Statement by
EU High Representative Catherine Ashton
on the elections in Zambia

Following the presidential, legislative and local government elections in Zambia on 20 September, the High Representative for External Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, Catherine Ashton, made the following statement:

"I welcome the successful conduct of Zambia's 2011 general elections. These were the fifth democratic general elections since a multi-party system was re-introduced in 1991. This election and the peaceful transfer of power through the ballot box strengthens Zambia's position as an example of democracy in the region and elsewhere. I would also like to commend the Zambian population for their determination to ensure peaceful elections.

I congratulate Michael Sata on his election as president. I am very keen to maintain and deepen our relations with Zambia and to strengthen the long-standing partnership between Zambia and the EU. I also commend outgoing president, Rupiah Banda, for his commitment to civil and political rights which made these elections possible."

The High Representative thanked the Chief Observer of the EU Election Observation Mission in Zambia, Ms Maria Muñiz de Urquiza MEP, as well as her entire team of 80 observers from the EU member states, for the important work they have undertaken. The Mission will issue its own conclusions on the elections shortly. The presence of a special delegation of three European MEPs, led by Mr. David Martin, was particularly welcome.

"As a long-standing partner, the EU will continue to support Zambia in its efforts to promote the country’s social and economic development."

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