Statement by the Spokesperson of High Representative
Catherine Ashton following her meeting with Serbian
President Nikolić

The spokesperson of Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the Commission, issued the following statement today:

"High Representative Catherine Ashton met Serbian President Tomislav Nikolić in New York on Thursday to discuss the progress of Serbia on its path towards the European Union.

On the basis of the good progress in the last year, Serbia obtained the status of candidate country in February. The High Representative encouraged the authorities to continue to move forward with the reforms and the efforts towards EU integration. In particular, she encouraged Serbia to take steps towards a visible and sustainable improvement of relations with Kosovo, crucial for opening of accession negotiations and Serbia's EU perspective in general.

The High Representative and President Nikolić also discussed the continuation and intensification of the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. Catherine Ashton stressed the need for Serbia to boldly engage in these talks and encouraged President Nikolić to be ready to take some tough decisions.

She also welcomed the recent progress in the implementation of the agreements reached in the dialogue so far and stressed that full implementation of all agreements is expected without delay."

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P R E S S

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