Statement by High Representative Catherine Ashton and Commissioner Štefan Füle on the agreements reached in the latest round of Belgrade-Pristina dialogue

Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission, and Štefan Füle, Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy made today the following statement:

We welcome the agreements reached today on regional cooperation and on the implementation of the integrated management for crossing points (IBM). These agreements are a major step forward. They are important not just for Serbia and Kosovo but for the stability of the region and thus for the EU.

All EU Member States have given their support to the UN General Assembly resolution of September 2010 launching the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. The objective of this dialogue is to help both parties achieve progress on their path to Europe.

In this context, High Representative/Vice President Ashton stated that "I want to congratulate both parties on these two substantial agreements. One puts into operational form the agreement on integrated management of crossing points. The other consolidates regional cooperation and ensures that everyone is properly represented. Both are further steps along the European path."

As regards Serbia, these agreements on regional cooperation and IBM are particularly welcome in view of the deliberations in the Council next week regarding candidate status for Serbia.

As regards Kosovo, this is important as it makes Kosovo a full participant in its own right in regional meetings and events and will allow for further progress to contractual relations with the EU. Kosovo will thus follow the same European course as all others in the Western Balkans, in line with its European perspective. In this light, the Commission proposes to launch a feasibility study for a Stabilisation and Association Agreement between Kosovo and the EU.
Commissioner Füle underlined that "The deal demonstrates a commitment on both sides to their common European future. Today's agreement also reinforces regional cooperation, good neighbourly relations and the Enlargement agenda in the Western Balkans region".