



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

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Strasbourg, 16 May 2006

MINUTES

of the 1744th meeting of the Commission

held in Brussels

(Berlaymont)

on Wednesday 10 May 2006

(morning)

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PV(2006)1744 final

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Single sitting: Wednesday 10 May (morning)

The sitting opened at 09.09 with Mr BARROSO, President, in the chair.

Present:

Mr BARROSO	President	
Ms WALLSTRÖM	Vice-President	
Mr VERHEUGEN	Vice-President	
Mr BARROT	Vice-President	
Mr FRATTINI	Vice-President	
Mr ALMUNIA		
Ms HÜBNER		
Mr BORG		
Ms GRYBAUSKAITĖ		Items 10 (in part) to 12
Mr POTOČNIK		Items 1 to 10
Mr FIGEL'		Items 1 to 10
Mr REHN		Items 10 (in part) to 12
Mr MICHEL		
Mr KOVÁCS		
Ms KROES		
Ms FERRERO-WALDNER		Items 10 (in part) to 12
Mr McCREEVY		
Mr ŠPIDLA		
Mr MANDELSON		
Mr PIEBALGS		

Absent:

Mr KALLAS

Vice-President

Ms REDING

Mr DIMAS

Mr KYPRIANOU

Ms FISCHER BOEL

The following sat in to represent absent Members of the Commission

Mr SCHMIDT	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr Kallas
Mr STROHMEIER	Chef de cabinet to Ms Reding
Mr SCHELLEKENS	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr Dimas
Mr SCHINAS	Chef de cabinet to Mr Kyprianou
Mr CHRISTOFFERSEN	Chef de cabinet to Ms FISCHER BOEL

The following also sat in

Mr VALE DE ALMEIDA	Chef de cabinet to the President	
Mr PETITE	Director-General, Legal Service	
Ms CORUGEDO STENEBERG	Communication DG	
Mr LAITENBERGER	Commission Spokesman	
Ms CARVALHO	Acting Director-General, Bureau of European Policy Advisers (BEPA)	Items 1 to 11 (in part)
Mr THEBAULT	Deputy Chef de cabinet to the President	Items 10 and 11
Mr ELLIS	Member of the President's staff	
Mr RAMSTEDT	A member of Ms Wallström's staff	Items 10 (in part) and 11)
Mr QUEST	Chef de cabinet to Ms Grybauskaitė	Items 1 to 10 (in part)
Mr FRUTUOSO DE MELO	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr Rehn	Items 1 to 10 (in part)
Mr CHILD	Chef de cabinet to Ms Ferrero-Waldner	Items 1 to 10 (in part)
Mr SLEATH	Secretariat-General	Items 10 to 12

Secretary: Ms DAY, Secretary-General, assisted by Mr AYET PUIGARNAU, Director in the Secretariat-General.

1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2006)1744/3; SEC(2006)574)

The Commission took note of that day's agenda and of the tentative agendas for forthcoming meetings.

2. WEEKLY MEETING OF CHEFS DE CABINET

(SEC(2006)1744)

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Friday 5 May.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND SPECIAL MINUTES OF 1743RD MEETING

(3 MAY)(PV(2006)1743 AND /2; PV(2006)1743, PART II)

The Commission approved the minutes of its 1743rd meeting.

4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS (SEC(2006)562)

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group held on Thursday 4 May (SEC(2006)562).

It paid particular attention to the following points:

4.1. *LEGISLATIVE MATTERS*

i) Preparations for May I part-session: legislation

(point 1.2 of the record)

The Commission, in accordance with the rules in force, authorised the Commission Members responsible, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, Ms WALLSTRÖM and any other Members concerned, to take a position on Parliament's amendments to its proposals.

It paid particular attention to the following:

Codecision 2nd reading

- POLI BORTONE report - Nutrition and health claims made on foods - COM(2003)424, 2003/0165(COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2006)1919 and /2 and authorised Mr KYPRIANOU to continue contacts with Parliament and the Council with a view to reaching agreement at second reading.

- SCHEELE report - Addition of vitamins and minerals and of certain other substances to foods - COM(2003)671, 2003/0262(COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2006)1920 and authorised Mr KYPRIANOU to continue contacts with Parliament and the Council with a view to reaching agreement at second reading, bearing in mind that this agreement would also depend on agreement on the above dossier.

Empowerment

- POLI BORTONE report - Nutrition and health claims made on foods - COM(2003)424, 2003/0165(COD)
- SCHEELE report - Addition of vitamins and minerals and of certain other substances to foods - COM(2003)671, 2003/0262(COD)

Under Article 13 of its Rules of Procedure the Commission empowered Mr KYPRIANOU, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, Ms WALLSTRÖM and any other Members associated, to adopt its opinion on the amendments, if appropriate with an amended proposal, on the basis of the line set out in SP(2006)1919 and /2 and SP(2006)1920, once Parliament had given its opinion, and transmit them to the Council in accordance with Article 251(2)(c) of the Treaty.

Codecision – 1st reading

- RACK Report – "Marco Polo II" (improving the environmental performance of the freight transport system) – COM(2004)478 – 2004/0157 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2006)1921, subject to the signing on 17 May of the interinstitutional agreement on the financial perspective, with a view to securing agreement at first reading.

- ROTH-BEHRENDT Report – Prevention, control and eradication of certain transmissible spongiform encephalopathies – COM(2004)775 – 2004/0270 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2006)1923 and /2 and authorised Mr KYPRIANOU to continue contacts with Parliament and the Council with a view to securing agreement at first reading.

- PLESTINSKÁ Report – Financing of European standardisation – COM(2005)377 – 2005/0175 (COD)

(10 May 2006)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2006)1925 and /2, thereby securing agreement at first reading.

Joint discussion – Financial instruments for external relations

- MITCHELL report - Financial instrument for development cooperation and economic cooperation - COM(2004)629 - 2004/0220 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2006)1926.

- SZYMANSKI Report – European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument – COM(2004)628 – 2004/0219 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2006)1927 and /2.

- BEER report – Instrument for stability – COM(2004)630 – 2004/0282(COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2006)1928, /2 and /3. As this concerned future financing for external assistance in the area of civil protection (heading 4 and a revised rapid reaction and preparation mechanism), specific interservice arrangements should be approved as regards the execution (while maintaining the ability to act in an emergency) and management of these resources in order to ensure coherence between civil protection measures outside the European Union and external measures falling under heading 4.

- SZENT-IVÁNYI Report – Instrument for pre-accession assistance – COM(2004)627 – 2004/0222 (CNS)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2006)1929 and /3.

- BREPOELS Report – European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction – COM(2005)399 – 2005/0219 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2006)1930 and /2.

- BEREND report – Solidarity fund – COM(2005)108 – 2005/0282(COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2006)1931 and /4.

4.2. RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT

ii) Action taken on Parliament's non-legislative resolutions

(point 3.3.2 of the record)

The Commission approved SP(2006)1999 and /2 on the action taken on the non-legislative resolutions adopted by Parliament at its March I part-session, for transmission to Parliament.

iii) Attendance by European Parliament Members at international conferences – 14th meeting of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (New York, 10-12 May)

(point 3.4 of the record)

The Commission decided to give a positive answer to the request from Mr BORRELL, President of Parliament, to the PRESIDENT regarding the attendance of six Members of Parliament at the above-mentioned meeting.

5. MONITORING THE APPLICATION OF COMMUNITY LAW

INFRINGEMENTS - URGENT CASE

(SEC(2006)591; SEC(2006)589)

The Commission adopted the decision in SEC(2006)591.

6. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

6.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED

(SEC(2006)575 et seq.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 2 and 5 May.

6.2. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES

(SEC(2006)576)

The Commission took note of written procedures initiated between 2 and 5 May for the adoption of decisions with political implications.

6.3. EMPOWERMENT

(SEC(2006)577 et seq.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 2 and 5 May.

6.4. DELEGATION AND SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation procedure between 2 and 5 May, as archived on the "Greffé 2000" (Registry) website.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

(SEC(2006)578)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

(PERS(2006)60)

**7.1. DG COMP – APPOINTMENT OF AD15/16 DEPUTY
DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

(PERS(2006)33 to /5)

(10 May 2006)

The Commission had before it applications under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Deputy Director-General, Competition (PERS(2006)33 and /2).

The Commission took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 27 February and 24 April (PERS(2006)33/3, /4 and /5).

The Commission proceeded to compare the applicants' qualifications for the post. On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr KROES, it then decided to appoint Ms Lowri EVANS to the vacant post in question.

This decision would take effect on a date to be determined.

7.2. DG RTD – EXTENSION OF CONTRACT OF A TEMPORARY MEMBER OF STAFF – DIRECTEUR

Having noted the procedure followed, as set out in point 2 of PERS(2006) 60, the Commission, on a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr POTOČNIK, decided to extend the contract of Mr Christian PATERMANN, Director of the Biotechnology, Agriculture and Food Directorate in the Research DG, for an undetermined period.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**8. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS - DELIVERING ON THE MODERNISATION AGENDA FOR UNIVERSITIES: EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
(COM(2006)208 TO /4; SEC(2006)587)**

The Commission approved the communication in COM(2006)208/4 for transmission to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

9. OTHER MATTERS

***SPRING 2006 ECONOMIC FORECASTS
(SEC(2006)606)***

The Commission took note of the information note from Mr ALMUNIA in SEC(2006)606.

**10. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE 2006 JUNE EUROPEAN COUNCIL - A CITIZENS' AGENDA - DELIVERING RESULTS FOR EUROPE
(COM(2006)211 TO /3)**

The PRESIDENT presented the communication intended for the European Council which he was putting to the Commission for approval. He thanked the Commission Members and their staff for their contributions to the preparation of this document. There had also been a high level of debate at the Lanaken seminar.

He underlined the initiative's pragmatic approach, the way in which it illustrated the Commission's commitment and confirmed its political priorities. He believed that

the communication would, in the context of the June European Council, help with the transition from reflection to action on the question of the future of Europe.

The Commission Members welcomed the very high quality of the document and the successful balance achieved between the different elements it examined; they then held an in-depth exchange of views covering the following points in particular:

- highlighting the main messages of the communication and its pragmatic and innovative approach which nevertheless complied with the essential principles of European integration;
- the importance of explaining that this was not about a change in Commission strategy but about strengthening and realising certain initiatives;
- the need to bear in mind, when presenting this communication, the elements mentioned in the document on the implementation of "Plan D" (see item 11), in particular as regards seeking interaction with the public;
- a development of interinstitutional relations which takes into account possible changes to the decision-making process and in particular an extension of qualified majority voting in the Council and modernisation of the budget;
- the relevance of the initiatives proposed to national parliaments by the Commission;
- the importance of not limiting economic integration to the internal market but taking into account other elements such as economic and monetary union and the Lisbon Strategy;
- the benefits of the internal market for ordinary citizens, emphasising the dynamic nature of the project and the importance of economic growth to achieving the objectives identified in the Lisbon Strategy;
- the need to complete economic and monetary union in order to improve the operation of the system and increase its coherence;

- the importance of responding actively to the challenges of globalisation, so that the public can reap the maximum benefit;
- the decisive contributions that can be made to increasing the Union's competitiveness by the knowledge-based society and the information society;
- the need to strike a balance between security and flexibility in the area of employment;
- the creation of a single area of law and security, and the development of cooperation, particularly in the areas of immigration and cross-border prosecution;
- the issue of absorption capacity as regards future enlargements and the leading role the Commission has to play in deliberations;
- the example of specific high-profile projects or programmes familiar to the public, such as Erasmus or Galileo.

Following its discussions, the Commission decided to make the following changes to the communication in COM(2006)211/3:

- change the title of the document and add a subtitle as follows:
"A Citizens' Agenda. Delivering Results for Europe";
- in the second paragraph of the Introduction, add the text underlined: *"The development of the European Union is an extraordinary success story, delivering unprecedented peace, prosperity and stability whilst acting, for its citizens, as a shock absorber to external change. The principles and values of the EU have not changed – freedom, democracy, the rule of law, tolerance, solidarity and making progress through peaceful co-operation are as valid today as when the Treaty of Rome was signed. So is the central role of cultural wealth and diversity in Europe's identity. But over 50 years Europe, and the world, have changed. The EU needs to promote and advocate its values against a background of growing diversity and change. The Hampton Court meeting last October showed the*

political consensus about the nature of these challenges and the essential role of the EU in responding to them through modernisation and reform. The agenda agreed at Hampton Court, including the development of a knowledge-based economy, is central to the creation of growth and jobs.;

- in the fourth paragraph of the Introduction, add the text underlined: "*The Constitutional Treaty is intended to help bridge the gap. The Commission continues to endorse its principles and values, and the improvements it would bring in the effectiveness, openness and accountability of the EU. Fifteen Member States have ratified the Constitutional Treaty and more may do so in the coming months. The electorates of two member states voted “no” to it in referenda. As yet, there is not yet consensus on the next steps.*";
- in the seventh paragraph of the Introduction, add the text underlined: "*But the Union needs to go further, through a policy driven agenda which addresses the expectations of EU citizens and reinvigorates their support for the European project. That agenda must be rooted in the established priorities of prosperity, solidarity and security, and the drive for growth and jobs. These are essential for the renewal of confidence in Europe. That support can also be mobilised by projects such as Erasmus, Galileo, ~~or~~ the European Institute for Technology or a European civil protection capability. But both policies and projects need to be embedded into a coherent political agenda. So they must be accompanied by a step by step approach to resolving the current difficulties over the Constitutional Treaty. The aim of this twin track approach is to lead, over time, to an institutional settlement which strengthens the overall political ambition of consolidating a ‘projet de vie en commun’.*";
- in the first paragraph of the section entitled "*Deeper economic integration; a single market for the 21st century*", add the text underlined: "*The European economy faces new challenges and opportunities in the 21st century. The single market, alongside effective competition policy, has brought huge benefits to Europe’s citizens, securing choice and opportunity for Europeans including in areas, such as telecommunications and air travel, which*

were once perceived as closed sectors. It has paved the way for the creation of the euro, which has in turn reinforced the dynamism of the single market and strengthened financial and economic integration, making the EU stronger globally. Finally, the revised Lisbon strategy has set the base for modernisation of our economies in order to deliver growth and jobs for all citizens.";

- delete the second paragraph of the section entitled "Deeper economic integration; a single market for the 21st century" ("The European Economy faces new challenges [...] of investment and export opportunities");
- in the fifth, sixth and seventh paragraphs of the section entitled "Deeper economic integration; a single market for the 21st century", add the text underlined and delete the text scored through:

"- Where are the remaining gaps? ~~In some areas work is incomplete such as the economic and monetary Union. The Single Market is not yet complete, with a need for~~ better integration of energy and financial markets, removing obstacles to the free movement of labour. These are issues which have direct effects on citizens; for example, on energy prices, on roaming charges for mobile phone users, on banking charges. In other areas, the full benefits for consumers are far from realised: for example, why is it still so difficult for a European in one Member State to obtain insurance in another? How do we take forward the Community patent?

- How can we meet the challenges of the future? ~~EU economic policy, including the single market, can help the integration and convergence of European economies. It can help structural reform and drive innovation and competitiveness and create a culture of entrepreneurship. This is a dynamic process, not a one-off achievement. A strong, open competitive single market can be a major part of Europe's response to the challenge of globalisation. EU economic policy has to boost integration and convergence of European economies. The EU needs to pursue the Lisbon agenda; promote the completion and smooth functioning of Economic and Monetary Union and complete the Single Market. EU economic policy has to take full account of external pressures, for example on competitiveness, as well as the opportunities which~~

globalisation offers in terms of investment and exports. The building of the single market must be a dynamic process, not a one-off achievement. A strong, open, competitive single market can be a major part of Europe's response to the challenge of globalisation.

- Do we have the most effective mechanisms for delivering the single market?

The means to boost economic integration ~~Techniques for opening markets and removing barriers~~ have evolved over the last twenty years and there are new ways ~~of simplifying economic activity for end users which can~~ to stimulate entrepreneurship and innovation. The Commission is ready to work in a renewed spirit of partnership with Member States and their administrations, including through the use of new technologies, to make the system work and to assist them in taking ownership and responsibility.";

- in the box in the section entitled "Deeper economic integration; a single market for the 21st century", add the text underlined:

"The Commission commits itself to removing the remaining barriers to a single market, to enable European citizens and entrepreneurs to enjoy the full benefits of the EU. To that end it proposes to launch a fundamental review of the single market to look at what more needs to be done and how. It will present a report – the single market in the 21st century - to the Council and European Parliament next year, including with concrete proposals for future action. The Commission will also pursue vigorously the Lisbon strategy and the completion and good functioning of Economic and Monetary Union.";

- in the fourth paragraph of the section entitled "Opportunity, access and solidarity", add the text underlined:

« European solidarity policies and programmes must promote a higher quality of life, social cohesion and increase opportunities for the Union's citizens, working with ~~the~~ national, regional and other authorities on the ground as well as with the social partners, promoting social dialogue and engaging with ~~and~~ civil society. This means that our policies to sustain solidarity must be matched by a more effective means of ensuring citizens' existing rights of access to

employment, education, social services, health care and other forms of social protection across Europe.";

- in the box in the section entitled "Opportunity, access and solidarity", add the text underlined:

"The Commission will take comprehensive stock of the reality of European society, and launch an agenda for access and solidarity, a social dimension in parallel and close coordination with the single market review, next year. It will explore the possibility of developing an "entitlement" card which would enable every European citizen to be aware of and enjoy full access to their existing rights. It will continue to drive forward its ~~social and~~ sustainable development agendas.";

- in the ninth paragraph of the section entitled "Freedom, Security and Justice", add the text underlined:

"- to make full use of existing mechanisms to tackle threats to citizens' security in a whole range of areas including food, health and bioterrorism.";

- in the second paragraph of the section entitled "The EU in the world", do not underline the word "defence";

- in the sixth paragraph of the section entitled "The EU in the world" add the text underlined and delete the text scored through:

*"- **Coordination.** The Member States and the institutions, and the institutions themselves, must work together better for a more effective and efficient external action. External policy necessarily involves many actors. They must all focus on what they are trying to achieve together rather than on who does what; for example in delivering effective assistance and civil protection in ~~response to~~ external ~~erises~~ crisis situations."*;

- in the second paragraph of the chapter entitled "A Partnership Europe: Subsidiarity, Better Regulation, Openness", add the text underlined:

*"- Respect the principle of **subsidiarity**, acting at the European level only when appropriate. The Commission is committed to working with Member States and*

their national parliaments, regions, city and local governments, social partners and civil society to ensure that the fruits of prosperity reach everyone.";

- in the fifth paragraph of the chapter entitled "A Partnership Europe: Subsidiarity, Better Regulation, Openness", add the text underlined and the accompanying footnote:

"- Partnership means that the EU institutions must work effectively together – the dividing lines between their tasks must never be seen as more important than the fact that all are pursuing shared goals. They must also reach out to the citizen – a key objective of the new communication policy {[footnote:] COM(2006) 35 of 1 February 2006}.";

- in the box in the chapter entitled "Towards an Institutional Settlement", add the text underlined:

"- In parallel, the European Council should decide in June to adopt a step by step approach, to be taken forward by future Presidencies, designed to create the conditions for a future institutional settlement.

- As ~~a first~~ the next major step towards an institutional settlement, EU leaders should adopt a political declaration which not only sets out Europe's values and ambitions, but also under which leaders make a shared undertaking to deliver them. This could take place next year, fifty years after the signing of the Treaty of Rome. The European Parliament and the Commission should also sign this declaration.

- As a further step, the solemn declaration should serve as the basis for decisions by the European Council next year to launch a process designed to lead to ~~an~~ future institutional settlement to be developed by future Presidencies. The Commission stands ready to assist as necessary. ».

Subject to these amendments and to a linguistic revision, the Commission approved the communication in COM(2006)211/3 for transmission to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

11. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE JUNE EUROPEAN COUNCIL - THE PERIOD OF REFLECTION AND PLAN D (COM(2006)212 TO /3)

Ms WALLSTRÖM briefly presented the communication she was tabling jointly with the PRESIDENT. She reminded Commission Members that the document offered a summary of and conclusions on what had already been done under Plan D. She pointed out that the Commission's commitment was not limited to the conclusions set out in the document, and that consultation with the public would have to be continued. After the June European Council, the drawing-up of a second phase of Plan D could be envisaged, going from reflection to concrete action. She ended by reiterating Plan D's achievements, which had stimulated debate, encouraged public participation, given support to projects and promoted communication with the public by means of modern communication tools.

The PRESIDENT stressed the importance of the contribution made by Plan D, saying that it was also important to encourage commitment from Member States. He insisted that Plan D did not claim to be *the* solution to the European Union's problems, but was intended to address one of the public's concerns, namely the European institutions' remoteness and, to that end, proposed a culture of consultation and openness.

Subject to the addition of the following sentence at the end of the penultimate paragraph of the chapter entitled "Conclusion", "During the process of formulating its policies, the Commission will examine how to respond to this feedback and to initiatives proposed by the public.", the Commission approved the communication in COM(2006)212/3 for transmission to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

12. RELATIONS WITH THIRD COUNTRIES

SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST – FINANCIAL AID TO PALESTINIANS

Ms FERRERO-WALDNER reported on the discussions which had taken place at the Quartet meeting held the previous day in New York which had yielded an agreement that the European Union should develop a temporary mechanism to allow financial aid to reach Palestinians who were in serious difficulties. In particular, it would help to maintain essential services such as healthcare and education. She described the conditions agreed upon, at the request, in particular, of the United States: limited scope and duration of the mechanism, transparency and responsibility, and aid provided direct to the sectors and/or persons concerned, without going through the Palestinian Government. As regards the payment of civil servants' salaries, the members of the Quartet still had differing views on the matter. She expressed satisfaction with the leading role played by the Commission in these discussions and presented the next steps in the search for solutions, while stressing the need to move quickly.

After a brief exchange of views and in response to the points raised, Ms FERRERO-WALDNER pointed out that:

- as regards the question of how to react to visa requests from members of the Palestinian Government, the common line adopted by the Member States was unchanged and was applicable to official, and not private, visits;
- the needs covered by the temporary aid mechanism were defined as being "basic human needs". They went beyond humanitarian aid and covered, in particular, the areas of education and health. It was direct aid to or via the Palestinian Government that had been suspended, while other UN cooperation and aid programmes (in particular UNWRA) were continuing, and the Commission was looking for other agents for certain programmes which until now had been implemented in cooperation with the government. The main criterion for applying this mechanism would therefore not be the type of aid concerned but the means of supplying it.

Ms FERRERO-WALDNER also thanked Mr MICHEL for the funds which had been released as humanitarian aid. She concluded by pointing out that, for the moment, the mechanism was to be in place for only three months.

(10 May 2006)

The Commission took note of this information.

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The meeting closed at 12.18.