate the Commission's response to the economic and financial challenges faced by Ukraine, Catherine Ashton invited Vice-President Olli Rehn to be the focal point on the EU side, coordinating the financial support efforts with the IMF and other international financial institutions, Member States and third countries.

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In the context of the EU's offer of political association and economic integration, the meeting also looked at ways to facilitate people to people contacts and Ukraine's energy needs.

Catherine Ashton will return to Kyiv again next Monday.