



EUROPEAN UNION

Brussels, 7 May 2011
A 177/11

Statement by High Representative Catherine Ashton on Europe Day

Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission, made today the following statement:

" I am delighted to speak to you again on the 9th of May, Europe Day. It seems incredible that a year has passed since we last celebrated this occasion. It is a year in which we have seen fundamental changes that have brought both challenges and opportunities for the international community.

The European Union is rising to these challenges. In recent years, we have become increasingly outward-looking with a growing role and reach, acting as a force for good in our neighbourhood and beyond.

The ambition to build a strong EU foreign policy received a major boost with the launch of the European External Action Service – the EEAS – on the 1st of January this year. The service will act as a single platform to project European values and interests around the world. And it will act as a one-stop shop for our partners.

The aim of all this is to forge a better, more coherent policy, developing European answers to complex global problems, working with our partners around the world. It's something I know countries have long asked for - and that we can now deliver.

For the first time, we are able to bring together all the tools that the EU has: diplomacy, political engagement, development assistance, humanitarian aid, economic cooperation, and civil and military crisis management.

We are already putting this increased capability to good use as we face the rapidly changing situation in North Africa and the Middle East.

P R E S S

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

Michael Mann +32 498 999 780 - +32 2 299 97 80 - Michael.Mann@eeas.europa.eu
Maja Kocijancic +32 498 984 425 - +32 2 298 65 70 - Maja.Kocijancic@ec.europa.eu
COMM-SPP-HRVP-ASHTON@ec.europa.eu
www.eeas.europa.eu

EN

The message from Europe to our friends around the world is clear: we want to work together to tackle some of the biggest challenges we all face. And with the EEAS in place, we will be a better, more capable partner.

We remain the biggest donor and the largest trading power in the world, but we are doing much more, and we are doing it together.

We are supporting democratic reforms in Egypt and Tunisia, working with the international community on the future of a post-Gaddafi Libya, and applying maximum pressure on repressive regimes in countries like Syria to support change.

We are playing a leading role in the Middle East Peace Process, both through close bilateral contacts with our partners and as part of the Quartet.

We are fighting piracy off the coast of Somalia and helping rebuild Haiti following the devastating earthquake.

We are mediating between Serbia and Kosovo for a lasting peace in the Western Balkans, and leading negotiations with Iran on their nuclear programme.

Our more than 130 EU Delegations around the world are trusted partners for their host countries on all aspects of EU policy, from security policy to energy and climate change.

On Europe Day, the European Union takes the opportunity to remember where it came from. But above all, it can look at how far it has come and look forward with confidence.

The European External Action Service will represent a united and strong continent. It is there to ensure security and stability for European citizens and to help spread the same throughout the world.”

[See video](#)
