

## **Catherine Ashton travels to Kenya to reiterate EU support to democracy, security and economic growth in the region**

Brussels, 24 August 2012 - Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Commission Vice President, is travelling to Nairobi where she is to meet Prime Minister Odinga, Minister of Foreign Affairs Ongeru, and other Kenyan leaders on 28 August. As Kenya is preparing for national elections in March 2013, the EU reiterates its support to the efforts of the Kenyan people to build democracy, security and prosperity in their country. Catherine Ashton regrets the loss of life in the conflict in south-eastern Kenya and appeals to the communities involved to cease violence and resort to peaceful means of conflict resolution.

On 26 August, Catherine Ashton will also visit a vessel participating in the EU Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) Somalia – Operation "Atalanta", the first EU naval operation, which was launched in 2008 in order to reduce pirates' ability to capture vessels navigating the Western Indian Ocean.

Speaking ahead of her trip to Nairobi, Catherine Ashton said: *"Kenya is a staunch ally for the EU in the region, and we are working very closely with the government of Kenya on a variety of domestic and regional challenges. I look forward to talking with our Kenyan partners about ways for the EU to support any efforts to foster an independent electoral process, to forestall a repetition of electoral violence and to bring about judicial and police reform ahead of national elections in 2013. Kenya has also been an important member of the international coalition against maritime piracy, a plague that menaces Kenya, the region and the international community at large. I hope that through our on-going military operations and our new regional civilian mission we can strengthen our relationship on that front too."*

EUNAVFOR has successfully reduced the pirates' ability to capture vessels in the Western Indian Ocean. However, the merchant community and regional stakeholders must remain alert. *"It is of great importance that we increase pressure on pirates by pulling on all the levers available to us, be they judicial, financial, military or those of governance and security"*, said EUNAVFOR Operation Commander, Rear Admiral Duncan L. Potts.

Last month, the Council of the EU approved the launch of a new civilian Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) mission, EUCAP Nestor, to support regional maritime capacity-building in the Horn of Africa and Western Indian Ocean states. In Kenya, EUCAP Nestor will provide support to the judiciary and the maritime security agencies. EUCAP Nestor is part of the EU's comprehensive approach to fighting piracy and instability in the region and its main focus lies on strengthening regional capacity to fight piracy. In this respect, Kenya is a key partner for the EU.

Since 2005, the EU has committed development assistance of over €500 million to Kenya for rural development, roads, and other needs. Humanitarian aid since 2005 amounts to around €150 million including help following the 2011 Horn of Africa drought.

### Background

Kenya's 10th European Development Fund's total allocation amounts to €383 million to Kenya. The two focal sectors are rural development and road infrastructure.

EUCAP Nestor is embedded in the EU strategic framework for the Horn of Africa and complementary to the other two CSDP missions in the region, EUNAVFOR contributing to the repression of piracy and to the protection of food aid shipments, and the EU Training Mission Somalia, which is contributing to training Somali armed forces in Uganda.

For more information please see:

[EU relations with Kenya](#)

[The EU fight against piracy in the Horn of Africa](#)

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