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## R E M A R K S

**by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton upon arrival  
at the Foreign Affairs Council, Luxembourg, 20 October 2014**

*"Good morning everyone.*

*Not surprisingly, our discussions will begin with thinking about what more we can do to tackle the incredibly complex issue of Ebola.*

*Already the EU and Member States have contributed half a billion euros in support of trying to protect people and you will know that many individual Member States are working hard in different countries, especially West Africa, to support the population, providing medical support by way of equipment and staff. But as ever we want to see what more can be done.*

*I've invited Commissioner Borg to join us for that discussion to link up with the work that he's doing from the side on health and we will deliberate on that as our first item on this morning's agenda.*

*For today, what I wanted to do is to make sure that we have a seriously joint approach between all the different elements. We have been working really hard in the EEAS to make sure that what Member States are doing and also what the Commission is also doing fit together. And I am very pleased that they are working so closely together.*

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*But we all know that this is a serious and significant problem that we should not underestimate. It is not a problem that will stay in one part of the globe, but has the potential to travel everywhere. So we need to make sure that we are doing everything we can to help sort it out at source and also to deal with it in terms of our own national security and in a collaborative way.*

*So I think our proposals will be looked at and it will just really depend what the best fit is, what the best package is. Money is very important, the equipment is very important, staff is very important.*

*I've also invited the UN Special Representative Bernardino Leon to come and talk to us about the situation in Libya. We have been very engaged as the European Union, and our individual Member States too, but we want to work closely with him. I appointed Mr Leon as our Special Representative, and was delighted when Ban Ki Moon asked me whether he could become the Representative of the United Nations. He's worked extremely hard in Libya and I know he'll have a lot to tell us.*

*There is a lot of worry about what is happening in Libya generally. This is a country that economically has the capacity to be very self-sufficient, but in the last months we have seen a real deterioration of the security situation. What we will discuss is what more can be done; we also have huge support for what the UN is doing.*

*People of Libya want what every other group of people in the world want. They want peace and security, and a future that is economically stable and that they can bring up their children in a secure and stable atmosphere. And the way to achieve that is to find ways in which we can resolve some of the problems that are faced by individuals and by groups, to recognize the inclusive nature of any country, the importance of people feeling part of that. And the dialogue is core and fundamental to doing that.*

*The future HR/VP, my successor, was in Libya with Ban Ki-moon, so Federica would also have an opportunity to give her impressions. She has been very engaged as Italian Foreign Minister and I know will be very engaged as High Representative.*

*We'll of course also concentrate on the issue of ISIL: what more can be done as we think about our own counter-terrorism strategies but also how we can support the international effort to deal with this and support the people of Syria and Iraq who deserve peace for the future.*

*We'll also be talking about the Middle East Peace Process. I was in Cairo last weekend for the Conference in support of the reconstruction of Gaza. Everyone there talked about the need for a political solution that would take us back to the consideration of the two-states solution and you've heard many times how much the European Union believes in that and the importance of it, even now. 5.4 billion dollars was raised in support of the people of Gaza and this now needs to be implemented.*

*Helga Schmid will host the Quartet Envoys, with the UN, Russia and the USA coming here to Europe, in Brussels, later on this month in order to discuss what more the Quartet can do.*

*And of course Ukraine - the importance of ensuring that what has been agreed in Minsk is implemented. We'll be reviewing the situation and determining what next we should do.*

*Finally. I've been negotiating with the Iranians and I'll be reporting back on progress to date."*

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