



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

**PV(2005)1719 final**

Brussels, 25 October 2005

**MINUTES**  
**of the 1719th meeting of the Commission**  
**held in Brussels**  
**(Berlaymont)**  
**on Thursday 20 October 2005**  
**(morning)**

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**PV(2005)1719 final**

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**Single sitting: Thursday 20 October 2005 (morning)**

The sitting opened at 09.44 with Mr BARROSO, President, in the chair. Items 12 and 13 were chaired by Ms WALLSTRÖM.

Present:

|              |                |               |
|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| Mr BARROSO   | President      | Items 1 to 11 |
| Ms WALLSTRÖM | Vice-President |               |
| Mr BARROT    | Vice-President |               |
| Mr KALLAS    | Vice-President |               |
| Mr FRATTINI  | Vice-President |               |
| Ms REDING    |                |               |
| Mr DIMAS     |                |               |
| Mr ALMUNIA   |                |               |
| Ms HÜBNER    |                |               |
| Mr BORG      |                |               |
| Mr POTOČNIK  |                |               |
| Mr FIGEL'    |                |               |
| Mr KYPRIANOU |                | Items 1 to 10 |
| Mr MICHEL    |                | Items 1 to 11 |
| Mme KROES    |                | Items 1 to 10 |
| Mr ŠPIDLA    |                |               |
| Mr PIEBALGS  |                |               |

Absent:

|                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Mr VERHEUGEN    | Vice-President |
| Ms GRYBAUSKAITĖ |                |
| Mr REHN         |                |
| Mr KOVÁCS       |                |
| Ms FISCHER BOEL |                |

Ms FERRERO-WALDNER

Mr McCREEVY

Mr MANDELSON

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

|                     |                                       |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Mr TEMPEL           | Chef de cabinet to Mr Verheugen       |
| Mr QUEST            | Chef de cabinet to Ms Grybauskaitė    |
| Mr FRUTUOSO DE MELO | Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr Rehn     |
| Mr SZÜCS            | Chef de cabinet to Mr Kovács          |
| Ms BORCHMANN        | A member of Ms Fischer Boel's staff   |
| Mr CHILD            | Chef de cabinet to Ms Ferrero-Waldner |
| Mr POWER            | Chef de cabinet to Mr McCreevy        |
| Mr LIDDLE           | A member of Mr Mandelson's staff      |
| Mr HOUBEN           | A member of Mr Mandelson's staff      |

**The following also sat in**

|                        |                                                      |                 |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Mr VALE DE ALMEIDA     | Chef de cabinet to the President                     |                 |
| Mr SANTAOLALLA GADEA   | Deputy Director-General (acting), Legal Service      |                 |
| Ms LE BAIL             | Commission Spokeswoman                               |                 |
| Ms VON SCHNURBEIN      | Spokeswoman                                          | Items 10 and 11 |
| Ms TORRES              | Spokeswoman                                          | Items 11 to 13  |
| Ms CORUGEDO STENERBERG | Press and Communication DG                           |                 |
| Mr ITALIANER           | Deputy Chef de cabinet to the President              |                 |
| Mr CABRAL              | Adviser <i>hors classe</i> in the President's Office |                 |
| Mr THEBAULT            | Chief Adviser in the President's Office              | Items 10 and 11 |
| Ms MARTINHO            | Chief Adviser in the President's Office              | Items 10 to 13  |
| Mr CYMBRON             | A member of the President's staff                    | Item 10         |
| Mr LAITENBERGER        | A member of the President's staff                    | Items 11 to 13  |

|              |                                        |                 |
|--------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Mr ELLIS     | A member of the President's staff      | Items 10 and 11 |
| Ms SPANOU    | A member of Mr Kyprianou's staff       | Items 10 to 13  |
| Mr SMULDERS  | Chef de cabinet to Ms Kroes            | Item 10         |
| Ms NAESAGER  | A member of Ms Fischer Boel's staff    | Items 11 to 13  |
| Mr GAMBS     | A member of Ms Ferrero-Waldner's staff | Items 10 to 13  |
| Ms SCHREIBER | Chef de cabinet to Mr Špidla           | Item 10         |
| Ms BUGNOT    | Secretariat-General                    | Item 11         |
| Mr SERVOZ    | Secretariat-General                    | Items 10 and 11 |
| Mr SANDLER   | Secretariat-General                    | Item 10         |
| Mr LEARDINI  | Secretariat-General                    | Item 11         |
| Mr SLEATH    | Secretariat-General                    | Items 10 and 11 |

Secretariat: Mr O'SULLIVAN, Secretary-General, assisted by Mr AYET PUIGARNAU, Director in the Secretariat-General, and Mr KERSTING, Unit Head in the Secretariat-General.

**1. AGENDAS**

**(OJ(2005)1719/3; SEC(2005)1295/2; SEC(2005)1317/3; SEC(2005)1322)**

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(2005)1719)**

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Tuesday 18 October.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND SPECIAL MINUTES OF 1718th MEETING  
(12 October)**

**(PV(2005)1718 and /2; PV(2005)1718, Part II)**

The Commission approved the minutes of its 1718th meeting.

**4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS**

**(SP(2005)1286)**

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group held on Friday 14 October (SEC(2005)1286).

It paid particular attention to the following points:

#### **4.1. LEGISLATIVE MATTERS**

##### ***i) Preparations for October II part-session***

(point 1.2.1 of the record)

In accordance with the rules in force, the Commission authorised the Commission Members responsible, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, Ms WALLSTRÖM and any other Members associated, to take a position on Parliament's amendments to its proposals. It paid particular attention to the following:

##### **2nd reading**

- BLOKLAND report - Shipments of waste,  
COM(2003)379, 03/0139 (COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)4031.

- DOYLE report - Fluorinated greenhouse gases,  
COM(2003)492, 03/0189A (COD)
- DOYLE report - Emissions from air-conditioning systems of motor vehicles  
COM(2003)492, 03/0189B (COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)4032/2 and authorised Mr DIMAS, in agreement with Mr VERHEUGEN, to continue contacts with Parliament and the Council with a view to reaching agreement at second reading on the regulation and the directive.

**1st reading**

- PACK report – Action programme in the field of lifelong learning  
COM(2004)474, 04/0153 (COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)4034 to /3.

- GRÖNER report – “Youth in action” programme (2007-13)  
COM(2004)471, 04/0152 (COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)4035 and /2.

- GRAÇA MOURA report – Culture 2007 programme (2007-13)  
COM(2004)469, 04/0150 (COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)4036 and /2.

- HIERONYMI report – Support programme for the European  
audiovisual sector (MEDIA 2007)  
COM(2004)470, 04/0151 (COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)4037 to /4.

- MAURO report – Trans-European transport and energy networks  
(Community financial assistance)  
COM(2004)475, 04/0154 (COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)4038.

- FLORENZ report – Noise emissions  
COM(2005)370, 05/0149 (COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)4089 and  
authorised Mr VERHEUGEN to continue contacts with Parliament and  
the Council with a view to reaching agreement at first reading.

### **Empowerment**

Under Article 13 of its Rules of Procedure the Commission empowered the Members concerned, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, Ms WALLSTRÖM and any other Members associated, to adopt its opinion on the amendments, together with any amended proposals, on the basis of the line set out in the documents concerned, once Parliament had given its opinion, and transmit them to the Council in accordance with Article 251(2)(c) of the Treaty, for the following:

- BLOKLAND report – Shipments of waste – SP(2005)4031
- DOYLE report – Fluorinated greenhouse gases– SP(2005)4032/2
- DOYLE report – Emissions from air-conditioning systems of motor vehicles – SP(2005)4032/2

#### ***ii) Council meeting (Agriculture and fisheries) (Luxembourg, 24 and 25 October)***

(point 1.2.2 of the record)

- Recovery of stocks of southern hake and Norway lobster

The Commission authorised Mr BORG to take a position at the Council meeting (Agriculture and fisheries) on 24 and 25 October along the lines set out in SI(2005)905.

## **4.2. RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT**

#### ***iii) Part-session of 12 and 13 October***

(SP(2005)4068)

The Commission took note of the information supplied relating to Parliament's part-session of 12 and 13 October (SP(2005)4068).

***iv) Action to be taken on Parliament's opinions***

(SP(2005)3994)

The Commission approved the proposed empowerment decisions relating to action to be taken on the amendments presented by Parliament under the codecision and consultation procedures requiring a single reading (SP(2005)3994).

**5. MONITORING THE APPLICATION OF COMMUNITY LAW**

***5.1. STATE AID - RECAPITULATIVE LIST***

***(SEC(2005)1328/2)***

The Commission adopted the decisions in the recapitulative list (SEC(2005)1328/2).

***5.2. INFRINGEMENTS - CASES POSTPONED BECAUSE OF UNAVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS - REGULARISATION***

***(SEC(2005)1321)***

The Commission adopted the decisions in SEC(2005)1321.

**6. WRITTEN PROCEDURES AND EMPOWERMENT**

***6.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED***

***(SEC(2005)1296 et seq.)***

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 10 and 14 October.

**6.2. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES**

***(SEC(2005)1297)***

The Commission took note of written procedures initiated between 10 and 17 October for the adoption of decisions with political implications.

**6.3. EMPOWERMENT**

***(SEC(2005)1298 et seq.)***

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 10 and 14 October.

**6.4. DELEGATION OF POWERS FOR FINANCING DECISIONS  
CONCERNING THE ANTI-FRAUD INFORMATION SYSTEM (AFIS)**

***(SEC(2005)1324)***

The Commission delegated powers to the Director-General of the European Anti-Fraud Office as set out in SEC(2005)1324.

**6.5. DELEGATION AND SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS**

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation procedure between 10 and 14 October, as archived on the "Grefte 2000" (Registry) website.

**7. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS**  
**(SEC(2005)1299)**

**ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**  
**(PERS(2005)130)**

**7.1. PUBLICATIONS OFFICE –EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF AN A\*14**  
**DIRECTOR POST (EU-10)\***  
**(PERS(2005)129)**

On a proposal from Mr KALLAS in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr FIGEL', the Commission authorised the publication under Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations of the vacancy notice in PERS(2005)129 for the A\*14 function of Director, Directorate A (Official Journal and access to law) in the Publications Office. This function was reserved for a national of one of the new Member States.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**OTHER MATTERS**

**7.2. AUDIT PROGRESS COMMITTEE - MEETING OF 26 SEPTEMBER**  
**(SEC(2005)1325)**

The Commission took note of the information in SEC(2005)1325.

**8. COMMISSION DECISION UNDER ARTICLE 81(1) OF THE EC TREATY**  
**(CASE COMP/C.38.281/B.2) – RAW TOBACCO ITALY**  
**(C(2005)4012 to /7; SEC(2005)1344)**

The Commission:

- took note of the opinion of the Advisory Committee on Restrictive Practices and Dominant Positions of 10 and 17 October in C(2004)4012/2 and /4;
- took note of the final report of the Hearing Officer of 11 October in C(2005)4012/3;
- adopted, in the authentic languages (Italian and English), the decision in C(2005)4012/5 and /7, noting that *Deltafina SpA*, *Universal Corporation*, *Mindo Srl*, *Transcatab SpA in Liquidazione*, *Standard Commercial Corporation* and *Dimon Inc.* (now merged into *Alliance One International Inc.*), *Romana Tabacchi SpA*, the *Associazione Professionale Trasformatori Tabacchi Italiani (APTI)* and *Unione Italiana Tabacco (UNITAB)* had infringed Article 81(1) of the EC Treaty, and imposing fines on these companies and bodies totalling €56.052 million;
- decided that the decision in C(2005)4012/5 and /7 would be notified to the companies concerned, together with the final report of the Hearing Officer;
- decided that the most important parts of the decision, together with the opinions of the Advisory Committee and the final report of the Hearing Officer, would be published in the official languages in the Official Journal (with business secrets removed);
- decided to publish the decision (with business secrets removed) on the internet.

**9. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LISBON COMMUNITY PROGRAMME:  
PROPOSAL FOR A PARLIAMENT AND COUNCIL DIRECTIVE ON  
IMPROVING THE PORTABILITY OF SUPPLEMENTARY PENSION  
RIGHTS**

**(COM(2005)507 to /4; SEC(2005)1293 and /2; SEC(2005)1331)**

The Commission adopted the proposal in COM(2005)507/4, took note of the impact assessment in the staff paper SEC(2005)1293/2, and decided to transmit both documents to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

**10. EUROPEAN VALUES IN THE GLOBALISED WORLD – COMMISSION  
CONTRIBUTION TO THE OCTOBER MEETING OF HEADS OF STATE  
AND GOVERNMENT**

**(COM(2005)525 to /3)**

The PRESIDENT introduced the communication he was tabling. This was a political document, which set out the main points for reflection and which therefore met the expectations for the informal meeting to be held on 27 October at Hampton Court. The key message was the need to reconcile reform and modernisation with the preservation of the European values shared by all the Member States. In view of the difficulty of meeting the major economic and social challenges confronting the EU, the status quo was certainly not an option. The communication pointed to Europe's potential for responding to these challenges and for successful reform, and made specific suggestions for the role that the EU and the Member States must play. The most important factor was the need to hit the necessary growth and job-creation targets as part of the renewed Lisbon strategy. At the same time, the Commission must enhance yet further its coordinating and catalysing role in the

new partnerships with the Member States, and the communication identified a number of subject areas where this approach could be applied, for instance in the field of energy. Finally, the communication contained a very concrete proposal, viz. the creation of an adjustment fund to deal with certain effects of globalisation.

The PRESIDENT concluded by emphasising the absolute need to have available the budgetary resources needed to achieve the strategy outlined in the communication, and therefore the need to reach agreement very quickly on the financial perspective 2007-13, which created an obvious link with the initiative he was proposing to take in this connection (see the following item of these minutes). In his remarks at Hampton Court, apart from the content of the communication currently on the table, which would have been made public by then, he would be addressing a series of other questions relating particularly to the external dimension and to justice, freedom and security, as an addition to the Commission's political message. That afternoon he would be presenting the communication to the open conference of chairmen of Parliament's political groups.

In an in-depth exchange of views on the communication, the Commission, noting unanimously the very high quality of the text, considered in particular the following aspects:

- the importance for the Commission of remaining proactive and united on such an important problem;
- the sound balance of the message to be sent, in that it was not exclusively defensive. It was specified that neither the ageing of the population nor globalisation should be seen as intrinsically negative factors; the EU must play a major role in dealing with these phenomena;
- the importance of protecting the Community approach against any intergovernmental move to create various high-level groups in different policy

areas, and of close agreement between the Commission and Parliament for this purpose;

- the usefulness of making it clear that the EU, under the Treaties, had a significant social role to play, an example of which was the adoption that day of an important proposal for a directive on the portability of supplementary pension rights;
- the need to take a perfectly balanced communication approach in this matter.

Following its discussions, the Commission decided to make the following changes to the communication in COM(2005)525/3:

- the footnote on page 2 was deleted;
- chart 2 would be amended to show also the situation of the EU, Japan and the United States;
- the text introducing chart 5 would be revised to stress the importance of competitiveness linked to knowledge;
- at the end of section 3.2 the words “*Of course, these extraordinary changes provoke strong reactions. Yet*” and the paragraph starting with “*From mobile telephones ...*” were deleted;
- in the text box on the sustainability of social systems (end of section 4), the third paragraph to read “*They could increase ... this does not **always** ... Cutting expenditure is another option, but could **in other cases** ...*”. The last sentence of the penultimate paragraph to read: “**Work has already been launched with the Member States on a common consolidated ...**”;
- the title of section 4.1 to read “*Who should do what? The role of Europe*”;

- in section 4.2.1 a new indent was inserted to read: “*Encourage enterprise, through conditions which allow European businesses, particularly small and medium-sized businesses, to be set up and thrive.*”;
- in the same section, the indent on the financial perspective to read “*Agree the Financial prospects ... rural development, **education**, research ... which can complement **the structural funds, and notably the European Social Fund**, by providing a swift ...*”;
- the first indent of section 4.2.3 to read “*Create an environment that ... in this area, **building on the success and experience of Airbus or Galileo. These should be** assisted by support ...*”;
- the conclusion to read “*The need for reform and modernisation is clear ... Europe has a central role to play **and the Commission will ensure that this will be the case. It will take the initiative, not least within its “Plan D” for dialogue with citizens, to explain why Europe is more relevant than ever in providing solutions to the challenges we face. The Commission stands ready to work with ...***”.

The Commission approved the communication as thus amended, for transmission to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

## 11. FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVE 2007-13

The PRESIDENT reported on the political initiative he intended to take, in line with the conclusions of the Commission seminar held on 20 September, with the aim of contributing to the efforts to relaunch the negotiations on the next financial perspective, so that the Union, on the basis of an agreement, would be in a position

to comply not only with the obligations resulting from the latest enlargement but also with those it had assumed vis-à-vis the developing countries. The means to carry on normal operation from 2007 would be in peril if agreement were not secured before the end of the year, and the PRESIDENT would be writing to Mr BLAIR, President of the Council, and Mr BORRELL, President of Parliament, setting out his initiative, which had two objectives: to facilitate the efforts of the British Presidency to reach agreement (particularly in trying to convince the Presidency of the urgency of relaunching the negotiations and the vital importance of choosing the option of building an agreement on the basis of the Luxembourg proposal rather than the option of submitting substantially revised proposals to the Member States) and to renew the alliance with Parliament, since an agreement without Parliament was inconceivable. After reviewing the major political questions which had played an important role in the failure of the talks in June (calls for the modernisation of the budget; the contradiction claimed by some between the “expenditure of the past” on cohesion and agriculture and the “expenditure of the future” concerning the various aspects of the Lisbon Strategy; statements to the effect that the budget would not have the capacity to respond to change), the PRESIDENT presented the five proposals of his initiative to help the Union get out of the impasse.

Under the first proposal, the contribution to the Lisbon Strategy of expenditure on the cohesion policy would be strengthened by introducing an objective of at least 60% on average of the resources intended for the Member States to be allocated in particular through research and innovation, human capital, business services, major European infrastructures, improvement of energy efficiency and renewable energy, with a similar mechanism being introduced for rural development. The result of the proposed measure should be that “Lisbon” expenditure would increase its share to one third of the Union budget.

The second proposal was to set up a fund for adjusting to globalisation (a “shock absorber”) operating outside the budget and to provide, via existing Structural Fund instruments, various forms of aid to cover, for instance, the costs incurred by workers who lose their jobs as a result of globalisation in seeking new jobs.

While stressing the need to comply with the 2002 budgetary agreement on the common agricultural policy, the third aspect of the initiative proposed that the switch of funds allocated for direct aid to farmers into rural development, including Natura 2000, be increased by 1% per year from 2009.

The fourth proposal suggested the launch in 2009, by means of a White Paper, of a complete re-examination of all aspects of the Union budget; expenditure, revenue and structure should all be reviewed with modernisation as the goal.

The fifth proposal concerned in particular the budgetisation of the European Development Fund, which should remain a key objective for the Commission, although a compromise solution might prove necessary. It would be best to conclude an interinstitutional agreement so as to ensure the role of Parliament as regards the definition of policies in the field of external expenditure.

The Commission noted the information provided by the PRESIDENT and held an in-depth exchange of views, referring in particular to the following points:

- the urgency for the Commission of acting in favour of a relaunch of the debate and the timing of the planned approach;
- the absolutely central importance for the Union of having its new financial perspective in place before 1 January 2007, in order to be able to achieve the political objectives laid down;

- the implications of any failure to reach agreement on the next financial perspective, among other things for the new Member States as well as for research policy;
- the need for the Commission to stress that it was not satisfied with the Luxembourg proposal (particularly as regards heading 1A) while continuing to follow the approach already agreed of not amending its initial proposals; the need also to spell out clearly the things that the Luxembourg proposal would prevent the Union from doing;
- the likely repercussions of each of the five proposals;
- the fact that heading 1B instruments could not be used for financing operations relating to heading 1A.

The PRESIDENT concluded by drawing attention to his intention to emphasise, in his speeches to Parliament and at the informal meeting of Heads of State and Government on 27 October, the Commission's dissatisfaction with the previous Presidency's proposal. Meanwhile the letter, to which he would make the amendments agreed during the meeting, would be distributed in its amended form to all Commission Members.

**12. RECOMMENDATION FOR A COUNCIL DECISION ESTABLISHING, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 104(8) OF THE EC TREATY, THAT THE ACTION TAKEN BY HUNGARY IN RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION OF 8 MARCH 2005 PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 104(7) OF THE TREATY IS PROVING TO BE INADEQUATE (SEC(2005)1305 to /3; SEC(2005)1319)**

Mr ALMUNIA briefly introduced the dossier by reminding the meeting that on 8 March the Council, on a Commission proposal, had adopted a recommendation under Article 104(7) of the EC Treaty concerning the excessive deficit procedure with respect to Hungary. In the light of recent developments and the latest information available, it was clear that Hungary's budgetary position had significantly deteriorated since July, when the Commission had last made an assessment. It was important for the Commission to send a strong message in the context of the assessment of the implementation of the stability and growth pact. Mr ALMUNIA proposed that the Commission establish, under Article 104(8) of the EC Treaty, that the action taken by Hungary in response to the Council recommendation of 8 March was inadequate.

Mr ALMUNIA also confirmed that he intended shortly to bring before the Commission (possibly at a seminar) the whole problem of budgetary surveillance and questions of economic governance.

The Commission took note of this information and approved the communication in SEC(2005)1305/3 for transmission to the Council.

### **13. OTHER BUSINESS**

#### ***13.1. DEVELOPMENTS ON THE OIL MARKETS AND ACTION TAKEN IN RESPONSE TO HIGH OIL PRICES (SEC(2005)1340)***

The Commission took note of the information note distributed by Mr PIEBALGS.

**13.2. MINISTERIAL SEMINAR ON THE REFORM OF COHESION  
POLICY: TWO POLITICAL INITIATIVES  
(SEC(2005)1367)**

The Commission took note of the information note distributed by  
Ms HÜBNER.

**13.3. THIRD EUROPEAN WEEK OF REGIONS AND CITIES: OPEN DAYS  
2005  
(SEC(2005)1371)**

The Commission took note of the information note distributed by  
Ms HÜBNER.

**13.4. SITUATION OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS IN CEUTA AND MELILLA**

Mr FRATTINI reported on the serious crisis caused by the continuous flow into Ceuta and Melilla of illegal immigrants, mostly from sub-Saharan Africa. Data contained in a report recently drawn up following a technical mission to the regions most affected, particularly in Algeria and Morocco, illustrated the scale of the problem. On the initiative of the PRESIDENT and Ms FERRERO-WALDNER, the Commission had taken emergency measures involving the release of €40 million. Mr FRATTINI also referred to the possibility of introducing an emergency fund, currently being considered by the departments under his authority. A political consensus had been reached at the Council meeting (Justice and home affairs) on 12 October on the central role allocated to the Commission for taking initiatives and coordinating them in several areas, particularly concerning:

- increased monitoring of the whole length of the border between Algeria and Morocco, with technical assistance from the European agency for external borders;

- the commitment to negotiations with Algeria on a readmission agreement;
- the development of a genuine Community approach by the strengthening of the Commission's ability, supported by the Member States, to assume its role as leader in combating illegal immigration.

Finally, Mr FRATTINI noted that, given the current situation, measures to improve local conditions in the countries of origin, and a policy to avoid trafficking in human beings, must be regarded as priority. He would shortly be visiting the capitals of the Member States most concerned.

The Commission took note of this information and noted that concrete proposals to deal with the problems raised would be put before it under the usual procedures.

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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 ended at 13.15.