Joint Statement by High Representative Catherine Ashton and Commissioner Füle on the new government in Tunisia

Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission, and Stefan Füle, EU Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, made today the following statement:

“Welcome the appointment of the new Tunisian government headed by Prime Minister Hamadi Jebali and wish him and his team every success. This is a further important step in the transition of the country towards democracy. It is highly symbolic that a democratically elected government has now been installed one year after the start of the Tunisian revolution. While the Tunisian people will continue to face new challenges, in the space of just one year, they have shed an authoritarian regime, engaged in an electoral process to set up a Constituent Assembly and put in place a democratic system. We pay tribute to the Tunisian people for this remarkable achievement.

We also wish to commend former Prime Minister Essebsi and his government for the excellent work they undertook during their mandate.

We look forward to starting an intense dialogue with the new Tunisian government. The EU has already provided substantial support to Tunisia in the process of democratic transition. We are committed to continuing our assistance in response to requests from the Tunisian authorities and civil society. There is a broad agenda of common work ahead of us, from the negotiations of a mobility partnership to the possibility of establishing a deep and comprehensive free trade area. We are keen to establish with Tunisia a privileged partnership that will be beneficial to our peoples.

The EU attaches great importance to the consolidation of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law in Tunisia, as well as to progress towards sustainable and equitable economic and social development. The new Tunisian government can rely on the full support of the EU to achieve these objectives.”