Remarks by High Representative Catherine Ashton
at the start of the EU-US Energy Council,
Brussels, 5th December, 2012

Can I start by saying what a great pleasure it has been to welcome Secretary Clinton and the rest of the US delegation for the first time to the External Action Service’s headquarters.

It’s a special moment for us to have you here in the EEAS. I can safely say that you, Hillary, have been a special friend to the European Union in your four years as Secretary of State.

Not only do you represent the best of diplomacy but, for me, it has been a great honour and a privilege to get to know you and have the chance to cooperate closely with you.

I wish you every possible success in whatever amazing things you do next.

We're here today for the fourth meeting of the EU-US Energy Council.

Commissioner Oettinger and I are very much looking forward to taking stock of what has been a very productive year in the work of the Council and looking ahead to setting priorities for the future.

We see this council as an extremely valuable forum that operates at the highest level.

It's helped both the EU and I would say the US to shape policy and to respond to the challenges that we face on energy and climate change.

We know that we need stable and transparent global energy markets if we are to ensure energy security.
But we must also work together on the long-term challenge of laying the foundations for the efficient and sustainable use of energy.

In particular, that means looking at clean energy, so that we can create economic growth and jobs, and address the challenge of climate change.

So for me, I am looking forward to a productive afternoon.

And as I began, it is a special pleasure to welcome you to the EEAS.

Thank you.