



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

**PV(2008)1836 final**

Brussels, 2 July 2008

**MINUTES**  
**of the 1836<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Commission**  
**held in Brussels**  
**(Berlaymont)**  
**on Wednesday 25 June 2008**  
**(morning)**

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**PV(2008)1836 final**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                                                                                                                                             |            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Attendance list</b>                                                                                                                                      | <b>6-8</b> |
|                                                                                                                                                             |            |
| 1. AGENDAS (OJ(2008)1836/3; SEC(2008)2071/2).....                                                                                                           | 9          |
| 2. WEEKLY MEETING OF CHEFS DE CABINET (SEC(2008)1836) .....                                                                                                 | 9          |
| 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND SPECIAL MINUTES OF 1835TH<br>MEETING (17 JUNE) (PV(2008)1835; PV(2008)1835, PART II) .....                                       | 9          |
| 4. MONITORING THE APPLICATION OF COMMUNITY LAW .....                                                                                                        | 9          |
| 4.1. STATE AID – INDIVIDUAL CASE (SEC(2008)2129) .....                                                                                                      | 9          |
| 4.2. INFRINGEMENTS – MONTHLY DECISION CYCLE M06/2008 –<br>RECAPITULATIVE LIST OF DECISIONS TO BE ADOPTED BY<br>EMPOWERMENT PROCEDURE (SEC(2008)2130/3)..... | 10         |
| 5. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF<br>POWERS.....                                                                                         | 10         |
| 5.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED (SEC(2008)2073 ET SEQ.).....                                                                                               | 10         |
| 5.2. EMPOWERMENT (SEC(2008)2074 ET SEQ.) .....                                                                                                              | 10         |
| 5.3. DELEGATION AND SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS (SEC(2008)2075 ET SEQ.) .....                                                                                   | 10         |
| 5.4. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES (SEC(2008)2076 AND /2).....                                                                                               | 11         |
| 6. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS<br>(SEC(2008)2072/2) .....                                                                                          | 11         |
| 6.1. INITIAL COMMUNICATION UNDER ARTICLE 50 OF THE STAFF<br>REGULATIONS.....                                                                                | 11         |
| 6.2. OUTSIDE ACTIVITY OF AN AD16 OFFICIAL (PERS(2008)89).....                                                                                               | 11         |
| 6.3. DG JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND SECURITY – TERMINATION OF EXTERNAL<br>SELECTION PROCEDURE FOR AN AD14 (EU-12) DIRECTOR POST<br>(PERS(2007)70).....             | 11         |

|                                                                                                                                                                                 |    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 6.4. DG JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND SECURITY – AMENDMENT OF ORGANISATION<br>CHART (SEC(2008)2138 AND /2) .....                                                                         | 12 |
| 6.5. DG JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND SECURITY – EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF<br>VACANCY NOTICE FOR AN AD14 (EU-12) DIRECTOR POST (PERS(2008)90) .....                                        | 13 |
| 6.6. DG JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND SECURITY – EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF<br>VACANCY NOTICE FOR AN AD14 (EU-12) DIRECTOR POST (PERS(2008)91) .....                                        | 13 |
| 6.7. DG ENTERPRISE AND INDUSTRY – EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF VACANCY<br>NOTICE FOR AN AD14 (EU-12) DIRECTOR POST (PERS(2008)92) .....                                              | 13 |
| 6.8. DG INFORMATION SOCIETY AND MEDIA – EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF<br>VACANCY NOTICE FOR AN AD14 (EU-12) CHIEF ADVISER POST<br>(PERS(2008)93) .....                                | 14 |
| 6.9. DG HEALTH AND CONSUMERS – EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF VACANCY<br>NOTICE FOR AN AD14 (EU-12) CHIEF ADVISER POST (PERS(2008)94) .....                                            | 14 |
| 6.10. DG ENERGY AND TRANSPORT – EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF VACANCY<br>NOTICE FOR AN AD14 (EU-12) DIRECTOR POST (PERS(2008)95) .....                                                | 14 |
| 6.11. DG ENERGY AND TRANSPORT – EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF VACANCY<br>NOTICE FOR AN AD14 (EU-12) CHIEF ADVISER POST (PERS(2008)96) .....                                           | 15 |
| 6.12. DG ENERGY AND TRANSPORT – AMENDMENT OF ORGANISATION CHART .....                                                                                                           | 15 |
| 6.13. DG ENLARGEMENT - AMENDMENT OF ORGANISATION CHART<br>(SEC(2008)2139 AND /2) .....                                                                                          | 16 |
| 6.14. DG ENLARGEMENT – EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF VACANCY NOTICE FOR<br>AN AD14 (EU-12) CHIEF ADVISER POST (PERS(2008)97) .....                                                    | 16 |
| 6.15. AMENDMENT OF ORGANISATION CHARTS – 2008 SUMMER PACKAGE<br>(SEC(2008)2140) .....                                                                                           | 16 |
| 6.16. REVIEW OF SECURITY POLICY WITHIN THE COMMISSION -<br>IMPLEMENTATION AND CONTROL (SEC(2008)2066 AND /2) .....                                                              | 17 |
| 7. PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL REGULATION ON THE STATUTE<br>FOR A EUROPEAN PRIVATE COMPANY (COM(2008)396 TO /3;<br>SEC(2008)2098; SEC(2008)2099; SEC(2008)2100; SEC(2008)2104) ..... | 17 |
| 8. PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL REGULATION AMENDING<br>REGULATION (EC) NO 2866/98 REGARDING THE CONVERSION                                                                            |    |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| RATE TO THE EURO FOR SLOVAKIA (SEC(2008)2107 AND /2;<br>SEC(2008)2108).....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 17        |
| 9. COMMISSION DECISION ON A PROCEEDING UNDER ARTICLE 81<br>OF THE EC TREATY AND ARTICLE 53 OF THE EEA AGREEMENT<br>( <i>CASE COMP/39.180 – ALUMINIUM FLUORIDE</i> ) (C(2008)3043 TO<br>/12; SEC(2008)2161)) .....                                                                                                                    | 18        |
| 10. RELATIONS WITH THIRD COUNTRIES.....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 19        |
| <i>INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY COOPERATION<br/>(AOMORI, 7 AND 8 JUNE) (SEC(2008)2142/2).....</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i>19</i> |
| 11. OTHER MATTERS.....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 20        |
| <i>OECD MINISTERIAL MEETING ON THE FUTURE OF THE INTERNET ECONOMY<br/>(SEOUL, 17 AND 18 JUNE) AND VISIT TO SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA<br/>(SINGAPORE AND KUALA LUMPUR, 18 TO 20 JUNE) (SEC(2008)2160).....</i>                                                                                                                           | <i>20</i> |
| 12. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN<br>PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND<br>SOCIAL COMMITTEE, THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS AND<br>THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK – A “SMALL BUSINESS<br>ACT” FOR EUROPE (COM(2008)394 TO /4; SEC(2008)2101;<br>SEC(2008)2102; SEC(2008)2103; SEC(2008)2106) .....   | 20        |
| 13. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN<br>PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND<br>SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS -<br>SINGLE EUROPEAN SKY II: TOWARDS MORE SUSTAINABLE<br>AND BETTER PERFORMING AVIATION (COM(2008)389 AND /2;<br>SEC(2008)2082; SEC(2008)2096; SEC(2008)2097) ..... | 24        |
| 14. PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN<br>PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL AMENDING                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |           |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| REGULATIONS (EC) NO 549/2004, (EC) NO 550/2004, (EC) NO 551/2004 AND (EC) NO 552/2004 IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE EUROPEAN AVIATION SYSTEM (COM(2008)388; SEC(2008)2093; SEC(2008)2094; SEC(2008)2095; SEC(2008)2096; SEC(2008)2097) .....                                                       | 24 |
| 15. PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL AMENDING REGULATION (EC) NO 216/2008 IN THE FIELD OF AERODROMES, AIR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND AIR NAVIGATION SERVICES AND REPEALING COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 2006/23/EEC (COM(2008)390 AND /2; SEC(2008)2086; SEC(2008)2087; SEC(2008)2088; SEC(2008)2097)..... | 24 |
| 16. GREEN PAPER ON FUTURE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES (COM(2008)383 TO /3; SEC(2008)2067 AND /2; SEC(2008)2069).....                                                                                                                                                           | 27 |
| 17. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS.....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 28 |
| 17.1. LEGISLATIVE MATTERS .....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 28 |
| 17.2. RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT .....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 31 |
| 18. TRENDS IN THE MEMBER STATES .....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 32 |
| 19. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS (CONTINUED FROM ITEM 17).....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 34 |
| RELATIONS WITH THE COUNCIL.....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 34 |

**Single sitting: Wednesday 25 June 2008 (morning)**

The sitting opened at 10.04 with Mr BARROSO in the chair.

**Present:**

|                 |                |                          |
|-----------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Mr BARROSO      | President      |                          |
| Ms WALLSTRÖM    | Vice-President | Items 12 to 19           |
| Mr VERHEUGEN    | Vice-President | Items 1 to 18            |
| Mr BARROT       | Vice-President | Items 12 to 19 (in part) |
| Mr KALLAS       | Vice-President |                          |
| Mr TAJANI       | Vice-President | Items 1 to 19 (in part)  |
| Ms REDING       |                |                          |
| Mr DIMAS        |                |                          |
| Mr ALMUNIA      |                |                          |
| Ms HÜBNER       |                |                          |
| Mr BORG         |                |                          |
| Mr POTOČNIK     |                |                          |
| Mr FIGEL'       |                |                          |
| Mr REHN         |                |                          |
| Mr MICHEL       |                |                          |
| Mr KOVÁCS       |                | Items 12 (in part) to 19 |
| Ms KROES        |                | Items 12 (in part) to 19 |
| Ms FISCHER BOEL |                |                          |
| Mr McCREEVY     |                | Items 1 to 19 (in part)  |
| Mr ŠPIDLA       |                |                          |
| Mr MANDELSON    |                |                          |
| Mr PIEBALGS     |                |                          |
| Ms KUNEVA       |                | Items 12 (in part) to 19 |
| Mr ORBAN        |                |                          |
| Ms VASSILIOU    |                |                          |

Absent:

Ms GRYBAUSKAITĖ

Ms FERRERO-WALDNER

(25 June 2008)

The following sat in to represent absent Members of the Commission:

|           |                                        |
|-----------|----------------------------------------|
| Mr QUEST  | Chef de cabinet to Ms GRYBAUSKAITĖ     |
| Mr KÜHNEL | A member of Ms FERRERO-WALDNER's staff |

The following also sat in:

|                       |                                                                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Mr THEBAULT           | Deputy Chef de cabinet to the<br>PRESIDENT                            |                         |
| Ms DURAND             | Acting Director-General, Legal Service                                |                         |
| Mr SØRENSEN           | Director-General, DG Communication                                    |                         |
| Ms AHRENKILDE         | DG Communication – Commission's<br>Spokesman Service                  | Items 1 to 19 (in part) |
| Mr GRAY               | DG Communication – Commission's<br>Spokesman's Service                | Item 19 (in part)       |
| Mr GASPAR             | Acting Director-General, Bureau of<br>European Policy Advisers (BEPA) |                         |
| Mr CABRAL             | Adviser in the PRESIDENT's office                                     | Item 12                 |
| Ms WEYAND             | Adviser in the PRESIDENT's office                                     | Items 17 to 19          |
| Mr MARQUÉS DE ALMEIDA | A member of the PRESIDENT's staff                                     | Item 19                 |
| Ms ERLER              | Chef de cabinet to M. VERHEUGEN                                       | Points 1 à 12           |

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

**1. AGENDAS**

**(OJ(2008)1836/3; SEC(2008)2071/2)**

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(2008)1836)**

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Monday 23 June.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND SPECIAL MINUTES OF 1835<sup>TH</sup> MEETING  
(17 JUNE)**

**(PV(2008)1835; PV(2008)1835, PART II)**

The Commission approved the minutes of its 1835th meeting.

**4. MONITORING THE APPLICATION OF COMMUNITY LAW**

**4.1. *STATE AID – INDIVIDUAL CASE***

**(SEC(2008)2129)**

The Commission adopted the decision in SEC(2008)2129.

**4.2. *INFRINGEMENTS – MONTHLY DECISION CYCLE M06/2008 –  
RECAPITULATIVE LIST OF DECISIONS TO BE ADOPTED BY  
EMPOWERMENT PROCEDURE***

***(SEC(2008)2130/3)***

The Commission adopted in principle the decisions set out in SEC(2008)2130/3 and empowered Mr TAJANI formally to adopt these decisions.

**5. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS**

**5.1. *WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED***

***(SEC(2008)2073 ET SEQ.)***

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 16 and 20 June.

**5.2. *EMPOWERMENT***

***(SEC(2008)2074 ET SEQ.)***

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 16 and 20 June.

**5.3. *DELEGATION AND SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS***

***(SEC(2008)2075 ET SEQ.)***

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedure between 16 and 20 June, as archived in e-Greffe.

**5.4. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES**

**(SEC(2008)2076 AND /2)**

The Commission took note of the sensitive written procedures for which the time limit expires between 23 and 27 June and of the "finalisation" written procedure initiated following the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet on 23 June.

**6. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS**

**(SEC(2008)2072/2)**

**ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

**(PERS(2008)88/2)**

**6.1. INITIAL COMMUNICATION UNDER ARTICLE 50 OF THE STAFF REGULATIONS**

The Commission decided to initiate the procedure laid down in Article 50 of the Staff Regulations with respect to an AD16 official.

**6.2. OUTSIDE ACTIVITY OF AN AD16 OFFICIAL**

**(PERS(2008)89)**

The Commission decided to authorise the request for an outside activity under Article 12b of the Staff Regulations from an AD16 official.

**6.3. DG JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND SECURITY – TERMINATION OF EXTERNAL SELECTION PROCEDURE FOR AN AD14 (EU-12) DIRECTOR POST**

**(PERS(2007)70)**

Having noted the procedure followed, as set out at point 3 of PERS(2008)88/2, the Commission, on a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr BARROT, decided to terminate –

(25 June 2008)

without making any appointment - selection procedure COM/2007/10052 for the post of Director, Internal Security and Criminal Justice, in DG Justice, Freedom and Security.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**6.4. *DG JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND SECURITY – AMENDMENT OF ORGANISATION CHART***  
***(SEC(2008)2138 AND /2)***

The Commission took note of the information in point 4 of PERS(2008)88/2 and, on a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr BARROT, decided:

- to create a function of Deputy Director-General, with responsibility for Directorates JLS.B (Immigration and Asylum) and JLS.C (Migration and Borders);
- to set up two Directorates: JLS.C (Migration and Borders) and JLS.E (Justice);
- to change the name and mission of the other Directorates;
- to set up eight units: JLS.B.1 (Immigration and integration), JLS.B.3 (International aspects of migration and visa policy), JLS.B.4 (Financial support – immigration and asylum), JLS.C.2 (IT projects: infrastructure and legal issues), JLS.C.4 (Financial support – migration and borders), JLS.E.1 (General justice issues and e-justice), JLS.E.4 (Financial support – justice) and JLS.F.3 (Police cooperation and access to information);
- to approve the amended organisation chart set out in SEC(2008)2138/2.

These decisions would take effect from 1 October 2008.

(25 June 2008)

**6.5. DG JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND SECURITY – EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF VACANCY NOTICE FOR AN AD14 (EU-12) DIRECTOR POST (PERS(2008)90)**

On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr BARROT, the Commission decided to authorise the publication, under Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations, of the vacancy notice in PERS(2008)90 for the post of Director, Immigration and Asylum, in DG Justice, Freedom and Security.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**6.6. DG JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND SECURITY – EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF VACANCY NOTICE FOR AN AD14 (EU-12) DIRECTOR POST (PERS(2008)91)**

On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr BARROT, the Commission decided to authorise the publication, under Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations, of the vacancy notice in PERS(2008)91 for the post of Director, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, in DG Justice, Freedom and Security.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**6.7. DG ENTERPRISE AND INDUSTRY – EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF VACANCY NOTICE FOR AN AD14 (EU-12) DIRECTOR POST (PERS(2008)92)**

On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr VERHEUGEN, the Commission decided to authorise the publication, under Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations, of the vacancy notice in PERS(2008)92 for the post of Director, Regulatory Policy, in DG Enterprise and Industry.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**6.8. *DG INFORMATION SOCIETY AND MEDIA – EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF VACANCY NOTICE FOR AN AD14 (EU-12) CHIEF ADVISER POST (PERS(2008)93)***

On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms REDING, the Commission decided to authorise the publication, under Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations, of the vacancy notice in PERS(2008)93 for the post of Chief Adviser in DG Information Society and Media .

This decision would take effect immediately.

**6.9. *DG HEALTH AND CONSUMERS – EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF VACANCY NOTICE FOR AN AD14 (EU-12) CHIEF ADVISER POST (PERS(2008)94)***

On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, Ms KUNEVA and Ms VASSILIOU, the Commission decided to authorise the publication, under Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations, of the vacancy notice in PERS(2008)94 for the post of Chief Adviser in DG Health and Consumers.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**6.10. *DG ENERGY AND TRANSPORT – EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF VACANCY NOTICE FOR AN AD14 (EU-12) DIRECTOR POST (PERS(2008)95)***

On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, Mr TAJANI and Mr PIEBALGS, the Commission decided to authorise the publication, under Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations, of the vacancy notice in PERS(2008)95 for the post of Director, Nuclear Safeguards, in DG Energy and Transport.

(25 June 2008)

This decision would take effect immediately.

**6.11. DG ENERGY AND TRANSPORT – EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF VACANCY NOTICE FOR AN AD14 (EU-12) CHIEF ADVISER POST (PERS(2008)96)**

On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, Mr TAJANI and Mr PIEBALGS, the Commission decided to authorise the publication, under Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations, of the vacancy notice in PERS(2008)96 for the post of Chief Adviser in DG Energy and Transport.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**6.12. DG ENERGY AND TRANSPORT – AMENDMENT OF ORGANISATION CHART**

The Commission took note of the information in point 12 of PERS(2008)88/2 and, on a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, Mr TAJANI and Mr PIEBALGS, decided:

- to set up a "Low-Carbon Energy Financing" Task Force at Director level for the period until 30 November 2008;
- to fill the post of Head of this Task Force, under Article 7 of the Staff Regulations, by transferring in the interest of the service Mr Alfonso GONZALEZ FINAT, AD15 official and currently Chief Adviser in DG Energy and Transport.

These decisions would take effect immediately.

**6.13. DG ENLARGEMENT - AMENDMENT OF ORGANISATION CHART  
(SEC(2008)2139 AND /2)**

The Commission took note of the information in point 13 of PERS(2008)88/2 and, on a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr REHN, decided:

- to create a function of Chief Adviser;
- to abolish the function of Adviser on the retirement of Mr Rony SABAH;
- to approve the amended organisation chart set out in SEC(2008)2139/2.

These decisions would take effect on 1 January 2009.

**6.14. DG ENLARGEMENT – EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF VACANCY  
NOTICE FOR AN AD14 (EU-12) CHIEF ADVISER POST  
(PERS(2008)97)**

On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr REHN, the Commission decided to authorise the publication, under Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations, of the vacancy notice in PERS(2008)97 for the post of Chief Adviser in DG Enlargement.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**6.15. AMENDMENT OF ORGANISATION CHARTS – 2008 SUMMER  
PACKAGE  
(SEC(2008)2140)**

The Commission took note of SEC(2008)2140.

**6.16. REVIEW OF SECURITY POLICY WITHIN THE COMMISSION -  
IMPLEMENTATION AND CONTROL  
(SEC(2008)2066 AND /2)**

The Commission took note of the information note from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, distributed as SEC(2008)2066/2.

**7. PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL REGULATION ON THE STATUTE FOR A  
EUROPEAN PRIVATE COMPANY  
(COM(2008)396 TO /3; SEC(2008)2098; SEC(2008)2099; SEC(2008)2100;  
SEC(2008)2104)**

The Commission adopted the proposal for a Council Regulation in COM(2008)396/3, for transmission to Parliament, the Council and the Economic and Social Committee, and to the national parliaments, accompanied by the impact assessment and its summary in the staff papers distributed as SEC(2008)2098 and SEC(2008)2099, the contents of which were noted.

It also took note of the opinion of the Impact Assessment Board on the above proposal for a Council Regulation, as set out in SEC(2008)2100.

**8. PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL REGULATION AMENDING REGULATION  
(EC) NO 2866/98 REGARDING THE CONVERSION RATE TO THE EURO  
FOR SLOVAKIA  
(SEC(2008)2107 AND /2; SEC(2008)2108)**

The Commission adopted the proposal for a Council Regulation in SEC(2007)2107/2, for transmission to the Council and to the European Central Bank.

**9. COMMISSION DECISION ON A PROCEEDING UNDER ARTICLE 81 OF THE EC TREATY AND ARTICLE 53 OF THE EEA AGREEMENT (*CASE COMP/39.180 – ALUMINIUM FLUORIDE*) (C(2008)3043 TO /12; SEC(2008)2161))**

The Commission:

- took note of the opinions of the Advisory Committee on Restrictive Practices and Dominant Positions of 12 and 20 June in C(2008)3043/3 and C(2008)3043/5;
- took note of the final report of the Hearing Officer of 24 June in C(2008)3043/7;
- adopted, in the authentic languages (English, French and Italian), the decision set out in C(2008)3043/8 finding that the companies to which the decision was addressed had infringed Article 81 of the EC Treaty and Article 53 of the Agreement on the European Economic Area and imposing fines on some of those companies totalling €4 970 000;
- decided that the decision in C(2008)3043/9 to /12 would be notified to the companies concerned, together with the final report of the Hearing Officer;
- decided that the most important parts of the decision, together with the opinion of the Advisory Committee and the final report of the Hearing Officer, would be published in the official languages in the Official Journal of the European Union (with all business secrets removed);
- decided to publish the decision (with business secrets removed) on the Internet.

## **10. RELATIONS WITH THIRD COUNTRIES**

### ***INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY COOPERATION (AOMORI, 7 AND 8 JUNE)***

***(SEC(2008)2142/2)***

The Commission took note of the information note from Mr PIEBALGS in SEC(2008)2142/2.

## **11. OTHER MATTERS**

***OECD MINISTERIAL MEETING ON THE FUTURE OF THE INTERNET ECONOMY (SEOUL, 17 AND 18 JUNE) AND VISIT TO SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA (SINGAPORE AND KUALA LUMPUR, 18 TO 20 JUNE)***  
***(SEC(2008)2160)***

The Commission took note of the information note from Ms REDING distributed as SEC(2008)2160.

## **12. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE, THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS AND THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK – A “SMALL BUSINESS ACT” FOR EUROPE** **(COM(2008)394 TO /4; SEC(2008)2101; SEC(2008)2102; SEC(2008)2103; SEC(2008)2106)**

Mr VERHEUGEN presented the Communication on a Small Business Act for Europe, which he was tabling for approval, stressing its politically decisive nature and thanking the Members of the Commission for their cooperation and support for this dossier, which he regarded as a joint effort.

He pointed out that the Communication was firmly anchored in actual practice and reminded the meeting in this regard that the document was based on the results of a wide-ranging public consultation exercise, which in particular had allowed managers of small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) to point out the weaknesses of Community policy in this area.

Mr VERHEUGEN said that Europe needed to make the transition from a situation in which SMEs had to overcome a large number of administrative obstacles to one in which all formalities would be simplified for these businesses, which made an

essential contribution to growth and employment and played a major role in vocational training.

He explained that, to do this, the Member States were being asked to agree on ten principles which would guide their policies along the same path.

He said that the time had come for a change of culture across the European Union as a whole, to be introduced by means of legislation but also through the behaviour of administrations and the way policies were made. He took the view that, whenever the interests of the SMEs were at stake, their needs should be taken into account as a matter of priority.

He mentioned in particular the importance in this context of the contribution by the European Investment Bank in simplifying and improving products aimed at SMEs, and the development of credit facilities for those same SMEs.

Mr VERHEUGEN reminded the meeting of the expectations of the forthcoming French Presidency of the Council as regards Commission proposals in this field, and stated his intention of making it one of his priorities for the next six months; he hoped that the dossier could be adopted by the European Council at the end of the year.

Finally, he stressed how important it was for all members to play an active role in publicising the Small Business Act, and that examples of good practice in the field of SME policy should be widely circulated.

He concluded by mentioning that the Community's policy on SMEs served as an example to the outside world.

The PRESIDENT thanked Mr VERHEUGEN for his presentation and agreed that the Small Business Act could help improve operating conditions for small and medium-sized companies.

He felt that the proposed package of principles and measures marked a further step towards a Europe that provided more support for "entrepreneurship", a key element

in implementing the renewed Lisbon Strategy for growth and employment. He stressed that it was more than a mere political statement or a simple list of measures.

The PRESIDENT was confident that the document would be adopted by the European Council in December, thus confirming the ten principles and making them politically binding; he too mentioned the strong support for this measure from the forthcoming French Presidency.

He concluded by expressing the hope that the Small Business Act would also send a positive signal to small businesses and help to boost confidence in the European economy.

The Commission then held an exchange of views in which the following aspects in particular were raised:

- expression of thanks to those involved for the work they had put in, the value of the proposed measures, the positive signal they sent to SMEs and their capacity for mobilisation;
- the key role of SMEs in the strategy for growth and employment;
- the benefits for the Commission of demonstrating its commitment to SMEs, in line with its desire to promote a “Europe of results”;
- the importance of continuing to support education in “entrepreneurship” and of encouraging mobility among entrepreneurs and future entrepreneurs in Europe;
- the benefits of encouraging a change in mentality to promote the development of a spirit of enterprise and risk-taking;
- the benefits of working towards the development of “clusters”, particularly in the Central and Eastern European Member States;
- the recognition, in the Small Business Act, of the special status of family firms and in particular the way in which such businesses were transferred.

(25 June 2008)

Following this exchange of views, the Commission adopted, subject to final linguistic revision, the Communication in COM(2008)394/4, for transmission to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the European Investment Bank and to the national parliaments, together with the impact assessment and summary contained in the staff papers distributed as SEC(2008)2101 and SEC(2008)2102 respectively, the contents of which were noted.

It also took note of the opinion of the Impact Assessment Board on the above Communication, as set out in SEC(2008)2103.

- 13. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS - SINGLE EUROPEAN SKY II: TOWARDS MORE SUSTAINABLE AND BETTER PERFORMING AVIATION**  
(COM(2008)389 AND /2; SEC(2008)2082; SEC(2008)2096; SEC(2008)2097)

- 14. PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL AMENDING REGULATIONS (EC) NO 549/2004, (EC) NO 550/2004, (EC) NO 551/2004 AND (EC) NO 552/2004 IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE EUROPEAN AVIATION SYSTEM**  
(COM(2008)388; SEC(2008)2093; SEC(2008)2094; SEC(2008)2095; SEC(2008)2096; SEC(2008)2097)

- 15. PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL AMENDING REGULATION (EC) NO 216/2008 IN THE FIELD OF AERODROMES, AIR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND AIR NAVIGATION SERVICES AND REPEALING COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 2006/23/EEC**  
(COM(2008)390 AND /2; SEC(2008)2086; SEC(2008)2087; SEC(2008)2088; SEC(2008)2097)

Mr TAJANI presented the Communication and legislative proposals on the "Single European Sky II" which he was laying before the Commission. They were designed to increase security, lower costs and reduce delays in intra-European flights by undertaking a thorough reform of the European air-traffic management system. He stressed that this initiative was politically important, but was above all designed to deliver concrete and tangible solutions that would benefit the public, the environment and the aviation industry as a whole.

First he paid tribute to the work done in the past few years by Mr BARROT and by the Directorate-General for Energy and Transport, reminding the meeting that the proposals on the table were a follow-up to an initiative launched by the Commission in 2001 that had culminated in 2004 in a first legislative package on "the Single European Sky". These proposals were also the result of a broad consultation exercise conducted with the civil and military authorities in the Member States and with all players in the aviation world, amid general recognition that the Single European Sky was a well-founded initiative.

Mr TAJANI explained the reasons why a new set of proposals now had to be presented, despite the adoption of the first series of measures in 2004. In particular he pointed out that Europe's skies were still fragmented into 27 national airspaces; the main effect of this was to make journeys and flight times longer than strictly necessary. Also, lower carbon emissions could be achieved by a combination of improvements in air traffic management and in airport operations.

Prompt action was therefore needed in order to remedy this fragmentation of airspace, to take account of the major increase in the volume of traffic and avoid network congestion, and to meet the challenge of climate change in an industry which, although responsible for only about 3% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Europe, was growing extremely quickly.

Mr TAJANI explained that this "Single European Sky II" package rested on four pillars: legislative measures to meet performance requirements, safety issues, technological aspects, and airport capacity. The first pillar – legislative measures relating to performance – consisted of (i) amending the four existing Regulations in order to include a framework for improving performance that involved setting quantified targets for flight efficiency, safety, environment and capacity, (ii) establishing functional airspace blocks, as instruments of regional integration, by the end of 2012 at the latest, and (iii) developing the network management function.

In relation to the second pillar - safety issues - the aim was to extend the powers of the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) to aerodromes, air-traffic management and air navigation services. The technological pillar consisted of

adopting the most effective technologies through the Single European Sky Air Traffic Management Research (SESAR) programme. Finally, the airport capacity pillar set out to improve the capacity, efficiency and safety of airports in Europe by setting up an observatory that would exchange and monitor data and information on all airport capacity.

In conclusion Mr TAJANI noted that this new "Single European Sky" initiative would benefit the public, the environment and the transport sector as a whole. He praised in particular the contribution towards that goal made by Mr Daniel CALLEJA CRESPO, Director responsible for air transport in the Energy and Transport DG.

Following this presentation, the Commission held a brief exchange of views, during which it highlighted the importance and benefits of these proposals and their contribution to resolving the oil price crisis.

The PRESIDENT concluded by thanking Mr TAJANI and the departments under his responsibility for the high standard of the dossier and noting the unanimous support of the Commission for the proposed measures. He welcomed the collective effort that had been made, which had made it possible to take practical action for the benefit of consumers and the competitiveness of European airlines and airports and to take account of environmental and social concerns by encouraging job creation, particularly in air traffic control.

Following this exchange of views, the Commission:

- approved the communication in COM(2008)389/2, for transmission to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, and to national parliaments, together with the staff paper distributed as SEC(2008)2082, the contents of which were noted;
- adopted the proposal for a Regulation in COM(2008)388, for transmission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, and to the national parliaments,

together with the impact assessment and the summary in staff papers SEC(2008)2093 and SEC(2008)2094, the contents of which were noted;

- took note of the opinion of the Impact Assessment Board on the above proposal for a Regulation, as set out in SEC(2008)2095;
- adopted the proposal for a Regulation in COM(2008)390, for transmission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, and to the national parliaments, together with the impact assessment and the summary in staff papers SEC(2008)2086 and SEC(2008)2087, the contents of which were noted;
- took note of the opinion of the Impact Assessment Board on the above proposal for a Regulation, as set out in SEC(2008)2088.

**16. GREEN PAPER ON FUTURE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES (COM(2008)383 TO /3; SEC(2008)2067 AND /2; SEC(2008)2069)**

Mr MICHEL briefly presented the Green Paper he was tabling for the Commission's approval. He began by stressing the importance of the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs), which had special relationships with certain Member States, namely Denmark, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, and the priority attached by the Commission to future relations with them.

Although the context surrounding the partnership between the EU and the OCTs had changed considerably over the years, the framework for cooperation and programmes had altered little. He drew attention in particular to the financing instruments at the Union's disposal for its cooperation with the OCTs, which still formed part of the European Development Fund, making it difficult to formulate an approach that was tailored more closely to the various countries and territories concerned.

Mr MICHEL explained that the main purpose of this initiative was to redefine and intensify cooperation and solidarity between the EU and the OCTs; the proposals focused on developing cooperation that took better account of the specific characteristics of the various OCTs, in particular the geographical isolation of some of them, their sometimes fragile economic situation, and the differences between them and the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries.

On the basis of this Green Paper, a broad public consultation exercise would be launched on the future partnership strategy, the aim of which was to ensure that the OCTs were better prepared to face the challenges of globalisation, and also to develop their economic and political potential and their capacities in the context of regional cooperation.

Having taken note of this presentation, the Commission held a brief exchange of views. Attention was drawn to the importance of the initiative for the future of relations with the OCTs and the need for a public debate on the issue, and also to the connection with other Community policies, in particular regional policy.

Winding up the exchange of views, the PRESIDENT noted the Commission's support for the Green Paper and joined in the expressions of thanks to Mr MICHEL.

The Commission then approved the Green Paper in COM(2008)383/3 for transmission to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions and to the national parliaments, together with the annexes in the staff paper distributed as SEC(2007)2067/2, the contents of which were noted.

## **17. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS**

### ***17.1. LEGISLATIVE MATTERS***

#### **i) Action to be taken on Parliament's opinions**

(SP(2008)3658)

The Commission decided to empower the Commission Members responsible for the sectors concerned, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms WALLSTRÖM and, if necessary, with other Members concerned, to adopt amended proposals for transmission to Parliament and the Council, as set out in SP(2008)3658, prepared after the June II part-session of Parliament, the contents of which were noted.

**ii) Results of the Council meeting (Agriculture and Fisheries)**  
**(Luxembourg, 23 and 24 June)**  
(SI(2008)1156)

- Placing of plant protection products on the market (Regulation) – BREYER report – 2006/0136 (COD)

The Commission confirmed the *ad referendum* agreement given by Ms VASSILIOU to the Presidency compromise at the Council meeting (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 23 and 24 June, following the line set out in SI(2008)1156.

## RELATIONS WITH THE COUNCIL

### **iii) Programming of Council business**

(SI(2008)1148)

The Commission took note of the information in SI(2008)1148 on the Council meetings between 19 June and 21 July.

### **iv) Results of Council meeting (Agriculture and Fisheries) (Luxembourg, 23 and 24 June)**

Mr BORG reported on the outcome of the discussions at the Council meeting (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 24 June.

More specifically he mentioned the agreement that had been secured on the Regulation on illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing and the Regulation on the authorisation of fishing activities outside Community waters and access to Community waters for fishing vessels flying the flag of a third country.

He felt that this Council meeting had marked an important step in harmonising the rules both on sanctions for illegal practices and on access to Community waters, and noted the constructive approach that had been adopted by the Member States.

He also mentioned the political agreement reached in the Council on the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems in the high seas, explaining that destructive fishing practices such as bottom-trawling would henceforth be prohibited, with exceptions being granted only in cases where it was scientifically proven that they posed no danger to ecosystems.

Mr BORG thanked the Commission Members for their support in preparing for this productive Council meeting. He regretted that the Commission had been unable to obtain a Council decision on another dossier that was very important for both the European fishing industry and a particular non-member

country, namely the protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement with Mauritania.

Mr BORG then explained that he had presented to the Council, on the basis of the information note discussed at the previous Commission meeting, the main points of a package of measures to be proposed by the Commission to tackle fuel price rises in the fisheries sector. He welcomed the support in principle that had been obtained in the Council on the need for emergency aid measures (modernisation schemes to reduce diesel consumption, scrapping of vessels, research into energy efficiency, market measures, aid for temporary cessation of activities, etc.) but also for reforms in the fisheries sector, despite some differences of view between the Member States, particularly regarding the threshold for *de minimis* state aid.

The Commission took note of this information and held a brief discussion which brought out the following points:

- the importance of pursuing the cooperation already in progress within the Commission to prepare a set of proposals aimed at tackling the fuel crisis in the fisheries sector;
- the need to maintain consistency between, on the one hand, emergency measures in the fisheries sector and, on the other, the EU's obligations in relation to the World Trade Organisation and the negotiations in progress; in particular, the importance of not providing Community aid for the construction of new vessels;
- the case for maintaining the Commission's approach concerning application of the *de minimis* rule.

## **17.2. RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT**

### **v) Results of June II part-session**

(SP(2008)3765; SP(2008)3799; SP(2008)3843)

The Commission took note of the information supplied in SP(2008)3765, SP(2008)3799 and SP(2008)3843 relating to Parliament's part-session held in Strasbourg from 16 to 19 June.

## **18. TRENDS IN THE MEMBER STATES**

Ms WALLSTRÖM reported on the results of the latest Eurobarometer survey, published the previous day, and the results of the post-referendum survey conducted in Ireland between 13 and 15 June.

As regards the Eurobarometer survey, Ms WALLSTRÖM noted the general deterioration in the morale of Europeans across nearly all the Member States, a widespread pessimism about the prospect of improvements in the economy and a drop in public confidence regarding jobs. Nevertheless, 50% of Europeans still trusted the European Union, a slight increase on autumn 2007, whereas trust in national parliaments and governments (34% and 32% respectively) had fallen slightly; moreover, 63% of respondents were optimistic about the future of the Union, which also enjoyed a favourable image when viewed against the backdrop of globalisation.

Highlighting the deep-seated concerns voiced by the European public, Ms WALLSTRÖM said the Commission must do its utmost between now and the end of its term of office to pursue policies and activities that helped to protect citizens and to prevent and resolve the problems facing them.

On the question of the vote in Ireland, Ms WALLSTRÖM acknowledged the considerable communication difficulties with regard to the Treaty of Lisbon and European integration in general. In this context she pointed out that the "yes" voters had generally been motivated by support for the Union rather than for the Treaty in particular, while some of the issues seized on by the "no" supporters, many of whom should also be counted as pro-Europeans, had nothing to do with the actual content of the Treaty.

She concluded that, to convince people, it was necessary to define a clear message while at the same time rebutting any false information immediately and firmly. Moreover, since the "no" supporters had also based their campaign on satisfaction at the way the Union currently operated, it would have been worthwhile explaining more clearly the "cost" of rejecting the Treaty. She also noted that the "yes" campaign had not been sufficiently targeted at certain sections of the Irish population who were particularly vulnerable to globalisation (young people under 25, women, people with relatively low educational or training qualifications).

Looking ahead to the European elections in June 2009, Ms WALLSTRÖM felt there was a need to formulate strong messages and to establish platforms for debate that were accessible to all candidates. It was important to embark with Parliament on a campaign to mobilise support in order to ensure a high turnout.

She also mentioned the importance of mobilising governments and political parties in support of the elections and of encouraging closer interinstitutional cooperation.

The Commission took note of this information.

**19. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS (CONTINUED FROM ITEM 17)*****RELATIONS WITH THE COUNCIL*****Results of the meeting of the European Council (Brussels, 19 and 20 June 2008)**

The PRESIDENT informed the Commission regarding the results of the European Council meeting in Brussels on 19 and 20 June. In an atmosphere that the President found to be serene overall, the European Council had reaffirmed its determination to make tangible progress in the various areas of concern to EU citizens. With regard to the Lisbon Treaty and the Irish referendum, the European Council members had noted the results and agreed that more time was needed to evaluate the situation. Efforts would be made to find proposals for a common way forward before the next European Parliament elections. He also noted the determination to continue the ratification process that had been expressed.

He gave an account of the discussions on the rise in food and oil prices and stated that the European Council had welcomed the two presentations submitted by the Commission on these issues. He was convinced that the situation required short-term measures to reduce the impact of recent price increases, in particular on low-income households. These measures would have to be accompanied by long-term structural measures at national and European levels as well as worldwide. The European Council had welcomed the Commission's initiative to examine possible measures regarding food prices, in particular prices of agricultural products and food for developing countries.

The President then discussed the trends uncovered in the last Eurobarometer survey (see item 18 of these minutes). Citizens continued to have confidence in the European institutions and the European project as a whole, indeed more confidence than they had in their national institutions. As a result, he was convinced of the need to continue working to achieve a Europe of results and to ensure that those results were widely disseminated and clearly explained. He reminded those present that the

Commission's remit was to work for the European general interest and, referring to certain criticisms, emphasised that it was unacceptable to call into question the Commission's right of initiative or to hold it responsible for the contradictory messages sent by certain authorities and political parties in the Member States. On the contrary, it was the Member States' responsibility to support the European project.

The discussion that followed focused on the following points:

***Consequences of the Irish referendum and lessons to be drawn from the campaign and the result***

- the usefulness (particularly in the run-up to the European elections) of the Commission preparing a dossier explaining, in terms accessible to all, the added value of action at the European level and the possible repercussions of "the absence of Europe";
- in a broader context, the need to continuously provide practical solutions and clear explanations in response to questions arising in the wake of certain decisions of the various European institutions, so that citizens would not begin to doubt the benefits and achievements of the European Union;
- in this context, the possibilities for communication offered by the planned adoption, the following week, of the package of social policy measures;
- the observation that citizens, even those who voted "no" in the Irish referendum, remained confident in the European project as a whole;
- the relevance of the Council Presidency's conclusions regarding the continuation of the Lisbon Treaty ratification process and the need, regarding Ireland, to allow a period of reflection so that the results could be analysed in full;
- the harmful impact of the systematic denigration of the Commission in certain quarters on the result of the referendum and the next steps in the ratification process; and the desire to increase awareness of the shared interest of the

European institutions and the Member States in continued constructive cooperation;

- in this context, the importance of showing total solidarity within the Commission over the coming months, in particular in the context of interinstitutional relations;
- the concern caused by the activism of the "no" movement vis-à-vis the Treaty and attempts to expand its influence beyond Ireland's borders; the repercussions observed on the ratification process in certain countries;
- regarding Ireland, the need to take the time to find a viable solution and the refusal to accept a multi-speed Europe or to marginalise Ireland;

***Broader context and specific political actions to be undertaken***

- the precautions to be taken when addressing the issue of purchasing power, the importance of not creating unrealistic expectations and, most important, of tailoring support measures to the categories of population that truly needed them;
- in an increasingly difficult economic context, the concern caused by protectionist tendencies in certain Member States to the detriment of internal reforms promoting an adaptation to globalisation;
- the need to reaffirm the Commission's right of initiative and its role as guardian of the Community rules and to hold this line firmly in the face of all criticism;
- the need to engage in communication activities but also to continue the day-to-day work, in order to help build confidence in the EU's political future;
- the concern regarding the link sometimes made between the Lisbon Treaty ratification process and EU enlargement, and the need to reassure candidate countries regarding their prospects for accession.

(25 June 2008)

The difficult economic context required that special attention be paid to the problems facing citizens, and the PRESIDENT emphasised the need to show solidarity at European level. He was convinced of the importance of social measures, both in regard to emergency aid in response to the food and oil-price crisis and as part of the preparations of the package of social policy measures on the agenda of next week's meeting. He repeated his conviction that it was necessary to combine the objectives of achieving an open market and a social Europe.

The Commission should continue to work at the same pace and, in this regard, he cited the exemplary nature of the measures for small and medium-sized enterprises that would be approved today (see item 12 of these minutes).

In concluding, he repeated the importance of preparing a dossier for citizens containing clear, well-documented information on the Commission's achievements and on the cost of immobility or "the absence of Europe". He asked the Directorate-General for Communication and the Secretariat-General, in close cooperation with all the Directorates-General, to draw up a document on these issues and invited all the Commission Members to contribute to this effort and to highlight, at every opportunity, the added value of collective action at EU level.

The Commission took note of this information and these conclusions.

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The Commission's other discussions on certain agenda items are recorded in the special minutes.

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The meeting closed at 12.36 hours.