Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton following her meeting with Jean Ping, Chairperson of the African Union Commission

Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission, met today in Brussels with Dr. Jean Ping, Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

After the meeting, she made the following statement:

“I was delighted to meet with Jean Ping today.

The African Union is a close partner of the European Union on many issues and we attach great value to our co-operation.

Dr Ping and I discussed Libya and Côte d’Ivoire.

On Libya, we agreed on the crucial importance of both EU and AU engagement in the long term, together with the United Nations and the Arab league, to build a solid foundation for democracy and to give the Libyan people the possibility to choose their leaders. We agreed to work closely together on the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1973.

On Côte d’Ivoire, we agreed that Laurent Gbagbo had to step down as the only way out of the current crisis, and that work should now start to promote recovery and reconciliation, under the leadership of the democratically elected President Alassane Ouattara. The European Union and the African Union will co-operate closely in this effort.”