



EUROPEAN UNION

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## **Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton following her meeting with Tajik President Emomali Rahmon**

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 with Tajik President Rahmon here in Brussels this afternoon.*

*I congratulated President Rahmon on Tajikistan's accession to the WTO and on the hard work and reforms accomplished on its path to membership. The EU was pleased to help Tajikistan in its reforms and would encourage the country to continue in these efforts, also enhancing reforms in areas concerning human rights and the freedoms of media, religion and association.*

*Energy and water issues were high up on our agenda: the EU is aware of Tajikistan's critical energy needs and encourages the country's engagement in energy sector reform with a focus on solutions discussed with its international partners, notably the World Bank. The EU stands ready to support measures taken in this direction and encourages engagement with riparian countries to seek sustainable regional solutions.*

*We also discussed regional security issues and I reiterated the EU's support for Tajikistan in dealing with regional security challenges including those linked to Afghanistan. I underlined the EU's commitment to long-term engagement with Central Asia and Afghanistan on security issues beyond 2014 alongside our contribution to border management, counter-narcotics, commercial opportunities and disaster risk management efforts."*

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## **P R E S S**

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**FOR FURTHER DETAILS:**

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