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## R E M A R K S

**by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton following  
the extraordinary Foreign Affairs Council, Brussels,  
15 August 2014**

*"Thanks everyone.*

*I'm just going to make a few comments about the Foreign Affairs Council which has now concluded.*

*Discussions, which I indicated when I arrived, have been extremely detailed on a number of subjects.*

*First of all, we discussed the situation in Iraq. I and a number of colleagues paid tribute to Former Prime Minister Maliki for the way in which, in a very statesmanlike way, he decided to move away from his position and to enable the Prime Minister designate to be put forward. There was a lot of support from Member States for now this process to move forward to find a political solution.*

*Not surprisingly, there was a great deal of focus too on how to deal with the humanitarian crisis and to support people and deep concern for many communities who had to flee in the face of attacks from ISIS. You'll see in the conclusions all that Member States have agreed to.*

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*It was a very strong and solid discussion and there was unanimity in the Council on all of these issues.*

*We talked too about Libya and the situation there. I mentioned earlier today that my former Envoy Bernardino Leon will begin his work as the UN Secretary General's Envoy. I wish him every success and I know that he is working hard even as we speak to try and support, first of all, the ceasefire to stop the fighting in Libya and to try and help that country to move forward. The Council Conclusions were reached by all Member States on this issue. These issues will all be returned to when we meet for the informal Foreign Affairs Council in Milan shortly.*

*We talked too about the situation in Gaza and our deep concern again for the humanitarian situation, and our willingness to support the long term solution, the political solution that leads to two states. You know very well the position of the European Union on all these issues. But I asked for the mandate from the Council to be able to do more work in discussions with the Palestinian Authority, with Israel, with Egypt, with Jordan and with all the countries most concerned. For the EU to play a strong role, particularly at the crossing, particularly with being able to ensure support to the people of Gaza, and that the security of Israel is assured, and to do the things we've been talking about for a number of years in my visits to Gaza, about trying to help support longer term strategic thinking for Gaza that includes as well trade and development.*

*And we talked about the situation in Ukraine. Not surprisingly again, a large number of colleagues are deeply concerned about the situation in the East of Ukraine. We heard from Frans Timmermans, the Netherlands Foreign Minister, about his visits, the work that has been done in the wake of the downing of the Malaysian airliner and the support that we want to give to the Netherlands and to all those who lost people as they now go through the painstaking work of identifying the bodies of people, and continue to give them support in doing that. And inevitably to call upon Russia to engage with the international community to bring this crisis to an end, to ensure the territorial integrity of Ukraine and a future for the Ukrainian people in their own country and to work with the international community to achieve that.*

*Thank you very much"*

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