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## Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton and Commissioner for Development Andris Piebalgs on presidential elections in Niger

Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission, and Andris Piebalgs, EU Commissioner for Development made today the following statement:

*"We welcome the great sense of responsibility shown by the Nigerien electorate who have gone to the polls peacefully to vote in the second round of the presidential election and wish to congratulate Mahamadou Issoufou who, according to preliminary results from the Electoral Commission, is the clear winner of the election. This election marks a milestone in the process of transition to democracy and a major step towards the restoration of full cooperation between Niger and the European Union. We wish therefore to commend the transition authorities for their efforts to respect the roadmap to which they were committed since April 2010.*

*The European Union is very closely monitoring the electoral process in Niger, to which it contributed technically and financially with over €20 million. As part of its reaffirmed commitment to supporting the elections, the European Union deployed an independent Electoral Observation Mission led by the MEP Santiago Fisas Ayxela, which considered the ballot of 12<sup>th</sup> March as credible.*

*This is a further milestone in the process of transition to democracy and a major step towards the restoration of full cooperation between Niger and the European Union, as agreed during consultations held in the framework of the article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement"*

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## P R E S S

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### FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

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