



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2009)1879 final

Brussels, 2 July 2009

MINUTES
of the 1879th meeting of the Commission
held in Brussels
(Berlaymont)
on Wednesday 24 June 2009
(morning)

PV(2009)1879 final

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Single sitting: Wednesday 24 June 2009 (morning)

The sitting opened at 9.08 in the Jean Monnet room with Mr BARROSO, President, in the chair. Item 25 was chaired by Mr VERHEUGEN.

Present:

Mr BARROSO	President	Items 1 to 24
Mr VERHEUGEN	Vice-President	
Mr BARROT	Vice-President	
Mr KALLAS	Vice-President	
Mr TAJANI	Vice-President	
Ms REDING		
Mr DIMAS		
Mr ALMUNIA		Items 1 to 23 (in part)
Ms HÜBNER		
Mr BORG		
Mr POTOČNIK		
Mr FIGEL'		
Mr REHN		
Mr KOVÁCS		
Ms KROES		
Ms FISCHER BOEL		
Ms FERRERO-WALDNER		Items 1 to 24 (in part)
Mr ŠPIDLA		
Mr ORBAN		
Ms VASSILIOU		
Baroness ASHTON		

Absent:

Ms WALLSTRÖM

Vice-President

Ms GRYBAUSKAITĖ

Mr MICHEL

Mr McCREEVY

Mr PIEBALGS

Ms KUNEVA

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

Mr LEFFLER	Chef de cabinet to Ms WALLSTRÖM
Mr STUCKENS	A member of Mr MICHEL's staff
Mr POWER	Chef de cabinet to Mr McCREEVY
Mr KESTERIS	Chef de cabinet to Mr PIEBALGS

The following also sat in:

Mr VALE DE ALMEIDA	Chef de cabinet to the PRESIDENT	Items 1 to 24
Mr ROMERO REQUENA	Director-General, Legal Service	
Mr SØRENSEN	Director-General, DG Communication	Items 23 (in part) to 25
Mr CARVOUNIS	Deputy Director-General, DG Communication	Items 1 to 23 (in part)
Mr LAITENBERGER	Commission Spokesman	Items 22 to 24
Mr GASPAR	Acting Director-General, Bureau of European Policy Advisers	Items 1 to 23 (in part)
Mr THEBAULT	Deputy Chef de cabinet to the PRESIDENT	Item 23 (in part)
Ms MARTINHO	Chief adviser in the PRESIDENT's Office	Item 23 (in part)
Mr QUERO MUSSOT	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr ALMUNIA	Items 23 (in part) to 25
Mr GAMBS	A member of Ms FERRERO-WALDNER's staff	Items 24 (in part) and 25

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

The PRESIDENT paid tribute to Mr Karel VAN MIERT, former Vice-President and Member of the European Commission from 1989 to 1999, who died on 23 June 2009.

He said Mr VAN MIERT would be remembered as a brilliant and respected politician of integrity and courage whose work had left its mark on European and Belgian public life. He was both socially committed and a convinced European from an early age, but it was above all as a Member of the Commission that he put these beliefs into practice. From 1989 to 1993 he was an excellent Commissioner for transport and consumer policy. Between 1993 and 1999 he held the competition portfolio, combining it for the first two years with responsibility for personnel and administration. He unquestionably left an indelible imprint on European competition policy through his rigorous but fair efforts to protect the weak from possible abuses by the strong.

Mr VAN MIERT retained his strong European and social convictions throughout his academic, political and professional life. In recent years, when the present Commission consulted him or entrusted him with special tasks, he never failed to respond. His views were always well-grounded and constructive.

It was too early for Europe to be losing one of its chief architects, but the achievements and example of this great and warm-hearted man would continue to inspire the work of the Commission.

Mr TAJANI, Mr BARROT and Ms KROES recalled Mr VAN MIERT's exceptional personality and his fundamental contribution to the development and consolidation of European policies on transport and competition.

On behalf of the European Commission and in his own name, the PRESIDENT offered his sincere condolences to the family and friends of Mr Karel VAN MIERT.

* * *

1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2009)1879/3; SEC(2009)818/3)

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(2009)1879)

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

3. MINUTES OF 1878th MEETING (17 JUNE)

(PV(2009)1878)

The Commission approved the minutes of its 1878th meeting.

4. MONITORING THE APPLICATION OF COMMUNITY LAW

STATE AID – HORIZONTAL DOSSIER

Communication from the Commission - Criteria for an in-depth assessment of regional aid to large investment projects

(SEC(2009)788/2)

The Commission:

- adopted in principle the notice set out in SEC(2009)788/2;
- under Article 13 of its Rules of Procedure, empowered Ms KROES, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, to formally adopt the notice in all the official

languages of the Union and to publish it in the Official Journal of the European Union.

5. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

5.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED

(SEC(2009)820 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 15 and 19 June.

5.2. EMPOWERMENT

(SEC(2009)821 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 15 and 19 June.

5.3. EMPOWERMENT CONCERNING THE FACILITY PROVIDING MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR MEMBER STATES' BALANCES OF PAYMENTS

The Commission authorised Mr ALMUNIA to conclude and sign with the competent authorities in Latvia the memorandum of understanding on medium-term financial assistance for its balance of payments (see PV(2009)1878, item 10.1.ii, pages 16 to 20).

5.4. DELEGATION AND SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS

(SEC(2009)822 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedure between 15 and 19 June, as archived in e-Greffe.

5.5. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES

(SEC(2009)823 AND /2)

The Commission took note of the sensitive written procedures for which the time limit expired between 22 and 26 June and of the "finalisation" written procedures initiated following the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet on 22 June.

6. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL – STRENGTHENING CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL, RADIOLOGICAL AND NUCLEAR SECURITY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION – AN EU CBRN ACTION PLAN

(COM(2009)273 TO /4; SEC(2009)790; SEC(2009)791; SEC(2009)874; SEC(2009)792; SEC(2009)794)

The Commission approved the communication set out in COM(2009)273/4, for transmission to Parliament and the Council, and to national parliaments, together with the impact study, the summary thereof and the compilation of good practice in staff papers distributed as SEC(2009)790, SEC(2009)791 and SEC(2009)874, 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(2009)792.

7. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AGENCY FOR THE OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT OF LARGE-SCALE IT SYSTEMS IN THE AREA OF FREEDOM, SECURITY AND JUSTICE

(COM(2009)292 AND /2; SEC(2009)830; SEC(2009)839)

- 8. PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL ESTABLISHING AN AGENCY FOR THE OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT OF LARGE-SCALE IT SYSTEMS IN THE AREA OF FREEDOM, SECURITY AND JUSTICE**
(COM(2009)293 TO /3; SEC(2009)837; SEC(2009)836; SEC(2009)835; SEC(2009)830; SEC(2009)839)
- 9. PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL DECISION CONFERRING UPON THE AGENCY ESTABLISHED BY REGULATION [...] TASKS REGARDING THE OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT OF THE SECOND-GENERATION SCHENGEN INFORMATION SYSTEM (SIS II) AND THE VISA INFORMATION SYSTEM (VIS) IN APPLICATION OF TITLE VI OF THE EU TREATY**
(COM(2009)294 AND /2; SEC(2009)837; SEC(2009)836; SEC(2009)835; SEC(2009)830; SEC(2009)839)

The Commission:

- approved the communication set out in COM(2009)292/2;
- adopted the proposal for a Regulation set out in COM(2009)293/3;
- adopted the proposal for a Council Decision set out in COM(2009)294/2;
- decided to transmit the communication and the two legislative proposals to Parliament and the Council, and to national parliaments, together with the impact study and the summary thereof in staff papers distributed as SEC(2009)837 and SEC(2009)836, the contents of which were noted;
- also took note of the opinion of the Impact Assessment Board on the above proposals for a Council Regulation and a Council Decision, as set out in SEC(2009)835.

10. COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION FOR A COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION UNDER ARTICLE 104(7) OF THE EC TREATY, WITH A VIEW TO BRINGING AN END TO THE SITUATION OF AN EXCESSIVE GOVERNMENT DEFICIT IN HUNGARY (SEC(2009)856 TO /3; SEC(2009)857; SEC(2009)871)

The Commission adopted the recommendation in SEC(2009)856/3, for transmission to the Council.

11. COMMISSION OPINION UNDER ARTICLE 104(5) OF THE EC TREATY ON THE EXISTENCE OF AN EXCESSIVE DEFICIT IN LITHUANIA (SEC(2009)853; SEC(2009)857; SEC(2009)871)

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION FOR A COUNCIL DECISION UNDER ARTICLE 104(6) OF THE EC TREATY ON THE EXISTENCE OF AN EXCESSIVE DEFICIT IN LITHUANIA (SEC(2009)860 AND /2; SEC(2009)857; SEC(2009)871)

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION FOR A COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION UNDER ARTICLE 104(7) OF THE EC TREATY, WITH A VIEW TO BRINGING AN END TO THE SITUATION OF AN EXCESSIVE GOVERNMENT DEFICIT IN LITHUANIA (SEC(2009)854 AND /2; SEC(2009)857; SEC(2009)871)

The Commission adopted:

- the opinion in SEC(2009)853, for transmission to the Council;
- the recommendation in SEC(2009)860/2, for transmission to the Council;
- the recommendation in SEC(2009)854/2, for transmission to the Council.

**12. COMMISSION OPINION UNDER ARTICLE 104(5) OF THE EC TREATY
ON THE EXISTENCE OF AN EXCESSIVE DEFICIT IN MALTA
(SEC(2009)848; SEC(2009)857; SEC(2009)871)**

**COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION FOR A COUNCIL DECISION
UNDER ARTICLE 104(6) OF THE EC TREATY ON THE EXISTENCE OF
AN EXCESSIVE DEFICIT IN MALTA
(SEC(2009)849; SEC(2009)857; SEC(2009)871)**

**COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION FOR A COUNCIL
RECOMMENDATION UNDER ARTICLE 104(7) OF THE EC TREATY,
WITH A VIEW TO BRINGING AN END TO THE SITUATION OF AN
EXCESSIVE GOVERNMENT DEFICIT IN MALTA
(SEC(2009)850 AND /2; SEC(2009)857; SEC(2009)871)**

The Commission adopted:

- the opinion in SEC(2009)848, for transmission to the Council;
- the recommendation in SEC(2009)849, for transmission to the Council;
- the recommendation in SEC(2009)850/2, for transmission to the Council.

**13. COMMISSION OPINION UNDER ARTICLE 104(5) OF THE EC TREATY
ON THE EXISTENCE OF AN EXCESSIVE DEFICIT IN POLAND
(SEC(2009)864 AND /2; SEC(2009)857; SEC(2009)871)**

**COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION FOR A COUNCIL DECISION
UNDER ARTICLE 104(6) OF THE EC TREATY ON THE EXISTENCE OF
AN EXCESSIVE DEFICIT IN POLAND
(SEC(2009)851 TO /3; SEC(2009)857; SEC(2009)871)**

**COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION FOR A COUNCIL
RECOMMENDATION UNDER ARTICLE 104(7) OF THE EC TREATY,
WITH A VIEW TO BRINGING AN END TO THE SITUATION OF AN
EXCESSIVE GOVERNMENT DEFICIT IN POLAND
(SEC(2009)852 TO /3; SEC(2009)857; SEC(2009)871)**

The Commission adopted:

- the opinion in SEC(2009)864/2, for transmission to the Council;
- the recommendation in SEC(2009)851/3, for transmission to the Council;
- the recommendation in SEC(2009)852/3, for transmission to the Council.

**14. COMMISSION OPINION UNDER ARTICLE 104(5) OF THE EC TREATY
ON THE EXISTENCE OF AN EXCESSIVE DEFICIT IN ROMANIA
(SEC(2009)861; SEC(2009)857; SEC(2009)871)**

**COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION FOR A COUNCIL DECISION
UNDER ARTICLE 104(6) OF THE EC TREATY ON THE EXISTENCE OF
AN EXCESSIVE DEFICIT IN ROMANIA
(SEC(2009)862; SEC(2009)857; SEC(2009)871)**

**COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION FOR A COUNCIL
RECOMMENDATION UNDER ARTICLE 104(7) OF THE EC TREATY,
WITH A VIEW TO BRINGING AN END TO THE SITUATION OF AN
EXCESSIVE GOVERNMENT DEFICIT IN ROMANIA
(SEC(2009)863 AND /2; SEC(2009)857; SEC(2009)871)**

The Commission adopted:

- the opinion in SEC(2009)861, for transmission to the Council;
- the recommendation in SEC(2009)862, for transmission to the Council;

- the recommendation in SEC(2009)863/2, for transmission to the Council.

15. COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION FOR A COUNCIL OPINION UNDER ARTICLE 5(3) OF COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) 1466/97 ON THE UPDATED STABILITY PROGRAMME OF AUSTRIA (2008-2013) (SEC(2009)869 AND /2; SEC(2009)870; SEC(2009)871)

The Commission adopted the recommendation for a Council opinion on the updated stability programme of Austria, as set out in SEC(2009)869/2, for transmission to the Council.

16. COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION FOR A COUNCIL OPINION UNDER ARTICLE 5(3) OF COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) 1466/97 ON THE UPDATED STABILITY PROGRAMME OF BELGIUM (2008-2013) (SEC(2009)865 AND /2; SEC(2009)870; SEC(2009)871)

The Commission adopted the recommendation for a Council opinion on the updated stability programme of Belgium, as set out in SEC(2009)865/2, for transmission to the Council.

17. COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION FOR A COUNCIL OPINION UNDER ARTICLE 9(3) OF COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) 1466/97 ON THE UPDATED CONVERGENCE PROGRAMME OF ROMANIA (2008-2011) (SEC(2009)868 AND /2; SEC(2009)870; SEC(2009)871)

The Commission adopted the recommendation for a Council opinion on the updated

convergence programme of Romania, as set out in SEC(2009)868/2, for transmission to the Council.

**18. COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION FOR A COUNCIL OPINION UNDER ARTICLE 5(2) OF COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) 1466/97 ON THE STABILITY PROGRAMME OF SLOVAKIA (2008-2011)
(SEC(2009)867 AND /2; SEC(2009)870; SEC(2009)871)**

The Commission adopted the recommendation for a Council opinion on the stability programme of Slovakia, as set out in SEC(2009)867/2, for transmission to the Council.

**19. COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION FOR A COUNCIL OPINION UNDER ARTICLE 5(3) OF COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) 1466/97 ON THE UPDATED STABILITY PROGRAMME OF SLOVENIA (2008-2011)
(SEC(2009)866 AND /2; SEC(2009)870; SEC(2009)871)**

The Commission adopted the recommendation for a Council opinion on the updated stability programme of Slovenia, as set out in SEC(2009)866/2, for transmission to the Council.

20. RELATIONS WITH NON-MEMBER COUNTRIES

***VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES (WASHINGTON, 14-18 JUNE)*
*(SEC(2009)898)***

The Commission took note of the information from Ms VASSILIOU in SEC(2009)898.

21. OTHER BUSINESS

21.1. BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION AT 31 MAY 2009

(SEC(2009)858 AND /2; SEC(2009)859)

The Commission took note of the information note from Ms GRYBAUSKAITĖ in SEC(2009)858/2.

21.2. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE HARMONISATION OF CHARGES FOR MOBILE PHONES

(SEC(2009)891)

The Commission took note of the information note from Mr VERHEUGEN in SEC(2009)891.

22. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

(SEC(2009)819/2)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

(PERS(2009)80/2)

22.1. DG INFORMATION SOCIETY AND MEDIA – APPOINTMENT OF AD15 DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL

On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms REDING, the Commission decided, under Article 7 of the Staff Regulations, to fill the post of Deputy Director-General in DG Information Society and Media by transferring in the interest of the service Mr Zoran STANČIČ, an AD15 official, currently Deputy Director-General in DG Research.

This decision would take effect on 1 September 2009.

**22.2. DG RESEARCH – INTERNAL PUBLICATION OF A VACANCY
NOTICE FOR AN AD 15/16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL
(PERS(2009)81)**

On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr POTOČNIK, the Commission decided to authorise the publication, under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations, of the vacancy notice in PERS(2009)81 for the post of Deputy Director-General in DG Research.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**22.3. DG ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS – APPOINTMENT OF
AD14/15 DIRECTOR
(PERS(2008)67 TO /7)**

The Commission had before it applications under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) and 29(2) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Director (Financial Operations, Programme Management and Liaison with the IFIs) in DG Economic and Financial Affairs (PERS(2008)67, /2, /3, /4 and /6).

The Commission took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 26 November 2008 and 7 May 2009 (PERS(2008)67/5 and /7).

It proceeded to compare the applicants' qualifications for the post. On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr ALMUNIA, it then decided to appoint Mr Gerassimos THOMAS to the vacant post.

This decision would take effect on 16 July 2009.

**22.4. SECRETARIAT-GENERAL – APPOINTMENT OF AD14/15 DIRECTOR
(PERS(2009)65 TO /3)**

The Commission had before it applications under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Director (Relations with the Council) in the Secretariat-General (PERS(2009)65).

It took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 19 May and 11 June 2009 (PERS(2009)65/2 and /3).

The Commission proceeded to consider the applicant's qualifications for the post. It also considered his ability, efficiency and conduct in the service. On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, it then decided to appoint Mr Joost KORTE to the post.

This decision would take effect on 1 July 2009.

**22.5. DG TRANSLATION – TERMINATION OF INTERNAL SELECTION
PROCEDURE FOR AN AD14/15 DIRECTOR AND APPOINTMENT OF
AD14/15 DIRECTOR**

The Commission took note of the information in point 5 of PERS(2009)80/2 and, on a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr ORBAN, decided:

- to terminate internal selection procedure COM/2008/2458 for the post of Director (Resources) in DG Translation. This decision would take effect immediately.
- to fill this post, under Article 7 of the Staff Regulations, by transferring in the interest of the service Mr Piet VERLEYSEN, an AD15 official and currently Principal Adviser in DG Personnel and Administration. This decision would take effect on 1 July 2009.

22.6. DG INFORMATION SOCIETY AND MEDIA – EXCEPTION TO THE COMPULSORY MOBILITY RULES FOR AN AD16 OFFICIAL

On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms REDING, the Commission decided to make an exception to the rules on compulsory mobility until 1 March 2010 in respect of Mr Fabio COLASANTI, an AD16 official and Director-General of DG Information Society and Media since 1 July 2002.

This decision would take effect immediately.

22.7. DG EXTERNAL RELATIONS – CHANGE TO THE ORGANISATION CHART AND APPOINTMENT OF AN AD 15 HEAD OF DELEGATION

On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms FERRERO-WALDNER, the Commission decided:

- to raise temporarily to director level (AD14/15) the grade of the post of Head of the Commission Delegation to the Council of Europe;
- to fill this post, under Article 7 of the Staff Regulations, by transferring in the interest of the service Ms Luisella PAVAN-WOOLFE, AD15 official and currently Principal Adviser in DG External Relations and Commission representative to the Council of Europe;
- to return the post to a grade equivalent to head of unit on the departure of the jobholder.

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

22.8. DG EXTERNAL RELATIONS – CHANGES IN THE DATES WHEN TRANSFER DECISIONS TAKE EFFECT

On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms FERRERO-WALDNER, the Commission decided:

(24 June 2009)

- to transfer Mr Bruno DETHOMAS, currently Head of the Commission Delegation in Morocco, to a new post of Principal Adviser in DG External Relations, with effect from 1 September 2009 rather than 1 August 2009;
- to transfer Mr Eneko LANDÁBURU, currently Director-General, DG External Relations, to the post of Head of the Commission Delegation in Morocco, subject to the agreement of the host country, with effect from 16 September 2009 rather than 1 August 2009;
- to transfer Mr Fernando VALENZUELA MARZO, currently Head of the Commission Delegation to international organisations in New York, to the post of Head of Delegation in Russia, subject to the agreement of the host country, with effect from 12 October 2009 rather than 1 August 2009;
- to transfer Mr Janos HERMAN, currently Principal Adviser in DG External Relations, to the post of Head of the Commission Delegation in Norway, subject to the agreement of the host country, with effect from 1 September 2009 rather than 1 August 2009.

These decisions would take effect immediately.

23. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

RELATIONS WITH THE COUNCIL

i) Results of the European Council (Brussels, 18 and 19 June 2009)

(SI(2009)301)

The PRESIDENT presented the results of the European Council which met in Brussels on 18 and 19 June, pointing out that it had once again been dominated by the economic and financial crisis, and that once again the Commission had been in the forefront when it came to finding a solution to the crisis. Just six months ago, it would have been difficult to imagine the European Union reaching agreement on an

ambitious approach to the supervision of financial markets, even though this measure was essential to respond to the crisis. It had been the Commission which had suggested entrusting a mandate to the High Level Group chaired by Mr Jacques de Larosière and, based on the recommendations in this Group's report and taking account of the views of stakeholders and governments, it had gradually managed to build consensus in this particularly sensitive area. The European Council's strong support for the approach put forward by the Commission would enable it to present new legislative proposals in the autumn.

The PRESIDENT then turned to the question of employment, mentioning the support expressed by several members of the European Council that a strong message should be conveyed in this respect. With the upsurge in unemployment, the Commission's insistence in recent months on underlining this aspect had once again been justified. He recommended continuing in the same direction, for instance by presenting a proposal shortly that would permit full Community financing of projects under the European Social Fund as a temporary measure to alleviate the crisis. The Commission was committed to a social Europe based on solidarity, although some Member States were reluctant to see the EU play a broader role in this area. Caution should be exercised, however, as regards proposals with a budgetary impact given the pressure on Member States' public finances in this time of crisis.

The PRESIDENT then broached the institutional issues on the agenda of the European Council, notably the agreement of Heads of State and Government concerning the guarantees designed to address concerns raised by the Irish people, which would pave the way for the organisation of another Irish referendum on the Lisbon Treaty, with a view to ratification. The Heads of State and Government had also agreed to include these guarantees in a protocol when signing the next accession Treaty, making it clear, however, that this protocol would clarify but not modify the content or application of the Lisbon Treaty, and would not make it necessary to reopen the ratification process. He asked the Commission to discuss at a future meeting the approach to be adopted regarding the referendum campaign in Ireland.

Lastly, he announced that the Heads of State and Government had unanimously agreed that he was the person they intended to nominate as President of the next Commission for the period 2009-2014. He said that he was touched and honoured by this unanimous support which should be seen as recognition of the Commission's collective work during its five years in office. At the dinner of Heads of State and Government, he had emphasised the Commission's work and efforts. He was convinced that in an enlarged Union and an increasingly complex society facing huge challenges, the Commission would remain the fundamental guardian of the principles of fairness and the European interest, and would also act as a vector of progress for a Europe based on partnership. During the forthcoming phases of the process for appointing the Commission president, he would have no hesitation in proudly presenting the Commission's track record and the huge potential that could be marshalled in the coming years.

In the ensuing discussion, the speakers welcomed the unanimous support expressed by the Heads of State and Government and their recognition of the work accomplished by the Commission over the past five years. The Commission noted that the acting President and future President of the European Council would hold talks with Parliament to determine whether the latter would approve the Commission president's appointment during its plenary session in July. The Commission took note of the fact that the agenda for this session should be agreed at the meeting of the Conference of Presidents scheduled for 9 July. It also took stock of the formation of political groups currently in progress in Parliament, the various options which were emerging and their political and institutional implications.

With regard to the conclusions of the European Council concerning economic, financial and social issues, the Commission raised the following aspects:

- the European Council's positive reaction to the approach proposed by the Commission regarding financial supervision;
- the importance of financial market stabilisation measures to boost the economy and safeguard and create jobs;

- the case for proposing temporary European Social Fund support for projects, without any cofinancing requirement;
- in relation to State aid, the need to continue showing flexibility while at the same time ensuring that the rules were respected, given the challenges raised by the economic crisis; and the importance of maintaining strict conditions in relation to restructuring measures in the banking sector.

The PRESIDENT concluded the discussion by thanking the Commission members for their good wishes and confirmed the Commission's commitment to fully implement the European Council's conclusions, in particular in the economic, social and financial domains.

The Commission took note of this information.

ii) Programming of Council business

(SI(2009)166)

The Commission took note of the information in SI(2009)166 on the Council meetings between 25 June and 8 July 2009.

iii) Results of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council (Luxembourg, 22 and 23 June 2009)

(SI(2009)162)

- Protection of animals at the time of killing (Council Regulation) – WOJCIECHOWSKI Report – 2008/0180 (CNS)

The Commission confirmed the ad referendum agreement given by Ms VASSILIOU to the Presidency compromise at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council meeting on 22 and 23 June, following the line set out in SI(2009)162.

- iv) **Questionnaire concerning the feasibility of developing a protocol to the Hague Convention of 23 November 2007 on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance to deal with the international recovery of maintenance in respect of vulnerable persons**
(SI(2009)164)

The Commission approved the approach set out in SI(2009)164.

24. 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 – PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND AFRICA – CONNECTING AFRICA AND EUROPE – WORKING TOWARDS STRENGTHENING TRANSPORT COOPERATION
(COM(2009)301 TO /3; SEC(2009)840)

Mr TAJANI introduced the communication he was tabling for approval, putting it in the broader context of cooperation between the European Union and Africa. He thanked Ms FERRERO-WALDNER and Mr MICHEL and their departments for their excellent cooperation in this matter.

He was convinced that the transport sector was a key factor in Africa for combating poverty, developing exchanges and improving standards of living. The sector could also make a significant contribution to reinforcing political stability in Africa and addressing the problem of immigration.

He considered that in the current context of global economic crisis, damage to the environment and climate change, there was concern that the poorest and most vulnerable countries would be affected more quickly and more severely and that all these factors would have a significant impact on migration, intensifying the pressure on the economies of the developed countries.

He went on to give an overview of the situation of the transport sector in Africa, pointing out that the level of road density was the lowest in the world; the level of interconnection in the rail network was very low and 15 countries did not have a rail network at all; only three airports could be classed among the world's first 150 in terms of passenger numbers; and around 80% of vessels in the African fleet were over 15 years old.

With regard to these problems of insufficient and obsolete infrastructure, he reminded the meeting that the Union already had a transport partnership with Africa and that this partnership should be maintained and developed, for example by promoting the idea of interconnecting trans-European and African networks in order to bring the two continents closer to each other.

He welcomed the support already expressed by the representatives of the African Union, in particular Ms Elham Mahmoud Ahmed Ibrahim, the member of the African Union Commission in charge of infrastructure and energy, and Mr Abdoulaye Wade, the President of Senegal, who was to take part that day in a joint press conference. He noted that the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) could be a starting point for this kind of cooperation.

Mr TAJANI then picked out from among the objectives of the communication, and in addition to investment in infrastructure, the wish to step up cooperation in strategic areas such as maritime or air transport, without forgetting security issues, for example in relation to the fight against piracy.

He added that it was essential that Africa should benefit from the development of the satellite navigation system, in particular through the EGNOS programme or the SESAR air traffic management system.

Furthermore, he suggested opening up the CIVITAS Forum Conference to African cities. This would provide a platform for exchanging ideas and best practices between cities in the field of urban transport.

Mr TAJANI concluded by expressing his hope that this communication would help to reinforce the European Union's presence in Africa and to gradually improve the

state of its infrastructure, thereby bringing economic and social benefits, including in the field of migration.

Following this presentation, the Commission noted the importance of a transport initiative for reinforcing cooperation with Africa, since mobility was a key factor in developing African states and bringing them closer together, as well as in bringing Africa close to Europe.

The PRESIDENT closed the discussion by expressing his support for this important initiative.

The Commission approved the communication in COM(2009)301/3 for transmission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the European Investment Bank, and to the national parliaments.

25. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS ON ACTION AGAINST CANCER: EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP (COM(2009)291 TO /4; SEC(2009)833)

Ms VASSILIOU introduced the communication on a European partnership for action against cancer for the period 2009-2013, which she tabled for approval by the Commission.

She noted that although substantial progress had been made in Europe since the first programme, "Europe Against Cancer", was implemented in 1987, in particular in the fields of prevention and treatment, the fight against cancer continued to pose a major challenge to the European Union. She pointed out that some 3.2 million cases of cancer were diagnosed in Europe every year, a figure that could increase further with longer life expectancy.

She highlighted marked differences within the Union; the mortality rate from cancer was twice as high in the Member State with the worst results in the fight against cancer than in the Member State with the best results. She also noted the significant difference between average mortality rates from cancer in the Member States that had joined the European Union in 2004 and 2007 and those in the other Member States.

Accordingly, she stressed the need to strengthen cooperation at European level in order to provide a better response to the challenges and to reduce inequalities between Member States in the fight against cancer. She referred to the European Parliament resolution of 10 April 2008 on combating cancer in the enlarged European Union, the Council conclusions of 10 June 2008, and legislative initiatives in the field of protection against occupational and environmental exposure to carcinogenic and mutagenic substances.

Ms VASSILIOU explained that the main objective of the partnership proposed for the period 2009-2013 was to promote and support the efforts by the Member States and stakeholders in their fight against cancer. She pointed out that the partnership provided a framework for exchanging information, expertise and research capacity, in particular in the areas of prevention and treatment. She stressed that the action sought to engage all relevant stakeholders, including patient organisations and researchers, in common commitments, but also to prevent dispersal and duplication of effort, and to optimise use of available resources.

She underlined the key actions that would be implemented under the partnership, namely: (i) health promotion, prevention and early diagnosis; (ii) identification and dissemination of good practices concerning cancer care; (iii) cooperation in the field of cancer research and development of a coordinated approach within the Union; and (iv) obtaining comparable data and information on cancer.

She thanked the Members of the Commission, their cabinets and departments for their contributions and for the excellent cooperation during the preparatory work for the communication.

The Commission then held a brief discussion, during which it highlighted:

- the need to stress the improvement in patients' quality of life, in particular those in the terminal stage of cancer;
- the added value of the initiative, its coherence with efforts to coordinate European research on diseases, and the contribution that it should make to international cooperation, especially with the United States, in the field of cancer research.

After this discussion the Commission approved the communication set out in COM(2009)291/4 for transmission to Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions and to the national parliaments.

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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 11.10.