Remarks by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on arrival to the Extraordinary European Council

Today we have the opportunity to think about support for our Southern Neighbourhood, so let me draw your attention to the document from the Commission and myself. This includes the three M’s.

Money - resources that can go into the region to help support the transition to democracy, the support for civil society and of course the economic needs of countries. For example the loss of tourism in Egypt and Tunisia.

Secondly market access - the importance of making sure that we give advantages in trade and the people can take advantage of that by being able to export and import properly.

And thirdly mobility - the ability of people to move around, for business people to be able to conduct business more effectively. Those three M’s are absolutely core to the document.

Now of course the situation in Libya is very, very high in the minds of the leaders and they will be discussing that at length this morning. The Foreign Affairs Council met yesterday and tomorrow we will have an informal meeting and from there I will go to Egypt on Sunday, so I can personally meet with the Secretary General of the Arab League to show and demonstrate the importance of working very closely with them on Libya, but also on the broader questions which we are also discussing today for support of the region.

Finally, what France did is meet with members from the National Council. I have met with them the day before and they are very clear that they should talk to everyone. My view is that we are also looking to have discussions with people to find out information on the ground to see what is happening; to see those who are moving towards democracy and are concerned about the future of Libya and we will continue to do that.