



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2024) 2491 final

- English translation of the French version which is authentic -

Brussels, 12 June 2024

TEXTE EN

MINUTES

of the 2491st meeting of the Commission

held in Strasbourg

(Winston Churchill building)

on Tuesday 23 April 2024

(afternoon)

PV(2024) 2491 final

- English translation of the French version which is authentic -

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Single sitting: Tuesday 23 April 2024 (afternoon)

The sitting opened at 13.07 with Ms von der LEYEN, President, in the chair.

Present:

Ms von der LEYEN	President	
Ms VESTAGER	Executive Vice-President	
Mr DOMBROVSKIS	Executive Vice-President	
Mr ŠEFČOVIČ	Executive Vice-President	
Mr BORRELL i FONTELLES	High Representative / Vice-President	
Ms ŠUICA	Vice-President	
Mr SCHINAS	Vice-President	
Mr HAHN	Member	
Mr SCHMIT	Member	
Mr GENTILONI	Member	Items 9/10 (in part) to 11
Mr BRETON	Member	
Ms FERREIRA	Member	
Ms JOHANSSON	Member	
Mr LENARČIČ	Member	
Ms VÁLEAN	Member	
Mr VÁRHELYI	Member	
Ms URPILAINEN	Member	
Ms SIMSON	Member	
Mr SINKEVIČIUS	Member	
Ms McGUINNESS	Member	
Mr HOEKSTRA	Member	

Absent:

Ms JOUROVÁ	Vice-President
Mr WOJCIECHOWSKI	Member
Ms KYRIAKIDES	Member
Mr REYNDERS	Member
Ms DALLI	Member
Ms IVANOVA	Member

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

Ms MUSILOVA	Member of Ms JOUROVÁ's cabinet
Mr BERUTTI	Member of Mr WOJCIECHOWSKI's cabinet
Ms OJALA	Deputy Head of Cabinet to Ms KYRIAKIDES
Mr VELLA	Head of Cabinet to Ms DALLI
Ms ALEXANDROVA	Deputy Head of Cabinet to Ms IVANOVA

The following also sat in:

Mr WHELAN	Acting Head of Cabinet to the PRESIDENT	
Mr CALLEJA CRESPO	Director-General, Legal Service	
Ms SPINANT	Director-General, DG Communication	
Mr MAMER	Head of the Spokesperson's Service and Chief Spokesperson of the Commission	
Ms PODESTA	Deputy Chief Spokesperson of the Commission	
Ms PETKOVA	Director of Coordination and Administration in the PRESIDENT's cabinet	
Ms REICHSTEIN	Policy Coordinator: Relations with the European Parliament in the PRESIDENT's Cabinet	Items 1 to 9/10

Secretary: Ms JUHANSONE, Secretary-General, assisted by
Ms ALLOUIS-LE LOSTEC, Head of Unit in the Secretariat-General.

PV(2024) 2491 final

1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2024) 2491/FINAL; SEC(2024) 2491/FINAL)

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

2. WEEKLY MEETING OF HEADS OF CABINET

(RCC(2024) 2491)

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Heads of Cabinet held on Monday 22 April 2024.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

(PV(2024) 2487; PV(2024) 2487, PART II; PV(2024) 2488)

The Commission approved the minutes of its 2487th and 2488th meetings of 20 and 27 March 2024 and decided to hold over approval of the minutes of its 2489th and 2490th meetings of 10 and 17 April 2024 until a later meeting.

4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

(RCC(2024) 92)

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group (GRI) held on Friday 19 April 2024 (RCC(2024) 92).

The Commission approved the lines proposed for the following points:

- **Amendment of Regulation (EU) 2021/1173 as regards an EuroHPC initiative for start-ups to boost European leadership in trustworthy Artificial Intelligence (Council Regulation) – CARVALHO report –**

2024/0016 (NLE)

Line set out in SP(2024) 346/2.

- **Objection pursuant to Rule 111 – Commission Delegated Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the amount of the visa fee – C(2024) 1759 – 2024/2686 (DEA)**

Line set out in SP(2024) 354.

- **Objection pursuant to Rule 111 – Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) .../... of 14 March 2024 amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1675 as regards adding Kenya and Namibia to the table in point I of the Annex and deleting Barbados, Gibraltar, Panama, Uganda and the United Arab Emirates from that table – C(2024) 1754 – 2024/2688 (DEA)**

Line set out in SP(2024) 348.

- **Objection pursuant to Rule 111 – Commission Delegated Directive of 14 March 2024 amending Annex IX to Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards adding feedstock for the production of biofuels and biogas – C(2024) 1585 – 2024/2694 (DEA)**

Line set out in SP(2024) 329.

- **Objection pursuant to Rule 111 – Commission Delegated Regulation amending Regulation (EU) 2015/2283 of the European Parliament and of the Council on novel foods as regards the definition of ‘engineered nanomaterials – C(2024) 1612 – 2024/2691 (DEA)**

Line set out in SP(2024) 330.

- **Objection pursuant to Rule 112 – Draft Commission Implementing Decision laying down rules for the application of Directive (EU) 2019/904 of**

the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the calculation, verification and reporting of data on recycled plastic content in single-use plastic beverage bottles, repealing Commission Implementing Decision (EU) – C(2023) 8062 – D095662 – 2024/2695 (RSP)

Line set out in SP(2024) 370.

- **Detailed arrangements for the exercise of the right to vote and stand as a candidate in elections to the European Parliament for Union citizens residing in a Member State of which they are not nationals (Council Directive – recast) – BOESELAGER report – 2021/0372 (CNS)**

Line set out in SI(2024) 211.

- **Oral Question O-000007/2024 – ‘The European Parliament’s right of inquiry’**

Line set out in SP(2024) 347.

The Commission approved the lines proposed for the following points, for transmission to the European Parliament:

- **Commission replies to the legislative resolutions (and list of non-legislative resolutions without formal reply) adopted by the European Parliament at its March 2024 part-session**

Line set out in SP(2024) 350.

- **Commission replies to the non-legislative resolutions adopted by the European Parliament at its February I 2024 part-session**

Line set out in SP(2024) 351.

The Commission approved the line proposed for the following point, for transmission to the Economic and Social Committee:

- **Follow-up to opinions of the Economic and Social Committee – Plenary session of January 2024**

Line set out in (SC(2024) 12/2).

The Commission took note of the following points:

- **Production and marketing of plant reproductive material in the Union, amendment of Regulations (EU) 2016/2031, 2017/625 and 2018/848 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repeal of Council Directives 66/401/EEC, 66/402/EEC, 68/193/EEC, 2002/53/EC, 2002/54/EC, 2002/55/EC, 2002/56/EC, 2002/57/EC, 2008/72/EC and 2008/90/EC (Regulation on plant reproductive material) (Regulation) – DORFMANN report – 2023/0227 (COD)**

Information set out in SP(2024) 304.

- **Production and marketing of forest reproductive material, amendment of Regulations (EU) 2016/2031 and 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council and repeal of Council Directive 1999/105/EC (Regulation on forest reproductive material) (Regulation) – DORFMANN report – 2023/0228 (COD)**

Information set out in SP(2024) 355.

- **Plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques and their food and feed, and amendment of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 (Regulation) – POLFJÄRD report – 2023/0226 (COD)**

Information set out in SP(2024) 305.

- **‘Banking Union’ – Amendment of Regulation (EU) No 806/2014 as regards early intervention measures, conditions for resolution and funding of resolution action (Regulation) – MARQUES report – 2023/0111 (COD) /**

Amendment of Directive 2014/59/EU as regards early intervention measures, conditions for resolution and financing of resolution action (Directive) – NIEDERMAYER report – 2023/0112 (COD) / Amendment of Directive 2014/49/EU as regards the scope of deposit protection, use of deposit guarantee schemes funds, cross-border cooperation, and transparency (Directive) – PETER-HANSEN (ex-URTASUN) report – 2023/0115 (COD)

Information set out in SP(2024) 310.

- **Amendment of Regulation (EU) 2016/1011 as regards the scope of the rules for benchmarks, the use in the Union of benchmarks provided by an administrator located in a third country, and certain reporting requirements (Regulation) – FERNÁNDEZ report – 2023/0379 (COD)**

Information set out in SP(2024) 311.

- **Amendment of Directives (EU) 2009/65/EC, 2009/138/EC, 2011/61/EU, 2014/65/EU and (EU) 2016/97 as regards the Union retail investor protection rules (Directive) – YON-COURTIN report – 2023/0167 (COD)**

Information set out in SP(2024) 308.

- **European Union labour market statistics on businesses, repeal of Council Regulation (EC) No 530/1999 and Regulations (EC) No 450/2003 and (EC) No 453/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council (Regulation) – TINAGLI report – 2023/0288 (COD)**

Information set out in SP(2024) 306.

- **European statistics on population and housing, amendment of Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 and repeal of Regulations (EC) No 763/2008 and (EU) No 1260/2013 (Regulation) – JOVEVA (ex-PEREIRA) report – 2023/0008 (COD)**

Information set out in SP(2024) 307/2.

- ***‘Advanced passenger information’* – Collection and transfer of advance passenger information (API) for enhancing and facilitating external border controls, amending Regulation (EU) 2019/817 and Regulation (EU) 2018/1726, and repealing Council Directive 2004/82/EC (Regulation) – OETJEN report – 2022/0424 (COD) / Collection and transfer of advance passenger information for the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of terrorist offences and serious crime, and amendment of Regulation (EU) 2019/818 – (Regulation) – KANKO report – 2022/0425 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 312, further to SI(2024) 166 already approved by the Commission on 12 March 2024.

- **Amendment of Regulation (EU) 2016/399 on a Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Regulation) – GUILLAUME report – 2021/0428 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 325, further to SI(2024) 102 already approved by the Commission on 14 February 2024.

- **Import, export and transit measures for firearms, their essential components and ammunition, implementation of Article 10 of the United Nations’ Protocol against the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, supplement of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UN Firearms Protocol) (Regulation – recast) – LANGE report – 2022/0288 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 326, further to SI(2024) 189 already approved by the Commission on 20 March 2024.

- **Amendment of Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 as regards holders of Serbian**

passports issued by the Serbian Coordination Directorate (Koordinaciona uprava) (Regulation) – NEMEC report – 2023/0418 (COD)

Final agreed text in SP(2024) 365.

- **Amendment of Directive 2013/36/EU as regards supervisory powers, sanctions, third-country branches, and environmental, social and governance risks, and amendment of Directive 2014/59/EU (Directive) – FERNÁNDEZ report – 2021/0341 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 314, further to SI(2023) 279 already approved by the Commission on 11 July 2023 and SI(2023) 501, approved by the Commission on 6 December 2023.

- **Amendment of Regulation (EU) No 575/2013 as regards requirements for credit risk, credit valuation adjustment risk, operational risk, market risk and the output floor (Regulation) – FERNÁNDEZ report – 2021/0342 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 315, further to SI(2023) 279 already approved by the Commission on 11 July 2023, and SI(2023) 501, approved by the Commission on 6 December 2023.

- **Prevention of the use of the financial system for the purposes of money laundering or terrorist financing (Regulation) – HEINÄLUOMA & CARÊME report – 2021/0239 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 316, further to SI(2024) 89 already approved by the Commission on 14 February 2024.

- **Mechanisms to be put in place by the Member States for the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purposes of money laundering or terrorist financing and repeal of Directive (EU) 2015/849 (Directive) – NIEDERMAYER & TANG report – 2021/0250 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 317, further to SI(2024) 89 already approved by the Commission on 14 February 2024.

- **Establishment of the Authority for Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism and amendment of Regulations (EU) No 1093/2010, (EU) 1094/2010, (EU) 1095/2010 (Regulation) – RADEV & POPTCHEVA (ex-GARICANO) report – 2021/0240 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 318, further to SI(2024) 89 already approved by the Commission on 14 February 2024.

- **Amendment of Regulations (EU) No 648/2012, (EU) No 575/2013 and (EU) 2017/1131 as regards measures to mitigate excessive exposures to third-country central counterparties and improve the efficiency of Union clearing markets (Regulation) – HÜBNER report – 2022/0403 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 319, further to SI(2024) 104 already approved by the Commission on 14 February 2024.

- **Amendment of Directives 2009/65/EU, 2013/36/EU and (EU) 2019/2034 as regards the treatment of concentration risk towards central counterparties and the counterparty risk on centrally cleared derivative transactions (Directive) – HÜBNER report – 2022/0404 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 320, further to SI(2024) 104 already approved by the Commission on 14 February 2024.

- **Transparency and integrity of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) rating activities (Regulation) – LALUCQ report – 2023/0177 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 321, further to SI(2024) 107 already approved by the Commission on 14 February 2024.

- **Amendment of Regulations (EU) 2017/1129, (EU) No 596/2014 and (EU)**

No 600/2014 to make public capital markets in the Union more attractive for companies and to facilitate access to capital for small and medium-sized enterprises (Regulation) – SANT report – 2022/0411 (COD)

Compromise text in SP(2024) 322, further to SI(2024) 90 already approved by the Commission on 14 February 2024.

- **Amendment of Directive 2014/65/EU to make public capital markets in the Union more attractive for companies and to facilitate access to capital for small and medium-sized enterprises and repeal of Directive 2001/34/EC (Directive) – SANT report – 2022/0405 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 323, further to SI(2024) 90 already approved by the Commission on 14 February 2024.

- **Establishment of the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans (Regulation) – RESSLER & PICULA report – 2023/0397 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 313, further to SI(2024) 198 already approved by the Commission on 10 April 2024.

- **European Health Data Space (Regulation) – SOKOL & TARDINO report – 2022/0140 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 339, further to SI(2024) 173 already approved by the Commission on 20 March 2024.

- **Amendment of Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards multiannual survey programmes, notifications concerning the presence of regulated non-quarantine pests, temporary derogations from import prohibitions and special import requirements and establishment of procedures for granting them, temporary import requirements for high risk plants, plant products and other objects, the establishment of procedures for the listing of high risk plants, the content of**

phytosanitary certificates, the use of plant passports and as regards certain reporting requirements for demarcated areas and surveys of pest (Regulation) – AGUILERA report – 2023/0378 (COD)

Compromise text in SP(2024) 340, further to SI(2024) 170 already approved by the Commission on 12 March 2024.

- **Standards of quality and safety for substances of human origin intended for human application and repeal of Directives 2002/98/EC and 2004/23/EC (Regulation) – COLIN-OESTERLÉ report – 2022/0216 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 342, further to SI(2024) 12 already approved by the Commission on 16 January 2024.

- **Multiple-vote share structures in companies that seek the admission to trading of their shares on an SME growth market (Directive) – SANT report – 2022/0406 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 324, further to SI(2024) 91 already approved by the Commission on 14 February 2024.

- **Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network, amendment of Regulation (EU) 2021/1153 and Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repeal of Regulation (EU) 1315/2013 (Regulation) – THALER & RIQUET report – 2021/0420 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 327, further to SI(2024) 26 already approved by the Commission on 31 January 2024.

- **Amendment of Directive (EU) 2015/413 facilitating cross-border exchange of information on road-safety-related traffic offences (Directive) – ZŁOTOWSKI report – 2023/0052 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 328, further to SI(2024) 185 already approved by

the Commission on 20 March 2024.

- **Establishment of a Single Market emergency instrument and repeal of Council Regulation (EC) No 2679/98 (Regulation) – SCHWAB report – 2022/0278 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 334, further to SI(2024) 92 already approved by the Commission on 14 February 2024.

- **Amendment of Regulations (EU) 2016/424, (EU) 2016/425, (EU) 2016/426, (EU) 2019/1009 and (EU) No 305/2011 as regards emergency procedures for the conformity assessment, adoption of common specifications and market surveillance due to a Single Market emergency (Regulation) – SCHWAB report – 2022/0279 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 335, further to SI(2024) 92 already approved by the Commission on 14 February 2024.

- **Amendment of Directives 2000/14/EC, 2006/42/EC, 2010/35/EU, 2013/29/EU, 2014/28/EU, 2014/29/EU, 2014/30/EU, 2014/31/EU, 2014/32/EU, 2014/33/EU, 2014/34/EU, 2014/35/EU, 2014/53/EU and 2014/68/EU as regards emergency procedures for the conformity assessment, adoption of common specifications and market surveillance due to a Single Market emergency (Directive) – SCHWAB report – 2022/0280 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 336, further to SI(2024) 92 already approved by the Commission on 14 February 2024.

- **Approval and market surveillance of non-road mobile machinery circulating on public roads and amendment of Regulation (EU) 2019/1020 – VANDENKENDELAERE report – 2023/0090 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 337, further to SI(2024) 160 already approved by

the Commission on 12 March 2024.

- **Packaging and packaging waste, amendment of Regulation (EU) 2019/1020 and Directive (EU) 2019/904, and repeal of Directive 94/62/EC – (Regulation) – RIES report – 2022/0396 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 331, further to SI(2024) 169/3, already approved by the Commission on 27 March 2024, and SI(2024) 208, approved by the Commission on 10 April 2024.

- **Ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe (Directive – recast) – LÓPEZ report – 2022/0347 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 332, further to SI(2024) 147 already approved by the Commission on 5 March 2024.

- **Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence and amendment of Directive (EU) 2019/1937 (Directive) – WOLTERS report – 2022/0051 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 296, further to SI(2023) 585, already approved by the Commission by written procedure on 19 December 2023, and SI(2024) 192 approved by the Commission on 20 March 2024.

- **Amendment of Directives 2009/102/EC and (EU) 2017/1132 as regards further expanding and upgrading the use of digital tools and processes in company law (Directive) – RADEV report – 2023/0089 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 297, further to SI(2024) 174 already approved by the Commission on 20 March 2024.

- **Improving working conditions in platform work (Directive) – GUALMINI report – 2021/0414 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 338, further to SI(2024) 99 already approved by the Commission on 14 February 2024.

- **Amendment of Regulation (EU) 2019/881 as regards managed security services (Regulation) – CUTAJAR report – 2023/0108 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 343, further to SI(2024) 175 already approved by the Commission on 12 March 2024.

- **Measures to strengthen solidarity and capacities in the Union to detect, prepare for and respond to cybersecurity threats and incidents (Regulation) – GÁLVEZ MUÑOZ report – 2023/0109 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 344, further to SI(2024) 181 already approved by the Commission on 20 March 2024.

- **Establishment of a framework for setting ecodesign requirements for sustainable products and repeal of Directive 2009/125/EC (Regulation) – MORETTI report – 2022/0095 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 345, further to SI(2023) 561 already approved by the Commission on 19 December 2023.

- **Temporary trade-liberalisation measures supplementing trade concessions applicable to Ukrainian products under the Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Ukraine, of the other part (Regulation) – KALNIETE report – 2024/0028 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 309, further to SI(2024) 213 already approved by the Commission on 17 April 2024.

5. COORDINATION OF EXTERNAL ACTION (RCC(2024) 17)

The Commission took note of the operational conclusions in RCC(2024) 17 of the

meeting of the Group for External Coordination (EXCO) held on Wednesday 17 April 2024.

6. MONITORING THE APPLICATION OF EUROPEAN UNION LAW

STATE AID AND OTHER COMPETITION RULES

(SEC(2024) 350; RCC(2024) 96)

The Commission's decision on this agenda item is recorded in the special minutes.

7. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

7.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED

(SEC(2024) 119 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 15 and 21 April 2024.

7.2. EMPOWERMENT

(SEC(2024) 120 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 15 and 21 April 2024.

7.3. DELEGATION / SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS

(SEC(2024) 121 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedures between 15 and 21 April 2024 archived in Decide.

7.4. SIGNIFICANT WRITTEN PROCEDURES

(SEC(2024) 122 AND /2)

The Commission took note of the significant written procedures for which the time limit expired between 22 and 26 April 2024.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

(SEC(2024) 123)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

(PERS(2024) 39)

During the meeting, Mr HAHN presented four additional proposals for administrative decisions, which were submitted directly to the College for approval.

8.1. DG CLIMATE ACTION – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD15/16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL

(PERS(2023) 51 TO /4)

The Commission had before it applications under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii), Article 29(1)(b) and Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Deputy Director-General – ‘Innovation, Adaptation and Resilience, Stakeholder Relations’ in DG Climate Action (PERS(2023) 51 and /2).

It took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 23 January and 15 February 2024 (PERS(2023) 51/3 and /4).

The Commission proceeded to compare the applicants’ qualifications for the post. On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, and after consulting Mr HOEKSTRA, it then decided to appoint Mr Jan DUSIK to the post.

Mr HAHN highlighted the great skills, outstanding career and recognised

expertise of Mr DUSIK, and congratulated him on his appointment.

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

**8.2. SECRETARIAT GENERAL – AMENDMENT OF THE ORGANISATION CHART
(SEC(2024) 145)**

On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, the Commission decided:

- to create a temporary post of *hors classe* adviser for the Ukraine Peace Conference (SG.HCA.02); this post would be abolished upon the departure of the job-holder;
- to approve the new organisation chart of the Secretariat-General as set out in SEC(2024) 145.

These decisions would take effect immediately.

8.3. DG MIGRATION AND HOME AFFAIRS – END OF SECONDMENT IN THE INTEREST OF THE SERVICE OF AN OFFICIAL AT GRADE AD15 UNDER ARTICLES 37 AND 38 OF THE STAFF REGULATIONS

On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and after consulting Ms JOHANSSON, the Commission decided to end the secondment to the Council of the European Union in the interest of the service under Articles 37 and 38 of the Staff Regulations, previously granted to Mr Simon MORDUE, and to reinstate him in the temporary post of *hors classe* adviser – which he had held before his secondment – in DG Migration and Home Affairs; this post would be abolished upon the departure of the job-holder.

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

8.4. SECRETARIAT-GENERAL – TRANSFER OF AN OFFICIAL AT GRADE AD15 UNDER ARTICLE 7 OF THE STAFF REGULATIONS

On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and after consulting Ms JOHANSSON, the Commission decided to transfer in the interest of the service, under Article 7 of the Staff Regulations, Mr Simon MORDUE – reinstated *hors classe* adviser in DG Migration and Home Affairs – to the new temporary post of *hors classe* adviser for the Ukraine Peace Conference created in the Secretariat-General.

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

Mr HAHN congratulated Mr MORDUE, highlighting his great skills, rich and varied career and undeniable expertise.

The PRESIDENT explained that, at the end of his mission, Mr MORDUE would be assigned to the European External Action Service, under conditions to be approved at a later date in agreement with Mr BORRELL.

9. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS – PUTTING CHILDREN’S INTERESTS FIRST: A COMMUNICATION ACCOMPANYING THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATED CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS

(COM(2024) 188 AND /2; RCC(2024) 95)

10. COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON DEVELOPING AND STRENGTHENING INTEGRATED CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD

(C(2024) 2680 AND /2; SWD(2024) 98 AND /2; RCC(2024) 95)

Ms ŠUIČA first thanked the different Commission departments for their input on the proposed measures. She noted that although significant progress had been achieved in recent years to strengthen child protection – both inside and outside the EU – violence against children remained a major problem.

Stressing the vulnerability of children to all forms of violence, including physical, psychological and sexual abuse, she pointed out that, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), half of the world's children experienced some form of violence each year. In Europe, for example, around 20% of children were victims of sexual abuse each year, suicide was the second leading cause of death among young people aged between 15 and 19 years, and up to 29% of 15-year-olds reported being frequently bullied.

She also mentioned the particularly damaging effects on the well-being of children of various crises affecting the EU, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

To tackle these challenges, the package of proposed measures aimed to help the Member States develop and strengthen integrated child protection systems that put children first, in line with the promise made in 2021 in the EU strategy on the rights of the child.

The package consisted of a Commission Recommendation, accompanied by a Communication setting out the EU policy rationale behind it, with an annex listing the ways in which the EU could provide support to the Member States, and a Staff Working Document detailing the input on which the Recommendation was based.

This input was the product of exhaustive stakeholder consultations as well as an open public consultation exercise. In particular, contributions from over 1 000 children from 21 Member States had been received via the new EU children's participation platform. The analysis carried out by the EU Agency for Fundamental

Rights on the state of play of child protection in all Member States had also been taken into account.

Ms ŠUICA stressed that child protection was a responsibility shared among a wide range of partners – public authorities (at different levels of responsibility), private individuals and bodies, international organisations and civil society. Although national systems differed, the Member States faced common challenges, such as the lack of coordination between the various ministries and layers of responsibility. This posed a real risk of children slipping through the cracks.

She then went on to present the Recommendation's main proposals for helping the Member States and candidate countries, such as Ukraine, to adapt their systems to better protect children against all forms of violence. She emphasised the importance of fostering prevention, fighting discrimination, providing targeted support for children in need and their families, and promoting a zero-tolerance culture towards violence against children. Coordination and cooperation across the different sectors and competent authorities also had to be improved, by adopting an approach that brought together all the parties involved in child protection.

In order to protect children's safety, integrity and mental health, both online and offline, the Recommendation put the emphasis on prevention and combating cyberbullying and advocated the development of mental health strategies, especially for young children. It also encouraged the Member States to set up child-friendly justice systems and to guarantee the rights and best interests of migrant children. In addition, the Recommendation called for the deinstitutionalisation of children in care, with a transition towards family- or community-based care. Ms ŠUICA stressed how important it was for Member States to integrate child protection into their foreign policy, e.g. eradicating child labour, protecting children in armed conflicts and protecting children's rights in the face of climate change and environmental hazards.

The Recommendation invited the Member States to set up a general framework of integrated child protection systems and to ensure effective coordination between national, regional and local authorities, in order to guarantee the proper implementation of national and EU legislation in this area. It also recognised the importance of the EU children's participation platform and the EU network for children's rights in amplifying children's voices and exchanging best practice.

Ms ŠUIČA concluded by underlining the EU's firm commitment to child protection, as enshrined in the EU treaties, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and international law. There was already strong EU legislation in place in related areas, such as child sexual abuse, human trafficking, domestic violence and cross-border family law, and concerning digital- and migration-related challenges. The proposed Recommendation therefore sought to connect the dots between the existing tools to help Member States and candidate countries, such as Ukraine, strengthen their child protection systems in full compliance with the principle of subsidiarity.

In the course of the brief discussion that followed, the Commission raised the following main points:

- the College's full support for the package of measures, which represented a key step in strengthening child protection against all forms of violence, both inside and outside the EU;
- the need to continue the process of deinstitutionalising the protection system for children without parental care, by prioritising personalised and family-based care structures;
- regret at the insufficient progress made by the co-legislators to adopt Commission proposals to combat child sexual abuse, and the worrying increase in online child sexual abuse;

- in this context, the positive role played by the new digital services legislation, which gave the competent authorities more tools for removing illegal online content and properly verifying the age of users.

The PRESIDENT brought the debate to a close by thanking the Commissioners responsible for their remarkable work to guarantee child protection. While noting the significant efforts made to restrict access to child pornography websites, she regretted that certain considerations, such as respect for private life, were sometimes prioritised to the detriment of child safety. She therefore called for priority to be given to better protecting the most vulnerable.

Following these presentations, the Commission:

- approved the Communication in COM(2024) 188/2 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 and the Member States;
- adopted the Commission Recommendation in document C(2024) 2680/2 and decided to notify it to the Member States, to publish it for information in the Official Journal of the European Union and to transmit it for information to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the national parliaments, together with the staff working document distributed as SWD(2024) 98/2, the contents of which were noted.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Mr BORRELL briefly mentioned the significant risk that the European Parliament might – for the wrong reasons – reject the Commission’s proposal to update the list

of high-risk third countries in the context of fighting money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism. In this regard, he considered that the inclusion or removal of countries on the list should be based solely on compliance with precise financial and transparency criteria. He reminded the College that there were other mechanisms for raising specific issues concerning third countries.

He then turned to the joint meeting of Defence and Foreign Affairs Ministers held in Luxembourg on 22 April, whose agenda had been focused on developments in Ukraine and the Middle East. The Council meeting had been followed by a high-level forum on regional security and cooperation between the EU and the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC). This first informal meeting in this configuration represented a significant step forward in strengthening the strategic partnership between the EU, the Gulf Cooperation Council and their respective Member States.

Mr BORRELL stressed the urgent need to speed up the delivery of military equipment to Ukraine, including air defence systems to protect large cities and critical infrastructure regularly targeted by Russian bombardments. He reported that 70% of the country's electricity generation capacity had been destroyed by these attacks, jeopardising the stability of the energy network. He deplored the slow supply of military equipment despite a common recognition of the urgency of the situation by EU ministers, a problem that had also been noted at the NATO-Ukraine Council on 19 April. With regard to ammunition, he said that the first deliveries were expected by the end of June, with the rest to follow before the end of the year. He pointed out that the delays incurred in relation to the initial forecasts were due not to financial constraints but to structural deficits in production capacity.

With regard to the situation in the Middle East, Mr BORRELL welcomed the measured reaction of Gulf partners to the regional tensions and noted the difficulties in the negotiations between Israel and Hamas outlined by the Prime Minister of Qatar. Mr BORRELL felt that the stability of the region could not be guaranteed as long as the conflict in Gaza continued. He considered it essential to continue to push

for an immediate humanitarian pause leading to a lasting ceasefire and to urge Israel to refrain from carrying out any military operation in Rafah. He stressed the importance of close cooperation to prevent further escalation, particularly after Iran's attack on Israel on 13 April, which he pointed out had led to a political consensus on strengthening sanctions against Iran.

He highlighted the scale of humanitarian needs in Gaza and the importance of facilitating access to humanitarian aid. He saw a gradual improvement, in particular thanks to the opening of the Erez crossing point and the port of Ashdod, but pointed out that the volumes of aid distributed were still insufficient.

He also referred to the recent publication of the report of the Independent Review Group led by Ms Catherine COLONNA and tasked with assessing the neutrality of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). While concluding that UNRWA's approach in this respect was more developed than that of other, similar organisations, the report contained a number of recommendations to address persistent concerns. Mr BORRELL added that, despite the resumption of funding by most donors, UNRWA was still facing a significant financial shortfall.

Lastly, Mr BORRELL drew attention to the critical situation in Sudan and Ethiopia, where more than 300 000 people had died to date as a result of conflicts, and expressed his concern that there was no prospect of conflict resolution in the short term. He highlighted the considerable humanitarian needs that persisted despite the success of the International Humanitarian Conference for Sudan and the neighbouring countries held in Paris on 15 April, one year after the start of the civil war. The more than EUR 2 billion pledged on that occasion barely covered half the UN's needs.

A short discussion followed in which it was confirmed that the European Parliament would reject the Commission's proposal to update the list of high-risk third countries in the context of fighting money laundering and countering the financing

of terrorism because of political considerations that went beyond the scope of the proposal. The Commission would reformulate the proposal for the next European Parliament, noting, however, that it would be difficult to explain the situation to the countries concerned, which had already met the EU's transparency criteria.

The PRESIDENT informed the College of her recent telephone conversation with US President Joe BIDEN during which she had congratulated him on the approval by the US House of Representatives of substantial financial support for Ukraine totalling USD 61 billion. She felt that while this was excellent news for Ukraine and for the EU, it did not lessen the urgency for the EU to increase its military support for Ukraine. She concluded by stressing that the outcome of the conflict would have a defining impact on the future of the EU.

The Commission took note of this information.

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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 13.48.