The European Union and New Zealand enhance their cooperation on crisis management

The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of New Zealand, Murray McCully, signed today a Framework Agreement for the participation of New Zealand in EU crisis management operations.

New Zealand is already an active partner in the area of the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), having contributed to both EU military and civilian operations: EUFOR Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the EU Police mission (EUPOL) in Afghanistan.

The Agreement, by setting down a legal framework governing any future participation by New Zealand in the full range of EU-led operations and missions, significantly steps forward and structures EU-New Zealand relations in the security field. This new instrument enables smooth involvement of New Zealand in on-going and future EU crisis management efforts in different theatres. In particular, it will avoid unnecessary delays in situations where New Zealand is invited and agrees to, participate in EU operations. It furthermore responds to New Zealand's strong desire to contribute personnel and assets to the EU efforts, facilitating future cooperation and contributing to enhanced effectiveness and flexibility in the response to any crisis.

The signature of this Framework Participation Agreement comes at a time when EU-New Zealand relations are developing very positively. On 27 October 2011, a joint statement issued by Mrs. Ashton and Mr. McCully expressed a shared political commitment to move rapidly towards negotiations for a Treaty-level Framework Agreement to upgrade the bilateral relationship, subject to respective mandating processes.