



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2011)1978 final

Brussels, 23 November 2011

MINUTES
of the 1978th meeting of the Commission
held in Brussels
(Berlaymont)
on Wednesday 9 November 2011
(morning)

PV(2011)1978 final

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Single sitting: Wednesday 9 November 2011 (morning)

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

Present:

Mr BARROSO	President	
Ms REDING	Vice-President	Items 1 to 13 (in part)
Mr ALMUNIA	Vice-President	
Mr KALLAS	Vice-President	
Ms KROES	Vice-President	
Mr TAJANI	Vice-President	Items 1 to 14 (in part)
Mr ŠEFČOVIČ	Vice-President	
Mr REHN	Vice-President	
Mr POTOČNIK	Member	
Mr BARNIER	Member	
Ms VASSILIOU	Member	
Mr ŠEMETA	Member	Items 1 to 13 (in part) and 14 (in part)
Mr DE GUCHT	Member	
Mr DALLI	Member	Items 1 to 13 (in part) and 14 (in part)
Ms GEOGHEGAN-QUINN	Member	Items 1 to 14 (in part)
Mr LEWANDOWSKI	Member	Items 1 to 13 (in part) and 14 (in part)
Ms DAMANAKI	Member	
Ms GEORGIEVA	Member	
Mr OETTINGER	Member	Items 1 to 13 (in part)
Mr HAHN	Member	
Ms HEDEGAARD	Member	
Mr FÜLE	Member	
Mr ANDOR	Member	
Ms MALMSTRÖM	Member	
Mr CIOLOŞ	Member	Item 14 (in part)

Absent:

Baroness ASHTON

High Representative/
Vice-President

Mr PIEBALGS

Member

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

Mr BANNERMAN	Adviser in Baroness ASHTON's Office
Mr KARHUNEN	Adviser in Mr PIEBALGS's Office

The following also sat in:

Mr LAITENBERGER	Chef de cabinet to the PRESIDENT	
Mr ROMERO REQUENA	Director-General, Legal Service	
Mr VANDERSTEEN	Acting Director-General, DG Communication	
Mr DOENS	Head of the Commission Spokesperson Service	Items 1 to 13 (in part) and 14 (in part)
Ms AHRENKILDE HANSEN	Commission Spokeswoman	Items 1 to 13 (in part)
Mr THEBAULT	Head of the Bureau of European Policy Advisers	Items 13 (in part) and 14 (in part)
Mr SCHINAS	Bureau of European Policy Advisers	Items 1 to 13 (in part)
Mr CABRAL	Adviser <i>hors classe</i> in the PRESIDENT 's Office	Items 1 to 13 (in part) and 14 (in part)
Mr KONIECKI	A member of the PRESIDENT's staff	
Mr SELMAYR	Chef de cabinet to Ms REDING	Items 13 (in part) and 14 (in part)
Mr PESONEN	Chef de cabinet to Mr REHN	Items 1 to 13 (in part)
Mr VIHRIÄLÄ	Adviser in Mr REHN's Office	Items 13 (in part) and 14 (in part)
Mr SADAUSKAS	Chef de cabinet to Mr ŠEMETA	Items 13 (in part) and 14
Mr HAEUSLER	Chef de cabinet to Mr CIOLOŞ	Items 1 to 14 (in part)
Mr SERVOZ	Deputy Secretary-General	Items 1 to 13 (in part)

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

The PRESIDENT paid tribute to Viscount DE CLERCQ, Belgian Minister of State and Member of the European Commission from 1985 to 1989, who died on 28 October.

Willy DE CLERCQ was a committed and active supporter of European integration, which was seen by his generation, who had lived through the Second World War, as the only means of bringing peace and prosperity to Europe. He made a direct contribution to this project, above all as a Member of the Commission responsible first for external relations and then for trade policy. In this capacity he gave a major impetus to the dialogue with the United States and was one of the principal architects of the Uruguay Round. He was also, for many years, a Member of the European Parliament.

Willy DE CLERCQ was one of the emblematic figures of Liberalism over the past fifty years, an architect of the regeneration of this political movement in Belgium who introduced a socially aware and progressive element into its ideology, and mentor to a whole generation of Liberal politicians.

The PRESIDENT said Willy DE CLERCQ would be remembered for his warmth, charisma and inspiration and as a true statesman whose actions shaped public life in both Belgium and Europe as a whole.

Speaking on behalf of the Commission and in a personal capacity, the PRESIDENT offered his sincere condolences to Willy DE CLERCQ's family and friends.

Mr DE GUCHT also paid tribute to Willy DE CLERCQ's statesmanship, his intellectual and moral authority, and his unfailing commitment to the European cause, which he retained throughout his life.

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1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2011)1978/4; SEC(2011)1300/2)

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

2. WEEKLY MEETING OF CHEFS DE CABINET

(RCC(2011)1978)

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Monday 7 November.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES AND SPECIAL MINUTES OF THE 1975TH AND 1976TH MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSION AND THE MINUTES OF THE 1977TH MEETING (12, 19 AND 25 OCTOBER)

(PV(2011)1975 AND /2; PV(2011)1975, PART II AND /2; PV(2011)1976 AND /2; PV(2011)1976, PART II; PV(2011)1977)

The Commission approved the minutes of its 1975th, 1976th and 1977th meetings and decided to hold over approval of the special minutes of its 1976th meeting for a later meeting.

4. MONITORING THE APPLICATION OF EUROPEAN UNION LAW

STATE AID – INDIVIDUAL CASES

(SEC(2011)1325/2)

The Commission adopted the decisions in SEC(2011)1325/2.

5. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

5.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED

(SEC(2011)1301 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 24 October and 4 November.

5.2. EMPOWERMENT

(SEC(2011)1302 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 24 October and 4 November.

5.3. DELEGATION AND SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS

(SEC(2011)1303 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedure between 24 October and 4 November, as archived in e-Greffe.

5.4. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES

(SEC(2011)1304/2)

The Commission took note of the sensitive written procedures for which the time limit expired between 7 and 11 November.

5.5. DELEGATION OF POWERS AND EXTENSION OF A GENERAL EMPOWERMENT FOR THE EXECUTION OF THE JOINT PROCUREMENT AGREEMENTS TO PROCURE COMMON AUCTION PLATFORMS AND A SINGLE AUCTION MONITOR FOR THE AUCTIONING OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION ALLOWANCES PURSUANT TO COMMISSION REGULATION 1031/2010 (C(2011)8078)

The Commission decided to delegate to the Director-General responsible for climate action the power to adopt, on behalf of the Commission and under its responsibility, amendments to the annexes to the joint procurement agreements for the auctioning of greenhouse gas emission allowances, and the budget implementing powers to organise the joint procurement procedure, under the terms set out in C(2011)8078.

It also decided that, as regard any litigation which could arise in the implementation of the joint procurement agreements, the empowerment and delegation granted under SEC(1977)3503, as modified and extended by SEC(1980)1823, SEC(1989)621 and SEC(2007)337, would apply.

5.6. AD HOC EMPOWERMENT CONCERNING THE ROLE PLAYED BY THE COMMISSION IN THE MONITORING OF CONDITIONALITY ASSOCIATED WITH THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO GREECE PROVIDED BY THE EURO AREA MEMBER STATES (C(2011)7900)

The Commission decide to empower Mr REHN, Member of the Commission responsible for economic and monetary affairs and the euro, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, on its behalf and under its responsibility, to prepare, negotiate with the Greek authorities and sign, after approval by the lending Member States, the revisions to the memorandum of understanding setting the detailed policy conditions attached to the loan, required as a result of the adoption of the Council Decision on this issue, under the terms set out in C(2011)7900.

**5.7. GENERAL EMPOWERMENT IN THE FIELDS OF ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS AND STATISTICS
(C(2011)8179)**

The Commission granted a general empowerment, as set out in C(2011)8179, to the Member of the Commission responsible for economic and monetary affairs and the euro, and to the Member of the Commission responsible for taxation and customs union, audit and the fight against fraud, for the adoption, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, on behalf of the Commission and under its responsibility, of certain decisions in the field of economic and financial affairs and the field of statistics, respectively.

**5.8. AMENDMENT TO THE GENERAL EMPOWERMENT IN THE FIELD OF ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS CONCERNING THE EUROPEAN FINANCIAL STABILISATION MECHANISM
(C(2011)8079/2)**

The Commission adopted the amendment in C(2011)8079/2 to the general empowerment granted to the Member of the Commission responsible for economic and monetary affairs and the euro, set out in SEC(2010)941.

**6. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS
(SEC(2011)1305/2)**

**ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
(PERS(2011)147/2)**

**6.1. DG EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND INCLUSION –
TERMINATION OF THE SELECTION PROCEDURE FOR AN AD14/15
DIRECTOR POST
(PERS(2011)38 TO /3)**

On a proposal from Mr ŠEFČOVIČ, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and

Mr ANDOR, the Commission decided to terminate – without making any appointment – selection procedure COM/2011/625 for the post of Director, ‘Europe 2020: Social Policies’, in DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.

This decision would take effect immediately.

6.2. DG EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND INCLUSION – APPOINTMENT OF AD15 DIRECTOR

On a proposal from Mr ŠEFČOVIČ, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, Ms REDING and Mr ANDOR, the Commission decided to fill the post of Director, ‘Europe 2020: Social Policies’, in DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion by transferring in the interest of the service under Article 7 of the Staff Regulations Ms Lieve FRANSEN, currently Director, ‘Representations’, in DG Communication.

This decision would take effect on 16 November 2011.

6.3. DG COMMUNICATION – TEMPORARY POSTING AS DIRECTOR-GENERAL

On a proposal from Mr ŠEFČOVIČ, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms REDING, the Commission decided, under Article 7(2) of the Staff Regulations, to grant a temporary posting as Director-General for Communication to Mr Jean-Pierre VANDERSTEEN, an AD15 official and Director, ‘Resources’, in that DG, from 1 July 2011 until such time as the post was filled, but in principle without exceeding the maximum period of one year laid down in the Staff Regulations.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**6.4. SECRETARIAT-GENERAL / DG BUDGET / DG HUMAN RESOURCES
AND SECURITY – OPENING OF EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION
IN LIBYA
(PERS(2011)148)**

The Commission took note of the information in point 4 of PERS(2011)147/2 and in PERS(2011)148 and, on a proposal from Mr ŠEFČOVIČ, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, Baroness ASHTON, Mr PIEBALGS, Mr DE GUCHT, Ms GEORGIEVA and Mr FÜLE, approved the decision to open a European Union delegation in Libya.

The Commission also took note of the fact that the decision on the organisation chart would have to be taken in agreement with the Commission, whereas the Commission resources to be assigned to the Delegation would have to be made available in accordance with the procedures in force at the Commission.

**6.5. SECRETARIAT GENERAL / DG BUDGET / DG HUMAN RESOURCES
AND SECURITY – OPENING OF A EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION
IN SOUTH SUDAN
(PERS(2011)149)**

The Commission took note of the information in point 5 of PERS(2011)147/2 and in PERS(2011)149 and, on a proposal from Mr ŠEFČOVIČ, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, Baroness ASHTON, Mr PIEBALGS, Mr DE GUCHT, Ms GEORGIEVA and Mr FÜLE, approved the decision to open a European Union Delegation in South Sudan.

The Commission also took note of the fact that the decision on the organisation chart would have to be taken in agreement with the Commission, whereas the Commission resources to be assigned to the Delegation would have to be made available in accordance with the procedures in force at the Commission.

**7. DECISION BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION OF
27 OCTOBER 2011 ON THE ORGANISATION OF THE
RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMISSION MEMBERS, CONCERNING IN
PARTICULAR THE VICE-PRESIDENT RESPONSIBLE FOR ECONOMIC
AND MONETARY AFFAIRS AND THE EURO
(C(2011)8000 AND /2)**

The Commission took note of the decision taken by the PRESIDENT, as set out in C(2011)8000 and /2, the latter amending in part the Annex to the PRESIDENT's decision of 10 February 2010 in C(2010)1000.

In particular it took note of the decisions by the PRESIDENT to appoint Mr REHN Vice-President of the Commission with responsibility for economic and monetary affairs and the euro and to place Eurostat under the authority of the Commission Member responsible for taxation and customs union, audit and the fight against fraud.

**8. COMMISSION DECISION AMENDING ITS RULES OF PROCEDURE
(C(2011)9000 AND /2)**

The Commission adopted the decision amending its Rules of Procedure, as set out in C(2011)9000/2, and decided to publish it in the Official Journal of the European Union.

**9. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS - SMALL BUSINESS, BIG WORLD, A NEW PARTNERSHIP TO HELP SMEs SEIZE GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES
(COM(2011)702 AND /2; RCC(2011)1007)**

The Commission approved the Communication in COM(2011)702/2 for transmission to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, and, for information, to the national parliaments.

**10. PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL ESTABLISHING AN ACTION PROGRAMME FOR CUSTOMS AND TAXATION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION FOR THE PERIOD 2014-2020 (FISCUS) AND REPEALING DECISIONS 1482/2007/EC AND 624/2007/EC
(COM(2011)706 TO /3; SEC(2011)1317 AND /2; SEC(2011)1318 TO /3; SEC(2011)1316; RCC(2011)1006)**

The Commission adopted the proposal for a Regulation in COM(2011)706/3 for transmission to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the national parliaments, together with the impact assessment and the summary thereof in staff working papers SEC(2011)1317 and /2 (volumes 1 and 2) and SEC(2011)1318/3, the contents of which were noted.

It also took note of the opinion of the Impact Assessment Board on the above proposal for a Regulation, as set out in SEC(2011)1316.

11. PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL ON A CONSUMER PROGRAMME 2014-2020 (COM(2011)707 AND /2; SEC(2011)1320 AND /2; SEC(2011)1321 AND /2; SEC(2011)1319; RCC(2011)1008)

The Commission adopted the proposal for a Regulation in COM(2011)707/2 for transmission to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the national parliaments, together with the impact assessment and the summary thereof in staff working papers SEC(2011)1320/2 and SEC(2011)1321/2, the contents of which were noted.

It also took note of the opinion of the Impact Assessment Board on the above proposal for a Regulation, as set out in SEC(2011)1319.

12. PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL ESTABLISHING A THIRD MULTIANNUAL PROGRAMME OF EU ACTION IN THE FIELD OF HEALTH – HEALTH FOR GROWTH – FOR THE PERIOD 2014-2020 (COM(2011)709 TO /3; SEC(2011)1322; SEC(2011)1323; SEC(2011)1324; RCC(2011)1008)

The Commission adopted the proposal for a Regulation in COM(2011)709/3 for transmission to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the national parliaments, together with the impact assessment and the summary thereof in staff working papers SEC(2011)1322 and SEC(2011)1323, the contents of which were noted.

It also took note of the opinion of the Impact Assessment Board on the above proposal for a Regulation, as set out in SEC(2011)1324.

13. POLICY DEBATE ON THE FORTHCOMING ANNUAL GROWTH SURVEY

Opening the policy debate on the forthcoming Annual Growth Survey, the PRESIDENT asked Mr REHN to present to the Commission Members his analysis of the economic situation and Mr ANDOR to share his assessment of the effects of the crisis and of the fiscal consolidation efforts on the labour market in the Member States, in particular on youth employment.

Mr REHN outlined the economic background to the 2012 Annual Growth Survey by presenting the autumn economic forecasts to be published by the Commission on Thursday 10 November.

Starting with macroeconomic issues, he stressed that there was no viable alternative to a credible fiscal consolidation strategy and that the Member States must continue their efforts to implement this strategy.

With regard to the weaknesses in the financial sector, he insisted that the work undertaken on the safety mechanisms applicable to sovereign debt, bank recapitalisation and financing guarantees must be completed as soon as possible.

Turning to measures to boost growth and competitiveness, Mr REHN pointed out that, according to the guidelines laid down in the roadmap to stability and growth approved by the Commission on 12 October, priority should be given to reforms that could have a positive effect on growth in the very short term in order to restore a climate of confidence, which was an essential condition for recovery.

Mr ANDOR then took the floor and referred to the social problems caused by the crisis, the difficulties which might arise given the prospect of a period of economic stagnation in the European Union in 2012 and the wide range of situations in the different Member States in this respect. He noted the unfavourable developments in the social situation, with high unemployment, particularly long-term and youth unemployment. He then set out the measures that would be proposed under the Annual Growth Survey to mitigate the main obstacles of growth.

Mr ANDOR wound up his presentation by pointing out that the 2012 Annual Growth Survey must of course take into account the urgent situation resulting from the crisis, but must also project beyond the short term to try and address the long-term challenges. He stressed above all the need to act on two fronts – growth and employment – to achieve the goal of sustainable growth that would create jobs.

The PRESIDENT thanked Mr REHN and Mr ANDOR for their presentations. He recalled that the Commission had proposed the introduction of the Annual Growth Survey in January 2011 and had then submitted proposals on the European Semester and country-specific recommendations, which had subsequently been adopted.

He noted that the Annual Survey was the starting point for the annual cycle of economic governance in the EU and that it clearly set out what could be done at EU level and in which areas the Commission could help Member States to formulate and implement their national policies. Moreover, the proposals tabled by the Commission since January were still relevant, both in the short and medium term, and had to be implemented properly.

The PRESIDENT then used a PowerPoint presentation to explain the potential sources of growth in Europe – i.e. the fourth of the five interdependent elements in the roadmap to stability and growth (mobilising stability and growth enhancing policies).

Given the lack of room for fiscal manoeuvre, he felt that the Commission should focus its work on promoting other sources of growth: first, ensuring that Member States implemented and took full advantage of what had already been adopted, second, speeding up the adoption of pending legislative initiatives and, finally, ensuring that future Commission proposals were dealt with efficiently and quickly within the interinstitutional procedure.

These commitments needed to translate into recommendations for action at national level and, at EU level, had to feed into the priority areas of strengthened economic governance in the EU, the seven flagship initiatives of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and, lastly, Europe's modernised levers for

growth and jobs potential (the Single Market Act, trade and external policy and the Structural Funds).

The PRESIDENT concluded his presentation by once again underlining the appropriateness of the Europe 2020 strategy for growth and the benefits to be obtained from implementation of the necessary structural reforms. The right balance now needed to be struck between the need for intelligent fiscal consolidation, which safeguarded and even strengthened EU growth potential, and the measures capable of unleashing this growth.

The PRESIDENT then opened the debate by asking Members to focus on addressing two essential points, the identification, firstly, of obstacles to growth and jobs in their respective areas and, secondly, of measures to overcome these obstacles and other possible growth levers that could be implemented.

The Commission held an in-depth debate, discussing among other things the importance of a promising macroeconomic climate to allow the drivers of growth to proceed at full steam and the importance of finding a swift and adequate response to the problems and questions concerning sovereign debt. It also noted the need to mobilise the political resolve in the Member States to put the objectives of European governance into practice and to establish the political conditions for overcoming the obstacles to growth. Other points raised included the value of properly analysing the factors causing the fragmentation and complexity of the European internal market, the potential offered by a more environment-friendly economy, the importance of education, the need to promote higher education, innovation and measures to allow young people a more rapid entry onto the labour market.

The PRESIDENT thanked Mr REHN, Mr ANDOR and the other Commission Members for their contributions to the debate. The discussions had demonstrated the need, at the start of the European semester, for the Commission to provide a realistic analysis of the economic situation, and also to emphasise sources of – and models for – growth, future prospects and a promising vision. He concluded by noting the Commission's agreement that it should show the way towards a new economy, given the current context and the strengthening of the Commission's role in

European economic governance.

He asked the Commission Members to forward to him their suggestions on and contributions to the annual growth exercise within two weeks, before it was adopted on 23 November. It might be possible to include a report on Member States' tax policy as an annex to the Annual Growth Survey.

The Commission took note of the results and conclusions of the policy debate.

14. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

14.1. LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

- i) Amendment of Directive 2001/112/EC relating to fruit juices and certain similar products intended for human consumption (Directive) - PERELLÓ RODRÍGUEZ report – 2010/0254 (COD) (SI(2011)395)**

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2011)395.

- ii) Conclusion of the work of the Inter-Institutional Working Group on decentralised agencies – Draft Common Understanding (SI(2011)396/2)**

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2011)396/2.

- iii) First radio spectrum policy programme (Decision) – HÖKMARK report – 2010/0252 (COD) (SI(2011)397/3)**

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2011)397/3.

- iv) Amendment of Regulation (EC) 1083/2006 as regards certain provisions relating to financial management for certain Member States experiencing or threatened with serious difficulties with**

respect to their financial stability (Regulation) – HÜBNER report – 2011/0211 (COD)
(SI(2011)398)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2011)398.

v) Amendment of Council Directive 78/660/EEC on the annual accounts of certain types of companies as regards micro-entities (Directive) – LEHNE report – 2009/0035 (COD)
(SI(2011)402)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2011)402.

vi) Amendment of Council Regulation (EC) 1698/2005 as regards certain provisions relating to financial management for certain Members States experiencing or threatened with serious difficulties with respect to their financial stability (Regulation) – DE CASTRO report – 2011/0209 (COD)
(SI(2011)405 and /2)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2011)405 and /2.

vii) Patent package – Enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection (Regulation) – RAPKAY report – 2011/0093 (COD) / Enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection with regard to the applicable translation arrangements (Council Regulation) – BALDASSARE report – 2011/0094 (CNS) / Draft Agreement on the European and Community Patents Court (Council document 7928/09) – LEHNE report
(SI(2011)406/2)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2011)406/2.

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

(SP(2011)8593)

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(2011)8593, drawn up following the October II part-session of Parliament, the contents of which were noted.

14.2. RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL

ix) Programming of Council business

(SI(2011)404; SI(2011)409)

The Commission took note of the information in SI(2011)404 and SI(2011)409 on the Council meetings between 3 and 23 November.

x) Conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the United States of America on the processing and transfer of Passenger Name Record (PNR) data by air carriers to the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) (2007 PNR agreement) (Council Decision) – IN 'T VELD report – 2009/0187 (NLE)

(SI(2011)383/3)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2011)383/3.

xi) Results of the meetings of the European Council (Brussels, 23 and 26 October), the summit of Heads of State or Government of the euro area member countries (Brussels, 26 October), and the G20 summit (Cannes, 3 and 4 November)

(SI(2011)390; SI(2011)391; SI(2011)400; INFO(2011)1033)

The PRESIDENT reviewed the intense political activity of the past two weeks, noting the accelerating pace of events and the fact that there was

already a considerable degree of uncertainty surrounding some of the decisions adopted at the latest European Council as a result of the recent developments in Greece and Italy.

He reminded the meeting that the Commission had paved the way for the European Council and the euro-area summit by approving on 12 October a roadmap to stability and growth calling for an integrated and complete response, and commented that in-depth discussions had been held on the five elements of the roadmap at both these meetings.

On the question of Greece, he referred to the agreement on private sector participation and the conclusion of the work on a second financial assistance programme. He also mentioned the stepping-up of measures to enable the leverage of the European Financial Stability Facility to be substantially increased and the decisions taken with a view to restoring confidence in the European banking sector.

He was particularly pleased that the Summit conclusions had emphasised the role of the Community method and had supported the role of the Commission – in the context of the ‘six-pack’ provisions and the European semester – with regard to the evaluation, surveillance and coordination of national economic and budgetary policies, despite strong pressure in favour of intergovernmental solutions, since that was the only path that ensured the effective implementation of decisions and cohesion between the countries that were members of the euro area and those that were not.

The PRESIDENT noted that these additional responsibilities involved changes in the way the Commission worked and he had therefore decided to appoint Mr REHN as Vice-President with responsibility for economic and monetary affairs and the euro, while Mr ŠEMETA would be responsible for Eurostat, so that the gathering and processing of data would be completely separate from economic analysis (see also items 5.7, 5.8, 7 and 8 of these minutes). He stressed the importance of these decisions, which were intended to guarantee the independent, objective and efficient exercise of the

Commission's powers with regard to the evaluation, surveillance, coordination and implementation of economic and budgetary policies, and in particular to anchor the euro in the Community method and institutions.

He said that the important thing at this time was to make rapid progress on adopting further proposals in the field of economic governance. In the longer term, he announced that the President of the European Council, the President of the Eurogroup and he himself had been invited to examine the possibility of a limited amendment to the Treaty to strengthen the euro. These questions would be discussed in depth at a seminar to be held by the Commission in January.

On the events of the past week, the PRESIDENT noted that the announcement of a referendum in Greece and the situation in Italy had made for a sombre mood at the G20 Summit in Cannes. He said that he had reminded the Greek Prime Minister, Georges Papandreou, on the fringe of the G20 meeting, that the Commission had every respect for Greek democracy, maintained its commitment to support Greece, and continued to support the decisions taken at the euro area summit, but Greece must in turn demonstrate its commitment to the decisions which it had itself supported. He said he had also called for national and political unity as the only means of restoring confidence and respecting commitments entered into. He hoped that a political solution would be found quickly so that the sixth instalment of aid could be paid out and a default avoided.

The PRESIDENT reported on the discussions, also held on the fringes of the G20 Summit, on the situation in Italy and Italy's decision to request International Monetary Fund (IMF) supervision to ensure that it was meeting its commitments. He said that the Commission would also carry out detailed assessment and monitoring of the situation, in accordance with the conclusions of the euro area summit and the G20 communiqué on this point, and he informed the meeting that a preliminary Commission technical mission was going to Italy that day.

The PRESIDENT then gave a brief summary of the practical results of the G20: (i) the G20 leaders' strong support for the action launched at the euro area summit and their call for it to be implemented quickly; (ii) the undertaking to ensure that the IMF had sufficient resources to play its systemic role in the world; (iii) agreement on an action plan for growth and employment; (iv) a commitment to continue to implement the reform of the financial markets and further strengthen financial regulation; (v) a constructive discussion on the tax on financial transactions; (vi) a pragmatic and realistic approach to trade, the G20 having restated its commitment to the Doha Round mandate - while being convinced of the need to review its approach for the 2012 negotiations - and having reaffirmed the importance of the World Trade Organisation and renewed the anti-protectionist undertaking it entered into in Toronto; (vii) results as regards food security; and (viii) agreement on maintaining the G20's informal status, with no secretariat but with a formalised troika and more activities aimed at non-member countries, and the strengthening of the Financial Stability Board.

The PRESIDENT said that, at the end of the Summit, he had called on all the leaders of the G20 to turn their attention as a matter of urgency to restoring confidence and doing more, at global level, to stimulate growth.

He was pleased with the position occupied by the Commission in the debate but said that he was concerned about the international consequences of some of the decisions taken by a number of European governments. He called on European leaders to show more dignity, and called for a total commitment by the 27 to support the necessary measures and a common objective.

The Commission went on to discuss the following matters:

- given the spread of Greece's economic and political difficulties to other euro-area Member States and fears over the possible state of the economy in December, the need for the Commission to hold a debate ahead of the December European Council in order to establish a united position and set out a collective proposal;

- the importance of keeping a close eye on relations between the Member States in the euro area and those outside;
- the need to ensure that the comprehensive approach promoted by the roadmap to stability and growth was kept intact;
- the extremely sensitive domestic political situation in Greece on that day and the need to avoid any statement that might interfere with the process under way;
- the breakdown in confidence towards Greece caused by the announcement of a referendum, and the decision taken by the Eurogroup on Monday to ask the incoming Greek Government to give a written undertaking to comply with the programme of measures to consolidate its public finances;
- the problems posed by certain Member States, the limitations of a policy based on compromise and the scope for amending the Treaty;
- a concern that the new provisions of the Rules of Procedure must preserve collective responsibility;
- the case for appointing Mr REHN as Vice-President responsible for economic and monetary affairs and the euro, and the positive reaction of the markets and the European Parliament to that decision.

In conclusion the PRESIDENT acknowledged the need for a certain degree of restraint in communications on the situation in Greece in the days ahead to avoid putting any pressure on internal developments there. He reminded the meeting that everything had been done to help Greece and to enable it to remain in the euro area and to avoid a default.

He said that the general issues concerning the relationship between members and non-members of the euro area and amendment of the Treaty could usefully be discussed at the next Commission meeting on Tuesday

15 November in Strasbourg, but more specific points would have to be examined in greater detail at the Commission's next seminar in January.

The Commission took note of these points and of the documents distributed as SI(2011)390, SI(2011)391, SI(2011)400 and INFO(2011)1033.

14.3. RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT

xii) Results of the October II part-session of Parliament

(SP(2011)8573; SP(2011)8574)

The Commission took note of the information in SP(2011)8573 and SP(2011)8574 on the proceedings of the part-session of Parliament held in Strasbourg from 24 to 27 October.

xiii) Participation by Members of Parliament in international conferences

- Twenty-second meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (CICTA/ICCAT) (Istanbul, 11 to 19 November)

The Commission agreed to the request to the PRESIDENT from Mr Buzek, President of Parliament, concerning the attendance of three Members of the European Parliament at the above-mentioned meeting, with a reminder about the procedure to be followed.

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

xiv) Action taken on opinions of the European Economic and Social Committee – Second quarter 2011

(SC(2011)34/3)

The Commission approved document SC(2011)34/3 on the action taken by the Commission on the opinions adopted by the European Economic and

Social Committee during the second quarter of 2011, for transmission to that Committee.

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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 13.16.