A focus on security issues as High Representative/Vice-President Mogherini participates in the ASEAN Regional Forum and holds bilateral meetings in the margins

At her fifth ASEAN Regional Forum, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, Federica Mogherini addressed a number of pressing global and regional issues.

Federica Mogherini stressed the need for continued diplomatic efforts on the Korean Peninsula to achieve the goal of complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation. She stressed the need for all stakeholders and powers to contribute positively and recalled the European Union’s policy of “critical engagement”.

She called for transparency and the rapid conclusion of negotiations for a legally binding Code of Conduct in the South China Sea between China and ASEAN as well as the respect for international law, including UNCLOS.

High Representative Mogherini also addressed the Rohingya crisis, where ASEAN has increased its engagement. At the same time it is crucial that the government of Myanmar continues to work fully with UN mechanisms and to ensure access for all humanitarian agencies. All allegations of serious crimes must be addressed, as must the root causes of the conflict.

In the margins of the Forum, Federica Mogherini held a number of bilateral meetings.

High Representative Mogherini was received by the Prime Minister of Thailand, Prayut Chan-o-cha, and discussed political developments in the country. The holding of elections
and the subsequent constitution of a pluralistic parliament and the formation of an elected government represent significant progress towards restoring democracy in Thailand. They discussed the need to consolidate the progress made to protect political pluralism and fundamental freedoms, and prospects for signing the new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement as well as resuming negotiations of a Free Trade Agreement between the EU and Thailand in due course.

The High Representative also met the **Canadian Foreign Minister**, Chrystia Freeland, to discuss the close partnership of the EU and Canada. They also discussed the situation in Ukraine, the Gulf and Hong Kong.

In a bilateral meeting with Tilak Marapana, **the Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka**, Federica Mogherini stressed the EU's solidarity with Sri Lanka following the Easter Sunday attacks. She underlined the EU's readiness to support Sri Lanka in the face of this challenge to help prevent and counter violent extremism and support improvements in coordinating the country's counterterrorism efforts.

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