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S T A T E M E N T

by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the occasion of International Women's Day 2014

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

"Today, on International Women's Day, we celebrate the real transformation the world has witnessed in women's rights, thanks both to individual achievements and our common participation in political life. Women have made great advances, but there is still a long way to go to achieve a world free from gender-based discrimination. Equal access to education and health services and the chance to become a full participant in political life is everyone's right and an essential ingredient of democracy. Long-term stability and development can only be achieved if violence and discrimination against women are addressed.

The European Union remains committed to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. About 200 projects and initiatives are currently funded by the EU around the world which aim to help women benefit from education and healthcare, to work and live free from violence and discrimination and to assume their rightful place in society. The rights of all women and girls are a universal priority for the EU and this is reflected in the current discussions on the post-2015 framework for poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Where women prosper, societies prosper; where women suffer, so do the societies they live in. I have had the privilege of meeting many inspiring women who through their hard work and sacrifices have played an extraordinary role in the history of their countries. Today I pay tribute to these women, whose courage and determination pave the way for future generations."

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

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