Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton following her meeting with Turkmen Foreign Minister Rashid Meredov

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

"I met today with Turkmenistan's Foreign Minister/Deputy Prime Minister Meredov.

I reiterated the EU's support for furthering economic and political reform in Turkmenistan and expressed our encouragement for reforms announced following the Presidential election last year. Such reforms will benefit the wellbeing as well as the long-term prospects of Turkmen citizens.

I also underlined the importance of EU-Turkmen cooperation towards strengthening rule of law and promoting judicial reform. Human rights are of course central to the EU's dialogues with all its partner countries and our concerns in this regard were also discussed.

Secondly, I expressed the EU's appreciation for Turkmenistan's constructive regional role on issues including security, energy and water.

I reaffirmed the EU's intention to remain engaged in the stabilisation process in neighbouring Afghanistan and reiterated our appreciation of Turkmenistan's efforts towards reconstruction and lasting peace in Afghanistan.

We also discussed EU-Turkmenistan energy cooperation as another important element of our relations."

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:
Michael Mann +32 498 999 780 - +32 2 584 9780- 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
Eamonn Prendergast +32 460 753 293 - +32 2 299 88 51 - Eamonn.Prendergast@ec.europa.eu
Follow us on Twitter@eu_ceas
www.eeas.europa.eu