Catherine Ashton travels to Latin America

Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission, travels to Peru and to Chile this week for a series of bilateral meetings with leaders of Latin American countries and to participate in the EU-CELAC (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States) Summit in Santiago de Chile.

In Lima on 22 January, the High Representative will meet with Peruvian President Ollanta Humala Tasso and Foreign Minister Rafael Roncagliolo. She will also participate in a EUROPAN child nutrition programme event with First Lady Nadine Heredia.

Speaking ahead of her visit to Lima, Catherine Ashton said: “We have come a long way in our relations with Peru but there is still great untapped potential. We salute the important progress that Peru has made on social inclusion. We are keen to continue joint efforts to fight illegal drug production and to support alternative development. We appreciate Peru’s engagement at regional level as demonstrated in its Presidency of UNASUR and I am certain it will be a very constructive voice in the forthcoming EU-CELAC Summit”.

In Santiago, the High Representative will meet with a number of Foreign Ministers from Latin American and Caribbean states including Chilean Minister for Foreign Affairs Alfredo Moreno. She will also address the joint EU-Latin America Parliamentary Assembly (EUROLAT) and meet representatives of Chilean civil society. On 25 January she will co-chair the EU-CELAC Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting under the theme "Working together towards growth and stability”.

The EU-CELAC Summit is being hosted by Chile on 26-27 January under the theme "Alliance for Sustainable Development: Promoting Investments of Social and Environmental Quality". The EU will be represented by President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy and European Commission President José Manuel Barroso. European Commission Vice-President responsible for Industry and Entrepreneurship Antonio Tajani and Commissioner for Trade Karel De Gucht will also participate (see links to separate press release and factsheet below).
Speaking ahead of her participation in the EU-CELAC summit and Ministerial meeting in Santiago, Catherine Ashton said: "The EU's relations with Latin America and the Caribbean, founded in a common history and culture and inspired by shared values, are as strong as they have ever been. The expansion of human and economic exchanges has strengthened further the bonds between our societies. I look forward to the Santiago summit as an opportunity to underline that we share common values such as democracy and human rights, but also that we share global responsibilities- for example, working together to deal with challenges such as security and climate change. We increasingly share common approaches on these critical issues."

The summit in Santiago will be the seventh since the inaugural EU-LAC summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1999 and the first summit with the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States as the EU’s counterpart.

Background
Press release and factsheet on EU-CELAC summit
The EU and Chile: http://eeas.europa.eu/chile/index_en.htm
The EU’s relations with Latin America and the Caribbean: http://eeas.europa.eu/lac/index_en.htm
EUROPAN programme factsheet and info on EU projects in Peru

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