Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton following her meeting with the President of Senegal, Mr Macky Sall

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

"It was a great pleasure to meet President Macky Sall today. I took the opportunity to emphasise the warm and close relationship between the EU and Senegal, and told the President that Senegal is a beacon of democracy and stability in the region and that the EU's support for the country would continue.

We held a lengthy discussion on the situation in the Sahel. I reaffirmed the EU's commitment to help the countries of the region and the people of Mali to restore legitimate government to northern Mali. This is not only a case of people living under lawless armed groups, but is a threat to the region and the world, and has exacerbated a serious humanitarian situation. The Foreign Affairs Council on 15 October pledged to support ECOWAS, the African Union and the UN in finding a solution to the current problems.

President Sall emphasised the complexity of the political and security situation, not only in the north but in southern Mali as well. He underlined the need to tackle drug traffickers who are benefitting from the lack of governance in Mali as well as in Guinea-Bissau and other parts of the region.

I stressed that the EU wants to take an approach that tackles the whole range of interlocking problems in West Africa. To do that our partnership with countries of the region is becoming ever more important."

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:
Michael Mann +32 498 999 780 - Michael.Mann@eeas.europa.eu
Maja Kocijancic +32 498 984 425 - +32 2 298 65 70 - Maja.Kocijancic@ec.europa.eu
Sebastien Brabant +32 460 75 09 98 - Sebastien.Brabant@ec.europa.eu
COMM-SPP-HRVP-ASHTON@ec.europa.eu
www.eeas.europa.eu