EU High Representative Catherine Ashton travels to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory to urge progress in Middle East Peace Process

Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, travels this weekend to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory to renew her call for a return to the negotiating table and urgent progress in the Middle East Peace Process.

"Following the recent tragic events in Israel and Gaza, it is more important than ever that the parties return to the negotiating table," Catherine Ashton said. "It is only through negotiations - and not violence - that the root causes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be addressed. The EU continues to make every effort to make a renewal of negotiations possible. That is why I am travelling to the region this weekend."

In Ramallah, the High Representative will meet President Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad as well as Hanan Ashrawi, Member of the PLO Executive Committee. She will also meet with the Norwegian Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Støre, who is travelling in the region.

In Israel, Catherine Ashton will meet President Shimon Peres, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Defence Minister Ehud Barak, Foreign Minister and Deputy PM Avigdor Liberman and Kadima Chairwoman Tzipi Livni.

The HR Ashton will end her travel to Middle East with the visit to Jordan where she will meet with HM King Abdullah II and Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh to discuss the Middle East Peace Process, Libya and the ongoing reforms in Jordan.

The coverage of the trip will be available on the Europe by Satellite.