



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2011)1942 final

Strasbourg, 18 January 2011

MINUTES
of the 1942nd meeting of the Commission
held in Brussels
(Berlaymont)
on Wednesday 5 January 2011
(morning)

PV(2011)1942 final

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Attendance list	3-5
1. AGENDAS (OJ(2011)1942/3; SEC(2011)28/2).....	6
2. WEEKLY MEETING OF CHEFS DE CABINET (SEC(2011)1942)	6
3. MINUTES OF 1941ST MEETING (21 DECEMBER 2010)	6
4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS.....	6
<i>RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL</i>	6
5. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS.....	7
5.1. <i>WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED (SEC(2011)30 ET SEQ.)</i>	7
5.2. <i>EMPOWERMENT (SEC(2011)31 ET SEQ.)</i>	7
5.3. <i>DELEGATION AND SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS (SEC(2011)32 ET SEQ.)</i>	7
5.4. <i>SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES (SEC(2011)33)</i>	7
6. POLICY DEBATE ON THE PROSPECTS FOR ENERGY AND INNOVATION POLICIES IN PREPARATION FOR THE FEBRUARY EUROPEAN COUNCIL (SEC(2011)41; SEC(2011)42)	7
7. OTHER BUSINESS.....	10
7.1. <i>PREPARATIONS FOR THE MEETING BETWEEN THE COMMISSION AND THE HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT (BUDAPEST, 7 JANUARY)</i>	10
7.2. <i>SITUATION IN BELARUS</i>	11

Single sitting: Wednesday 5 January 2011 (morning)

The sitting opened at 10.09 with Mr BARROSO, President, in the chair. Items 6 (in part) and 7 were chaired by Ms REDING.

Present:

Mr BARROSO	President	Items 1 to 6 (in part)
Ms REDING	Vice-President	
Mr ALMUNIA	Vice-President	Items 1 to 7 (in part)
Mr KALLAS	Vice-President	
Ms KROES	Vice-President	
Mr TAJANI	Vice-President	
Mr POTOČNIK	Member	
Mr REHN	Member	
Mr BARNIER	Member	Items 1 to 7 (in part)
Ms VASSILIOU	Member	
Mr ŠEMETA	Member	
Mr DE GUCHT	Member	Items 1 to 6 (in part)
Mr DALLI	Member	
Ms GEOGHEGAN-QUINN	Member	Items 1 to 7 (in part)
Mr LEWANDOWSKI	Member	
Ms DAMANAKI	Member	Items 1 to 6 (in part)
Mr OETTINGER	Member	Items 1 to 6 (in part)
Ms HEDEGAARD	Member	
Mr FÜLE	Member	
Mr ANDOR	Member	
Mr CIOLOŞ	Member	

Absent:

Baroness ASHTON

High
Representative/Vice-
President

Mr ŠEFČOVIČ

Vice-President

Mr PIEBALGS

Member

Ms GEORGIEVA

Member

Mr HAHN

Member

Ms MALMSTRÖM

Member

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

Mr EVERTS	A member of Baroness ASHTON's staff
Mr NOCIAR	Chef de cabinet to Mr ŠEFČOVIČ
Mr USTUBS	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr PIEBALGS
Ms HRISTCHEVA	A member of Ms GEORGIEVA's staff
Mr DE MICHELIS	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr HAHN
Ms ÅSENIUS	Chef de cabinet to Ms MALMSTRÖM

The following also sat in:

Mr LAITENBERGER	Chef de cabinet to the PRESIDENT	
Mr ROMERO REQUENA	Director-General, Legal Service	
Mr DOENS	Head of the Commission Spokesperson Service	Item 6 (in part)
Ms AHRENKILDE HANSEN	Commission Spokeswoman	Items 1 to 6 (in part)
Mr THEBAULT	Head of the Bureau of European Policy Advisers	Items 1 to 6 (in part)
Mr FRUTUOSO DE MELO	Deputy Chef de cabinet to the PRESIDENT	Items 1 to 6 (in part)
Ms DE RICHEMONT	Adviser in the PRESIDENT's Office	Items 1 to 7 (in part)
Mr BELL	Chef de cabinet to Ms GEOGHEGAN- QUINN	Items 1 to 7 (in part)
Ms DEWAR	A member of Ms GEOGHEGAN- QUINN's staff	Items 1 to 7 (in part)
Mr KOEHLER	Chef de cabinet to Mr OETTINGER	Items 1 to 6 (in part)
Mr ONIDI	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr OETTINGER	Items 1 to 7 (in part)
Mr LOWE	Director-General, DG Energy	Items 1 to 6 (in part)

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

1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2011)1942/3; SEC(2011)28/2)

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(2011)1942)

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Monday 3 January.

3. MINUTES OF 1941ST MEETING (21 DECEMBER 2010)

The Commission held over approval of the minutes of its 1941st meeting for the following week.

4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL

Programming of Council business

(SI(2011)1)

The Commission took note of the information in SI(2011)1 on the Council meetings between 6 and 21 January.

5. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

5.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED

(SEC(2011)30 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 20 and 31 December.

5.2. EMPOWERMENT

(SEC(2011)31 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 20 and 31 December.

5.3. DELEGATION AND SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS

(SEC(2011)32 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedure between 20 and 31 December, as archived in e-Greffe.

5.4. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES

(SEC(2011)33)

The Commission took note of the sensitive written procedure for which the time limit expired between 3 and 7 January.

6. POLICY DEBATE ON THE PROSPECTS FOR ENERGY AND INNOVATION POLICIES IN PREPARATION FOR THE FEBRUARY EUROPEAN COUNCIL

(SEC(2011)41; SEC(2011)42)

The PRESIDENT opened the policy debate to prepare the Commission's contribution to the European Council on 4 February 2011 devoted to energy and

innovation. He stressed the urgency for the European Union of taking decisions in these two interdependent fields in order to extend the measures already taken on the internal market in energy and the legislative package on energy and climate change, and to achieve the Union's priority objectives of sustainable growth and competitiveness as part of the Europe 2020 strategy. He was seeking support for the major initiatives presented by the Commission ahead of the European Council on 4 February, in particular the energy agenda 2020 and the Communication on energy infrastructure priorities for 2020 and beyond.

Mr OETTINGER recapped the different foundations laid by the European Council in recent years with a view to developing a European energy policy. He then mentioned the three major questions to be discussed at the European Council on 4 February: the practicalities of completing the European internal market in energy; the development of innovative solutions for energy efficiency and renewables; and the external dimension of the market.

The Commission noted the relevance of the proposed approach and the quality of the initiatives presented. It then held a debate during which the following points emerged: the importance of having an ambitious, long-term vision in order to arrive at a truly unified energy policy; the need to examine in depth the funding arrangements for major infrastructure projects, in particular European bonds, and to invest in energy innovation; the importance of transposing the third package of measures on liberalisation of European markets; the potential scope for pooling research efforts and investment in low carbon energy technologies at European level; the need to consider the possibility of setting binding targets for energy efficiency and to work on building standards in order to achieve the planned 20% reduction in primary energy consumption; the case for strengthening the external dimension of the European energy market by including a section on energy in all partnership agreements, for pooling negotiating efforts and for examining the possibility of raising the political profile of energy issues when the Neighbourhood Policy was revised.

The PRESIDENT concluded this part of the debate by praising the wealth of contributions on an issue that was a priority for the present Commission's term of

office. He stressed the need for the Commission to continue to play a driving role, seeking continuity with the work of the previous Commission and drawing on the political capital it had accumulated through its actions and proposals in this field over several years, strengthening the dialogue and cooperation with the Member States and working closely with the Council Presidency.

He then introduced the second part of the debate by referring to the flagship initiative of a 'Union for innovation', adopted in October 2010, which had defined the strategy to be adopted in order to make innovation a real motor for growth in Europe; this initiative now had to be implemented.

Ms GEOGHEGAN-QUINN then took the floor to place this second part of the debate in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy. She highlighted Europe's need for growth against the background of the economic crisis and then referred to the five main priorities that would be discussed at the European Council on 4 February: intelligent budgetary consolidation, an open and forward-looking European budget, the development of European excellence, better conditions for converting innovations into jobs, and, finally, how to respond to the major global challenges.

During the debate that followed, the Commission noted the high quality of this proposed strategy, which focused on the role of innovation in economic growth, job creation and maintaining the social market economy model, and its significance in terms of existing or potential synergies between different Commission policies. She hoped that the European Council on 4 February would express clear support for this strategy in order to promote better coordination between the Member States and the Commission and to pool resources so as to respond to the major challenges and speed up implementation of innovation policy.

Following this second part of the policy debate, Ms GEOGHEGAN-QUINN thanked the other Members of the Commission for taking part and for their contributions to the discussion. She hoped to continue this valuable cooperation in future, particularly in the Innovation Group of Commissioners.

The Commission took note of the conclusions of the policy debate and of the notes distributed by Mr OETTINGER and Ms GEOGHEGAN-QUINN in SEC(2011)41 and SEC(2011)42.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1. PREPARATIONS FOR THE MEETING BETWEEN THE COMMISSION AND THE HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT (BUDAPEST, 7 JANUARY)

In preparation for its meeting with the Hungarian Government on Friday 7 January, the Commission held an exchange of views on the new Hungarian media law and the special tax imposed by Hungary on the retail, energy and telecommunications sectors. During this discussion the following points were raised:

- it was pointed out that the Commission, acting within its remit, had recently expressed doubts about the new media law and asked the Hungarian authorities for explanations;
- the Commission departments responsible were currently working in close cooperation with the Legal Service to assess the legality of the new legislation;
- it was noted also that the new Hungarian legislation imposing a crisis tax on certain sectors was being examined in the light of EU law, including state aid rules;
- finally, certain problems had come to light in the evaluation of the pension reforms introduced by Hungary;
- it was important for the Commission to react quickly, while adhering strictly to the law and not overstepping its powers, but also without losing sight of the wider, more political debate concerning European values;

- it was appropriate for the Commission to express its concerns regarding the situation in Hungary, among other occasions at its meeting with the Hungarian Presidency on Friday 7 January;
- however, a distinction had to be drawn between matters relating to the forthcoming Hungarian Presidency and the entry into force of certain new laws.

Ms REDING thanked the various Members for their contributions and stressed that the Commission must ensure, within its remit in these matters, that the fundamental values and principles of the European Union were upheld and that the European legislation in force was complied with. In the next few days and beyond the Commission would seek to continue its dialogue with the Hungarian authorities in order to clarify the situation and dispel the doubts that had arisen.

The Commission took note of this information.

7.2. SITUATION IN BELARUS

Mr FÜLE spoke very briefly about the political situation in Belarus and the possible implications for bilateral relations with the EU, particularly with an eye to the next meeting of the Foreign Affairs Council.

The Commission took note of this information.

*

* *

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

*

* *

The meeting closed at 14.17.