



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2002)1579 final

Brussels, 11 September 2002

MINUTES

**of the 1579th meeting of the Commission
held in Strasbourg
(Winston Churchill Building)
on Tuesday 3 September 2002
(afternoon)**

These minutes were approved by the Commission at its 1580th meeting, held in Brussels on 11th September 2002.

They contain 15 pages.

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Single sitting: Tuesday 3 September (afternoon)

The sitting opened at 1330 hours with Mr KINNOCK, Vice-President, in the chair.

Present:

Mr KINNOCK Vice-President

Ms de PALACIO Vice-President

Mr MONTI

Mr FISCHLER

Mr LIIKANEN

Mr BOLKESTEIN

Mr BUSQUIN

Mr SOLBES

Mr VERHEUGEN

Mr PATTEN

Mr LAMY

Mr BYRNE

Mr BARNIER

Ms REDING

Ms SCHREYER

Mr VITORINO

Ms DIAMANTOPOULOU

Absent:

Mr PRODI President

Mr NIELSON

Ms WALLSTRÖM

The following sat in to represent absent Members of the Commission

Ms HOUTMAN	Deputy Chef de cabinet to the President
Mr MØRCH	A member of Mr Nielson's staff
Mr GRÖNBERG	A member of Ms Wallström's staff

The following also sat in

Mr MARENCO	Deputy Director-General, Legal Service	
Mr MAMER	Spokesman	
Mr SCHINAS	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Ms de Palacio	Item 8
Ms FLORES	A member of Mr Solbes's staff	Item 7

Secretary: Mr O'SULLIVAN, Secretary-General, assisted by Mr BISARRE, Director in the Secretariat-General.

**1. AGENDAS AND QUARTERLY ROLLING PROGRAMME
(OJ(2002)1579/3; SEC (2002)910/3; SEC(2002)927)**

The Commission took note of that day's agenda, the tentative agendas for future meetings, and the rolling programme of items to be entered on the agenda from 11 September to 27 November.

**2. WEEKLY MEETING OF CHEFS DE CABINET
(SEC(2002)1579)**

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Monday 2 September.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND SPECIAL MINUTES OF 1578th MEETING
(28 August)
(PV(2002)1578; PV(2002)1578, Part II)**

The Commission approved the minutes of its 1578th meeting.

4. PARLIAMENT

**4.1. PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS GROUP
(SP(2002)2775)**

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Parliamentary Affairs Group held on Friday 30 August.

It paid particular attention to the following:

a) Interinstitutional relations (point 1 of the record)

Waste electrical and electronic equipment

Hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2002)2730 for the conciliation committee meeting on 12 September.

Animal by-products not intended for human consumption

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2002)2729 for the conciliation committee meeting on 12 September.

b) Action taken on Parliament's opinions and resolutions (point 5 of the record)

The Commission adopted the replies to own-initiative resolutions adopted by Parliament to which the Commission had undertaken to reply (SP(2002)2669), for transmission to Parliament.

c) Other matters (point 8 of the record)

Application of Parliament's new Rules of Procedure

The Commission noted that the latest revision of Parliament's Rules of Procedure (CORBETT report) had entered into force; points covered included the arrangements for oral intervention by Commission Members in certain types of dossiers, and the possibility for the Commission to submit its position in writing on any amendment presented by Parliament at first reading. It agreed to take stock of the actual interpretation and application of some of these new rules in the light of experience gained during the coming period, on the basis of a document to be drawn up by the Secretariat-General.

5. WRITTEN PROCEDURES AND EMPOWERMENT

5.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED

(SEC(2002)911 to /5)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted by written procedure between 26 and 30 August.

5.2. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES

(SEC(2002)912)

The Commission took note of the following written procedures initiated between 26 and 30 August for the adoption of decisions with political implications:

Time limit: 04.09.2002

E/2002/1697 - COM(2002)484 DG TRADE

Twentieth annual Commission report to Parliament on the Community's anti-dumping and anti-subsidy activities - Overview of the monitoring of third-country anti-dumping, anti-subsidy and safeguard cases in 2001

E/2002/1702 - COM(2002)486 DG EMPL

Proposal for a Council Decision setting up an advisory committee for safety, hygiene and health protection at work

Time limit: 06.09.2002

E/2002/1710 - C(2002)3303 DG ELARG

Communication on the phasing-out of the PHARE programme in the
accessing countries; revision of the PHARE guidelines (2002-06);
Commission Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 2760/98
concerning the implementation of a programme for cross-border
cooperation in the framework of the PHARE programme

5.3. *EMPOWERMENT*

(SEC(2002)913 to /5)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording
decisions adopted under the empowerment procedure between 26 and
30 August.

5.4. *DELEGATION AND SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS*

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording
decisions adopted under the delegation procedure between 26 and 30 August,
as archived on the "Grefte 2000" (Registry) website.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS
(SEC(2002)914/2)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
(PERS(2002)118)

6.1. VACANCY NOTICES

DG BUDG - A1 post of Deputy Director-General

On a proposal from Mr KINNOCK, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms SCHREYER, the Commission approved the vacancy notice in PERS(2002)119 and /2 and asked DG ADMIN to publish it.

**6.2. DG SANCO - SELECTION OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE
EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY**
(C(2002)2852 to /4)

Mr BYRNE and Mr LIIKANEN reported on the applications received following publication of the vacancy notice for the post of Executive Director of the European Food Safety Authority, and on the outcome of the selection procedure.

On a proposal from Mr BYRNE and Mr LIIKANEN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, the Commission decided:

- to approve the decision to adopt a shortlist of three candidates for the post of Executive Director of the European Food Safety Authority, as set out in C(2002)2852/4;
- to authorise Mr BYRNE to communicate this decision to the Management Board of the Authority.

**7. STREAMLINING THE ANNUAL ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT
POLICY COORDINATION CYCLES
(COM(2002)487 to /4; SEC(2002)917)**

Mr SOLBES and Ms DIAMANTOPOULOU presented a communication on the streamlining and synchronisation of processes for coordinating the economic policy guidelines with the European employment strategy.

Mr SOLBES reminded the meeting that this was in response to a request from the European Council and met the need to simplify processes that had become too complex; the aim in particular, under the Treaty as it stood, was:

- to improve the effectiveness of policy coordination, particularly by means of better follow-up and assessment of the implementation of the guidelines by the Member States;
- to improve coherence and complementarity between the various processes and instruments, by giving priority to the medium term in drawing up the strategy in the economic and employment fields (package of guidelines to cover periods of three years from now on);
- to promote a wider sharing of responsibilities and commitments, particularly through greater participation by Parliament and the national parliaments, and better consultation of social partners and civil society;
- to increase the transparency and intelligibility of the policy coordination cycle and thereby its visibility and impact.

He proposed implementing the new system as from the preparations for the spring 2003 European Council, and explained the various stages of the process once this reform was in place.

Ms DIAMANTOPOULOU reminded the meeting of the underlying reasons for establishing a new framework for the preparation, adoption and evaluation of the

implementation of the guidelines and recommendations in these two subject areas, in particular the accretion over time of new processes whose timetables had not been harmonised.

The autonomy of the guidelines in each of the two subject areas (economic policy and employment strategy) would be maintained, with the broad economic policy guidelines (BEPGs) providing only a general framework for the guidelines and recommendations in the employment field.

The new process would also mean better economic governance, since access to more coherent information would facilitate increased involvement by Parliament and the national parliaments and for improved consultation of stakeholders and the wider community.

The Commission discussed:

- the need to make Parliament aware of the substantive advantages of this rationalisation, although its immediate effect would be to change the timetable for well-established procedures;
- the fact that the three-year cycle for the new guidelines package would not prevent the BEPGs and the employment guidelines from being adopted on an annual basis, but that, in the absence of any major new factor, the annual proposals could be succinct and deal with adjustments of a minor nature, while a full review would be carried out only every three years;
- the link to be made at a later stage between this initiative, presented at this stage under the existing Treaty provisions, and the work in progress on economic governance under the Convention on the future of the Union in the working party chaired by Mr HAENSCH.

Following this discussion, the Commission approved the communication in COM(2002)487/4 for transmission to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the European Central Bank.

The Commission asked Mr SOLBES to defend the Commission's position as set out in the communication at the informal Council meeting (Economic and Financial Affairs) on 6 and 7 September, particularly in comparison with the other ideas circulating in the Council on this matter.

8. COUNCIL MEETINGS
(SI(2002)947)

INFORMAL MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS (GYMNICH)
(HELSINGØR, 30 AND 31 AUGUST)

Mr PATTEN reported on the Foreign Ministers' discussions at their informal meeting in Helsingør on the following:

- the situation in Iraq;
- the situation in the Middle East;
- the International Criminal Court;
- Community food aid for Afghanistan and Africa;
- the floods in Europe in August;
- negotiations with Russia on Kaliningrad.

The speed and effectiveness of the Commission's action following the floods in August had been unanimously acclaimed.

Mr PATTEN would shortly be tabling a proposal for a negotiating mandate concerning Kaliningrad.

Mr VERHEUGEN reported on the very constructive discussions on enlargement, which had revealed unreserved support for the timetable and strategy put forward.

The Copenhagen European Council would need to decide on the actual date for accession, which would have to be stated in the Treaty.

The Commission took note of this information.

9. RELATIONS WITH NON-MEMBER COUNTRIES

EUROPEAN UNION/UNITED STATES TRADE RELATIONS (FOREIGN SALES CORPORATION) - WTO DECISION

Mr LAMY reported on the decision by the World Trade Organisation on Friday 30 August to authorise the European Union to impose customs sanctions of up to USD 4 billion on imports from the United States.

This decision on the amount of the retaliatory measures followed the basic decision, already taken by the WTO, on the non-conformity with WTO rules of the US tax legislation applicable to exports (taxation scheme equivalent to an export subsidy).

The amount of USD 4 billion corresponded exactly to the assessment made by the EU of the damage suffered by European companies since 2000, while the estimate presented by the US administration came to only USD 1 billion.

He reminded the meeting that President BUSH had announced in May 2002 that US legislation would be brought into line with WTO rules, and that a draft tax reform on these lines had already been tabled in the US Congress.

The Union's essential objective should be to secure speedy amendment of the US legislation, and the threat of applying sanctions on such a scale should help bring this about within a reasonable timescale.

The Commission took note of this information.

It thanked all the departments involved in making this case at the WTO, and in particular the lawyers of DG TRADE and the Legal Service.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

On the initiative of Ms de PALACIO, the Commission held a brief exchange of views on the political situation in Spain.

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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 1500 hours.