Remarks by the EU High Representative Catherine Ashton after meeting with Mr. Hashim Thaci, Prime Minister of Kosovo

What a great delight it is to have Prime Minister Thaci in Brussels today. And as you'll recall it's just a few weeks after my visit to Kosovo and only two days since the latest discussions between Pristina and Belgrade produced our first concrete agreements.

The agreements reached this Saturday are European solutions to some very difficult but very important issues. I want to congratulate Prime Minister Thaci and Mrs Tahiri, the negotiator from the Kosovo side, as well as their counterparts from Serbia, for their leadership, their courage and their hard work.

Let me stress that these agreements – on the freedom of movement, civil registry and acceptance of university and school diplomas - are good for both sides. They do not require either to give away anything, rather both sides gain a lot.

The aim of this dialogue is to bring both sides closer to the European Union, to improve cooperation and most importantly to improve the lives of ordinary people. This is what we want to achieve.

I am looking forward to the swift implementation of these agreements. I also hope that the dialogue will very soon give further results, in areas like telecoms, cadastre records, customs stamps and energy.
Apart from the dialogue I also discussed the European perspective of Kosovo. I always encouraged the Prime Minister to continue, with even more energy, the necessary reform across the board—in the interest of the people of Kosovo to bring Kosovo closer to the European Union. I am very happy to hear that a good package of laws has been processed. I hope they will be soon adopted by the parliament.

Part of this will be to improve the rule of law and I encouraged Prime Minister Thaci to make good use of the important work of our Rule of Law mission, EULEX. It is there to support Kosovo in crucial areas like police, justice and customs, but also to help fight organised crime and corruption.

Finally, my main message today has been to reiterate the European Union's commitment to Kosovo's European perspective. We all want to see Kosovo move closer to the European Union and I believe the latest results are extremely encouraging.