



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

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MINUTES

of the 1941st meeting of the Commission

held in Brussels

(Berlaymont)

on Tuesday 21 December 2010

(morning)

PV(2010)1941 final

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Attendance list	5-7
1. AGENDAS (OJ(2010)1941/3; SEC(2010)1595).....	8
2. WEEKLY MEETING OF CHEFS DE CABINET (SEC(2010)1941)	9
3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES AND SPECIAL MINUTES OF THE 1939TH AND 1940TH MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSION (8 AND 14 DECEMBER) (PV(2010)1939; PV(2010)1939, PART II; (PV(2010)1940; (PV(2010)1940, PART II.....	9
4. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS.....	9
4.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED (SEC(2010)1597 ET SEQ.).....	9
4.2. EMPOWERMENT (SEC(2010)1598 ET SEQ.)	9
4.3. DELEGATION AND SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS (SEC(2010)1599 ET SEQ.).....	10
4.4. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES (SEC(2010)1600 AND /2)	10
4.5. GENERAL EMPOWERMENT FOR THE FINANCING INSTRUMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION (DCI) AND THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD AND PARTNERSHIP INSTRUMENT (ENPI) (SEC(2010)1619 AND /2).....	10
5. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS REVIEWING THE WORKING TIME DIRECTIVE (SECOND-PHASE CONSULTATION OF THE SOCIAL PARTNERS AT EUROPEAN LEVEL UNDER ARTICLE 154 TFEU) (COM(2010)801 TO /3; SEC(2010)1610; SEC(2010)1612).....	11

6.	REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS ON IMPLEMENTATION BY MEMBER STATES OF DIRECTIVE 2003/88/EC ('THE WORKING TIME DIRECTIVE') (COM(2010)802 TO /3; SEC(2010)1611 AND /2; SEC(2010)1612)	11
7.	ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS (SEC(2010)1596/3)	12
7.1.	DG INTERNAL MARKET AND SERVICES – APPOINTMENT OF AD15 DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL (EU-3) (PERS(2010)87 TO /5)	12
7.2.	DG REGIONAL POLICY – APPOINTMENT OF AD15 DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL (EU-3) (PERS(2010)109 TO /4)	13
7.3.	DG RESEARCH – APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE EXECUTIVE AGENCY OF THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH COUNCIL	13
7.4.	DG BUDGET – APPOINTMENT OF AD14/15 PRINCIPAL ADVISER (PERS(2010)101 TO /3).....	14
7.5.	DG MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES – APPOINTMENT OF AD14/15 DIRECTOR (PERS(2010)141 TO /5)	14
7.6.	DG BUDGET – APPOINTMENT OF AD14 DIRECTOR	15
7.7.	DG ENERGY – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD15 DIRECTOR.....	15
7.8.	DG HUMAN RESOURCES AND SECURITY / OFFICE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION AND PAYMENT OF INDIVIDUAL ENTITLEMENTS / LEGAL SERVICE – ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT FOR 2009 AND 2010 OF THE REMUNERATION AND PENSIONS OF OFFICIALS AND OTHER SERVANTS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (SEC(2010)1623/2).....	15
8.	INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS.....	16
8.1.	LEGISLATIVE MATTERS	16
8.2.	RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL	16
8.3.	RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT	23

8.4. RELATIONS WITH THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE, THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS, THE EUROPEAN OMBUDSMAN AND NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS.....	23
9. OTHER BUSINESS.....	24

Single sitting: Tuesday 21 December 2010 (morning)

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

Present:

Mr BARROSO	President	
Ms REDING	Vice-President	
Ms KROES	Vice-President	
Mr ŠEFČOVIČ	Vice-President	
Mr POTOČNIK	Member	
Mr PIEBALGS	Member	
Mr BARNIER	Member	Items 7 to 9
Ms VASSILIOU	Member	
Mr DALLI	Member	
Mr LEWANDOWSKI	Member	Items 1 to 8 (in part)
Ms DAMANAKI	Member	
Ms GEORGIEVA	Member	
Mr OETTINGER	Member	
Mr HAHN	Member	
Mr FÜLE	Member	
Mr ANDOR	Member	
Ms MALMSTRÖM	Member	Items 1 to 8 (in part)
Mr CIOLOŞ	Member	

Absent:

Baroness ASHTON	High Representative/Vice- President
Mr ALMUNIA	Vice-President
Mr KALLAS	Vice-President
Mr TAJANI	Vice-President
Mr REHN	Member
Mr ŠEMETA	Member
Mr DE GUCHT	Member
Ms GEOGHEGAN-QUINN	Member
Ms HEDEGAARD	Member

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

Mr BANNERMAN	A member of Baroness ASHTON's staff
Mr LORIENT	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr ALMUNIA
Mr FITCH	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr KALLAS
Mr CANGA FANO	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr TAJANI
Mr LAHTI	A member of Mr REHN's staff
Mr SADAUSKAS	Chef de cabinet to Mr ŠEMETA
Mr HOFFMEISTER	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr DE GUCHT
Mr BELL	Chef de cabinet to Ms GEOGHEGAN- QUINN
Mr VIS	Chef de cabinet to Ms HEDEGAARD

The following also sat in:

Mr LAITENBERGER	Chef de cabinet to the PRESIDENT	
Mr ROMERO REQUENA	Director-General, Legal Service	
Ms AHRENKILDE HANSEN	Commission Spokeswoman	Item 8 (in part)
Mr ULZURRÚN DE ASANZA Y MUÑOZ	European Commission Spokesperson Service	Items 1 to 8 (in part) and 9
Mr THEBAULT	Head of the Bureau of European Policy Advisers	
Ms SUTTON	A member of the PRESIDENT's staff	Items 7 (in part) and 8 (in part)

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

The PRESIDENT paid tribute to Mr Tommaso PADOA-SCHIOPPA, who had died in Rome on Saturday, 18 December.

The PRESIDENT hailed him as a great European whose professional and political career had been remarkable, in particular in his role as Director-General of Economic and Financial Affairs at the Commission, Italian Minister of Economy and Finance, member of the Executive Board of the European Central Bank and President of the think tank *Notre Europe*. He highlighted Mr PADOA-SCHIOPPA's total commitment to European integration, and recalled his personal involvement in the 1980s in the process that led to the creation of the single currency. He spoke of his experience in economic matters, his vision and his great human and intellectual qualities.

Mr TAJANI would represent the Commission at the funeral, which would take place in Rome that day. The Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs had decided to hold an annual conference, to be known as the Padoa-Schioppa Conference.

On behalf of the Commission and in his own name, the PRESIDENT offered his sincere condolences to the family and friends of Mr PADOA-SCHIOPPA.

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1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2010)1941/3; SEC(2010)1595)

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(2010)1941)**

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Monday 20 December.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES AND SPECIAL MINUTES OF THE 1939TH
AND 1940TH MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSION (8 AND 14 DECEMBER)
(PV(2010)1939; PV(2010)1939, PART II; (PV(2010)1940; (PV(2010)1940, PART
II**

The Commission approved the minutes of its 1939th and 1940th meetings.

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

**4.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED
(SEC(2010)1597 ET SEQ.)**

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 13 and 17 December.

**4.2. EMPOWERMENT
(SEC(2010)1598 ET SEQ.)**

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 13 and 17 December.

4.3. DELEGATION AND SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS
(SEC(2010)1599 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedure between 13 and 17 December, as archived in e-Greffe.

4.4. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES
(SEC(2010)1600 AND /2)

The Commission took note of the sensitive written procedures for which the time limit expired between 20 and 22 December.

4.5. GENERAL EMPOWERMENT FOR THE FINANCING INSTRUMENT
FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION (DCI) AND THE EUROPEAN
NEIGHBOURHOOD AND PARTNERSHIP INSTRUMENT (ENPI)
(SEC(2010)1619 AND /2)

The Commission delegated general powers, as specified in SEC(2010)1619, to the Members of the Commission responsible for development and external relations, in order to adopt, on behalf of and under the responsibility of the Commission, certain decisions on the implementation of the financing instrument for development cooperation (DCI), and to the Members of the Commission responsible for European neighbourhood policy and external relations, in order to adopt, on behalf of and under the responsibility of the Commission, certain decisions on the implementation of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI).

5. **COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS REVIEWING THE WORKING TIME DIRECTIVE (SECOND-PHASE CONSULTATION OF THE SOCIAL PARTNERS AT EUROPEAN LEVEL UNDER ARTICLE 154 TFEU)**
(COM(2010)801 TO /3; SEC(2010)1610; SEC(2010)1612)

6. **REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS ON IMPLEMENTATION BY MEMBER STATES OF DIRECTIVE 2003/88/EC ('THE WORKING TIME DIRECTIVE')**
(COM(2010)802 TO /3; SEC(2010)1611 AND /2; SEC(2010)1612)

The Commission:

- approved the communication set out in COM(2010)801/3, with a view to the second phase of consultations with the social partners under Article 154 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and decided to transmit it, with a request for a reply, to the social partners at European level, and to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions and, for information, to the national parliaments, together with staff working paper SEC(2010)1610, the contents of which were noted.

- approved the report set out in COM(2010)802/3, for transmission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions and, for information, to the national parliaments, together with staff working paper SEC(2010)1611/2, the contents of which were noted.

**7. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS
(SEC(2010)1596/3)**

**ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
(PERS(2010)177/3)**

Mr ŠEFČOVIČ announced the addition of an extra item to the agenda (see item 7.2 of these minutes) concerning the appointment of a Deputy Director-General with responsibility for convergence, competitiveness and cross-border programmes in the Directorate-General for Regional Policy. He proposed to the Commission, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr HAHN, that Mr Normunds POPENS be appointed to that post.

Mr ŠEFČOVIČ placed this decision in the more general context of the objectives for the appointment of nationals of the new Member States to senior management posts by 31 December 2010. He expressed satisfaction at these results and said that detailed reports on this matter would be laid before the Commission at the end of January.

Mr ŠEFČOVIČ also reported to the Commission on the follow-up to the judgment given by the Court of Justice of the European Union on 24 November in Case C-40/10 concerning the annual adjustment of the remuneration and pensions of officials and other servants of the European Union from 1 July 2009 (see item 7.8 of these minutes).

**7.1. DG INTERNAL MARKET AND SERVICES – APPOINTMENT OF AD15
DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL (EU-3)
(PERS(2010)87 TO /5)**

The Commission had before it applications under Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Deputy Director-General in DG Internal Market and Services (PERS(2010)87 to /3).

It took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 15 September and 5 October (PERS(2010)87/4 and /5).

The Commission proceeded to consider the applicant's qualifications for the post. On a proposal from Mr ŠEFČOVIČ, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr BARNIER, it then decided to appoint Mr Rytis MARTIKONIS to the post.

This decision would take effect immediately. Mr MARTIKONIS would take up his duties on 1 April 2011 at the latest.

**7.2. DG REGIONAL POLICY – APPOINTMENT OF AD15 DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL (EU-3)
(PERS(2010)109 TO /4)**

The Commission had before it applications under Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Deputy Director-General in DG Regional Policy (PERS(2010)109 and /2).

It took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 26 October and 10 November (PERS(2010)109/3 and /4).

The Commission proceeded to compare the applicants' qualifications for the post. On a proposal from Mr ŠEFČOVIČ, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr HAHN, it then decided to appoint Mr Normunds POPENS to the post.

This decision would take effect immediately. Mr POPENS would take up his duties on 1 April 2011 at the latest.

7.3. DG RESEARCH – APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE EXECUTIVE AGENCY OF THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH COUNCIL

On a proposal from Mr ŠEFČOVIČ, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms GEOGHEGAN-QUINN, the Commission decided to appoint Mr José Pablo AMOR ECHEVERRI, AD13 official and currently seconded in the interest of the service to the Executive Agency of the European Research Council, to carry out the duties of interim Executive Director of that Agency, in addition to his present duties, until the Executive Director took up

post.

This decision would take effect on 1 January 2011.

**7.4. DG BUDGET – APPOINTMENT OF AD14/15 PRINCIPAL ADVISER
(PERS(2010)101 TO /3)**

The Commission had before it applications under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Principal Adviser in DG Budget (PERS(2010)101).

It took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 5 October and 12 November (PERS(2010)101/2 and /3).

The Commission proceeded to consider the applicant's qualifications for the post. On a proposal from Mr ŠEFČOVIČ, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr LEWANDOWSKI, it then decided to appoint Ms Paraskevi GILCHRIST-SOULA to the post.

This decision would take effect on 1 January 2011.

**7.5. DG MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES – APPOINTMENT OF
AD14/15 DIRECTOR
(PERS(2010)141 TO /5)**

The Commission had before it applications under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Director, 'Atlantic, Outermost Regions and Arctic', in DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (PERS(2010)141).

It took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 18 November and 1 December (PERS(2010)141/3 and /5).

The Commission proceeded to compare the applicants' qualifications for the post. It also considered their ability, efficiency and conduct in the service. On a proposal from Mr ŠEFČOVIČ, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms DAMANAKI, it then decided to appoint Mr Bernhard FRIESS to the post.

This decision would take effect on 16 February 2011.

7.6. DG BUDGET – APPOINTMENT OF AD14 DIRECTOR

On a proposal from Mr ŠEFČOVIČ, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr LEWANDOWSKI, the Commission decided to fill the post of Director, 'Resources', in DG Budget by transferring in the interest of the service, under Article 7 of the Staff Regulations, Ms Daniela GHEORGHE-MARINESCU, AD14 official and currently Director, 'Resources' in DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries.

This decision would take effect on 1 February 2011.

7.7. DG ENERGY – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD15 DIRECTOR

On a proposal from Mr ŠEFČOVIČ, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr OETTINGER, the Commission decided to fill the post of Director, 'General Policy' in DG Energy by transferring in the interest of the service, under Article 7 of the Staff Regulations, Ms Georgette LALIS, AD15 official and currently Director, 'Industrial Innovation and Mobility Industries', in DG Enterprise and Industry.

This decision would take effect on 1 February 2011.

**7.8. DG HUMAN RESOURCES AND SECURITY / OFFICE FOR THE
ADMINISTRATION AND PAYMENT OF INDIVIDUAL
ENTITLEMENTS / LEGAL SERVICE – ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT FOR
2009 AND 2010 OF THE REMUNERATION AND PENSIONS OF
OFFICIALS AND OTHER SERVANTS OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
(SEC(2010)1623/2)**

The Commission took note of the information in SEC(2010)1623/2.

8. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

8.1. LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

i) Action to be taken on Parliament's legislative opinions

(SP(2010)9094)

The Commission decided to empower the Commission Members responsible for the sectors in question, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr ŠEFČOVIČ and, if necessary, with the other Members concerned, to adopt the amended proposals for transmission to Parliament and the Council, as set out in SP(2010)9094, drawn up following the December part-session of Parliament, the contents of which were noted.

8.2. RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL

ii) Programming of Council business

(SI(2010)369)

The Commission took note of the information in SI(2010)369 on the Council meetings between 16 and 22 December.

iii) Conclusions of the European Council (Brussels, 16 and 17 December 2010)

(SI(2010)370)

The PRESIDENT reported on the latest European Council meeting, underlining the political commitment and determination it had shown in defence of the euro, the display of unity to help the European Union to emerge stronger from the current economic crisis, and the discipline which had made it possible to avoid sterile debates and last-minute announcements. The Commission should take advantage of the slight lull on the financial markets to remain vigilant as regards these sensitive issues.

Recalling the letter he had sent to the Commission Members on this matter, the PRESIDENT turned to the main decisions taken by the European Council.

First, the agreement concerning the launching of the simplified procedure to carry out a limited revision of the Treaty in order to set up a European Stability Mechanism, which would not involve amending other provisions in the Treaty as some Member States had originally requested, and which preserved the Commission's right of initiative.

The amendments would in principle come into force at the beginning of 2013, therefore a proposal for a positive Commission opinion would be tabled for adoption by a forthcoming meeting of the college. The PRESIDENT again emphasised the political importance of what had been decided and the progress this represented for Europe; although it had been achieved via the intergovernmental method, the Commission's work in defining the various parameters had nevertheless played an important part.

The PRESIDENT said that Mr REHN would work with the Ministers of Finance to complete the details of this agreement with a view to the 2011 Spring European Council, and repeated his conviction concerning the Commission's essential role and expertise in the adoption and implementation of the decisions. The importance and quality of the Commission's proposals had fostered an agreement by the European Council on the accelerated adoption by June 2011 of six legislative proposals by the Commission on economic governance.

The PRESIDENT also referred to the specific statement by the euro-area Member States, which the European Council welcomed in its conclusions, and which contained several commitments relating to (i) the implementation of the national reform programmes in Greece and Ireland, (ii) increased budgetary responsibility, (iii) structural reforms, (iv) the reinforcement of the growth and stability pact and of supervision, (v) appropriate financial support through the European Financial Stability Facility and subsequently the European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism, (vi) the reform of financial services, and (vii) support for the work of the European Central Bank. The Member States had not reached a consensus on the question of euro bonds and

elements relating to this might be discussed in more detail in the coming months.

He considered that, while the measures decided at the European Council were very important, they should be underpinned by intensive work aimed at preparing a more comprehensive response to the current crisis. He welcomed the support given to the structural reforms and considered that the Annual Growth Survey, scheduled for adoption by the Commission in January 2011, would be a key element in providing a global solution to the problems encountered by the European economy.

The PRESIDENT also explained that, based on documents presented by Baroness ASHTON, fruitful talks had been held on the question of strategic partnerships between the EU and the United States, China and Russia. This echoed the good results of recent summits and showed that the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty were working properly. These issues, which concerned many of the Commission's areas of work, should be the subject of greater synergy within the institution, under the coordination of the PRESIDENT. Other topics that had been broached included the status of candidate country granted to Montenegro and the outcome of the Cancun conference.

The PRESIDENT ended by briefly recalling the talks held on the budget and multiannual financial framework, and the Council's sober conclusions on this. The Commission had received a letter from five Member States (Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom) concerning the preparation of the next multiannual financial framework. Referring to the content and scope of this letter, he said that a careful, precise reply would be prepared, avoiding excessive defensiveness and brusque reactions. The Commission would present its proposals in the course of 2011.

He considered that there was a risk that such initiatives would prevent an in-depth debate on the necessary reforms to the European budget, in other words the added value and ranking of expenditure, and would create divisions between Member States whose cohesion policy might eventually be affected.

To conclude, he said that the next European Council would be held on 4 February 2011 and that the Commission meeting on 5 January could be used to prepare properly for it.

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

General points

- the observation that, following a turbulent year for the European Union and the euro area, progress had been achieved with the introduction of sustainable tools for economic governance and financial regulation, and the importance of highlighting the key role played by the Commission in this respect;
- the need to demonstrate the usefulness of the idea of creating EU project bonds in essential areas, and the case for supporting this idea and putting it into practice;
- the observation concerning the many measures taken by the Commission during the crisis, but also the fact that the tools in question would require a running-in period before becoming effective;
- the positive reception given by the Council to the idea of an enhanced European economic governance;
- given the problems predicted for 2011, the need for more intensive European coordination, which was the only way out of the crisis, in particular given the different situations in the Member States; in this connection, the importance of pursuing discussions on issues such as European bonds, a tax Union and the harmonisation of the economic policies of the Member States;
- the relevance of more offensive positioning by the EU at international level;

Budgetary aspects

- the need to respond to the letter signed by five Member States calling for the European budget to be frozen from 2014 by producing well-designed proposals and above all by preserving the aim of a strong regional policy, which was crucial to the success of the Europe 2020 strategy and the single market;
- in response to certain Member States' less ambitious vision of the EU budget, the importance of demonstrating the leverage effect of traditional policies on other more innovative areas;
- the division which this letter unfortunately created between two groups of countries, and the very conservative nature of its content, despite the fact that many Member States and European analysts were calling for a fundamental change in approach;
- the damage which such a move did to the rest of the world's view of EU unity;
- the growing gap between commitments and payments and the difficulties that were likely to develop from 2012-2013 onwards, given the increase in outstanding commitments;
- the importance of preserving the unity of the Commission and its right of initiative in this context in particular;
- the growing unpopularity of the austerity measures in Greece, even when they were portrayed as a means of safeguarding the euro, and the need to reassure the country of the support it could expect; connected with this, the importance of payments from the Cohesion Fund, the likely problems in the event of these payments being called into question, but also the need to ensure that beneficiaries made better use of the Fund's resources;
- similarly, a reminder of the stabilising role played by the Structural Funds for the beneficiary countries, the importance of not calling them

into question, and the wide range of countries and regions that would be affected by any reduction in such aid;

- the difficulties anticipated in the funding and management of major projects such as ITER and Galileo, where the costs had also been underestimated at the outset, and the need to look carefully into these matters in the future; likewise, the budgetary requirements connected with the operation of the European Chemicals Agency in Helsinki in the context of the implementation of the rules on biocides;
- regret at the widespread and misguided perception in the Member States that the Commission was extravagant in its expenditure; this view was based on a serious lack of information and explanation and it was important to present the facts, the projects that had been carried out and the solutions produced, highlighting Europe's added value; the role that the Representations could play here and the importance of having the right people in these positions;
- the need for a thorough debate on these budgetary issues at a meeting in January.

The PRESIDENT thanked the participants for their contribution to the debate. The budget situation would be discussed at the next Commission meetings, and the group of Commissioners on the budget was also due to meet on 5 January. He noted, too, that the current economic and financial situation was far from satisfactory, as some participants had said, yet many Member States and political leaders were unfortunately still hesitating to take all the measures that were absolutely essential and to explain the need for them to the public.

The Commission's role here was, in his view, to create the conditions for a consensus between the Member States through solid work and dynamic interaction. Over the last few months the Commission had been constantly active in promoting dialogue and putting forward proposals and tireless in its

discussions with the Member States and the main financial players on the international stage.

He acknowledged the exceptional gravity of the current crisis, the difficult political situation of the Member States, each of which faced its own specific problems, and the consequent need to be pragmatic. Nevertheless, he felt it was vital that Europe's citizens fully understood the necessity of the structural reforms that had been initiated or were still to come (although their impact would only really be felt in 2011 and 2012) and their link with renewed economic growth in Europe and a revival in jobs, prosperity and competitiveness.

The PRESIDENT firmly believed that on the subject of the budget there was now a strong swing against conservatism and in favour of innovation, priority-setting and added value, particularly with a view to preparing proposals on the future multiannual financial framework. He felt that the success of the Commission's proposals would depend on their quality, and it was important for the forthcoming budgetary debate to focus not on figures but on substance and specific European projects.

He reminded the meeting of the various studies that had shown the cost of non-Europe, and of all the benefits the Member States derived from European projects – benefits which were not always properly explained to the European public and businesses. Although 2010 had been a particularly difficult year for the European Union, the Commission had withstood the crisis, particularly in the sensitive areas of economic governance and financial supervision.

The PRESIDENT ended by reminding the meeting that progress and European integration came about in a variety of ways, including through the intergovernmental method, and due credit should be given where genuine advances had been made. He stressed the need for the Commission to produce high-quality, innovative proposals, without inhibition or conservatism, and the importance of effective communication in this connection.

The Commission took note of this information.

iv) Preparation for Council meeting (Environment) (Brussels, 20 December)

Preparation of agreement at first reading

- Setting emission performance standards for new light commercial vehicles as part of the Community's integrated approach to reduce CO₂ emissions from light-duty vehicles (Regulation) – CALLANAN report – 2009/0173 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SPI(2010)85 and authorised Ms HEDEGAARD to give her *ad referendum* agreement at the Council meeting (Environment) on 20 December to the compromise reached between Parliament and the Council at the trialogue meeting on 15 December.

8.3. RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT

v) Results of Parliament's December part-session
(SP(2010)9061 to /3)

The Commission took note of the information in SP(2010)9061 to /3 on the proceedings of the part-session of Parliament held in Strasbourg from 13 to 16 December.

8.4. RELATIONS WITH THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE, THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS, THE EUROPEAN OMBUDSMAN AND NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS

vi) Draft answer to the opinions of the national parliaments concerning the proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of seasonal employment

Further to the line already approved, as set out in SP(2010)9046 and /2, the Commission approved the specific replies annexed to SP(2010)9046/3 for

transmission to the national parliaments that had raised more detailed technical issues in their opinions.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

LAUNCH OF EUROPEAN YEAR OF VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES 2011

Ms REDING referred briefly to the documents circulated among the Members at the meeting presenting the events planned by the Commission for the European Year of Voluntary Activities.

She drew attention to the figures on voluntary activities in the European Union, which were both surprising and impressive. Among the initiatives planned, she highlighted in particular the Tour of the Union that would run throughout the year. She urged the Members of the Commission to visit their capital city when the tour passed through it and to take part in the events held on that occasion.

During a short exchange of views, the Commission also discussed the projects that would be developed in 2011 in connection with the European Humanitarian Aid Volunteer Corps set up by the Lisbon Treaty, and the internal work of the volunteer network within the Commission.

The Commission took note of this information.

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The meeting closed at 12.36.