



EUROPEAN UNION

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## Remarks by High Representative Catherine Ashton at the gala dinner of the EU-Egypt Task Force meeting

Thank you everyone.

Minister, Mohamed my friend, it is an enormous pleasure to be here with you and to see so many people from Egypt, and from the European Union who've come together in celebration of the Task Force and what it stands for.

It is exactly two months ago since President Morsi came to Brussels and we announced to him that we wanted to try and bring people together to demonstrate the commitment of the European Union to the future of the people of Egypt and to do so by doing what I call economics meet politics.

To bring entrepreneurs here. And I'd like to thank Antonio Tajani so much for the work that he and his team have put in. You have brought with you entrepreneurs that I'm reliably told have a turnover of the equivalent of the GDP of the Netherlands.

It's a demonstration of the commitment that you have, the Commission has, but also that business has to engaging with Egypt. Štefan Füle today has been engaged with civil society, with our Special Representative Stavros Lambrinidis, all engaged in supporting politics meet economics. It's a chance for this country to grow and develop the deep democracy that I believe in and that will ensure the future of the country, but linked to the strong economy that you need and you want to ensure the future, particularly of the young people of this country.

It is an honour to be standing here, it is an honour to see so many people who are willing to engage with us and my commitment is to say that the European Union is not just here for tonight, it's here for the future, we will stay, we will continue to work, with our friends from the European Investment Bank, the Bank for Reconstruction and Development, with colleagues from the European Union and beyond.

**P R E S S**

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We have countries here who've also joined in from our neighbourhood, in order to ensure that we play our part in the future. But as you know, my dear friend Minister, this country belongs to you. The country of Egypt belongs to the Egyptians and the future that you will create. It will be a privilege to be a partner and a friend in that journey. Thank you.

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