



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2005)1725 final

Brussels, 13 December 2005

MINUTES
of the 1725th meeting of the Commission
held in Brussels
(Berlaymont)
on Wednesday 7 December 2005
(morning)

PV(2005)1725 final

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Single sitting: Wednesday 7 December 2005 (morning)

The sitting opened at 0908 hours with Mr BARROSO, President, in the chair. Items 11 (in part), 13 and 14 were chaired by Ms WALLSTRÖM.

Present:

Mr BARROSO	President	Items 1 to 11 (in part) and 12
Ms WALLSTRÖM	Vice-President	
Mr VERHEUGEN	Vice-President	Items 1 to 11 (in part) and 12
Mr BARROT	Vice-President	
Mr KALLAS	Vice-President	
Mr FRATTINI	Vice-President	
Ms REDING		
Mr ALMUNIA		
Ms HÜBNER		
Mr BORG		
Ms GRYBAUSKAITÉ		
Mr POTOČNIK		
Mr FIGEL'		
Mr KYPRIANOU		
Mr REHN		
Mr MICHEL		
Mr KOVÁCS		
Ms KROES		
Ms FISCHER BOEL		
Ms FERRERO-WALDNER		
Mr McCREEVY		
Mr ŠPIDLA		
Mr MANDELSON		Items 1 to 11 (in part) and 12
Mr PIEBALGS		Items 1 to 11 (in part) and 12

Absent:

Mr DIMAS

The following sat in to represent absent Members of the Commission

Ms KONTOU Chef de cabinet to Mr Dimas

The following also sat in

Ms DURAND	Deputy Director-General of the Legal Service	
Mr VALE DE ALMEIDA	Chef de cabinet to the President	Items 1 to 11 (in part) and 12
Mr LAITENBERGER	Commission Spokeswoman	
Ms CORUGEDO STENEBOURG	Press and Communication DG	
Mr ITALIANER	Deputy Chef de cabinet to the President	Items 1 to 11 in part
Mr THEBAULT	Chief Adviser in the President's Office	Items 1 to 11 in part
Mr ELLIS	Member of the President's Office	Items 1 to 11 (in part) and 12
Mr SZÜCS	Chef de cabinet to Mr Kovács	
Ms SCHREIBER	Chef de cabinet to Mr Špidla	Items 1 to 11 (in part) and 12
Mr REDONNET	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr Mandelson	Item 12
Mr MOAVERO-MILANESI	Deputy Secretary-General	Items 1 to 11 in part
Ms BUGNOT	Secretariat-General	Item 11 (in part)
Mr LEARDINI	Secretariat-General	Items 1 to 11 in part
Mr SLEATH	Secretariat-General	Item 11 (in part)

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

1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2005)1725/3; SEC(2005)1580/2)

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

2. WEEKLY MEETING OF CHEFS DE CABINET

(SEC(2005)1725)

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Monday 5 December.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND SPECIAL MINUTES OF 1724th MEETING

(30 November)

(PV(2005)1724; PV(2005)1724, Part II)

The Commission approved the minutes of its 1724th meeting.

4. MONITORING THE APPLICATION OF COMMUNITY LAW

STATE AID - RECAPITULATIVE LIST

(SEC(2005)1635)

The Commission adopted the decisions in the recapitulative list (SEC(2005)1635).

5. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

5.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED

(SEC(2005)1581 et seq.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 28 November and 2 December.

5.2. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES

(SEC(2005)1582)

The Commission took note of written procedures initiated between 28 November and 2 December for the adoption of decisions with political implications.

5.3. EMPOWERMENT

(SEC(2005)1583 et seq.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 28 November and 2 December.

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 28 November and 2 December, as archived on the "Greffé 2000" (Registry) website.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS
(SEC(2005)1584/3)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
(PERS(2005)146/3)

**6.1. DG COMP – FIRST COMMUNICATION UNDER ARTICLE 50 OF THE
STAFF REGULATIONS**

The Commission decided to initiate the procedure laid down in Article 50 of the Staff Regulations with respect to an A*15 official.

6.2. DG AGRI.B – APPOINTMENT OF AN A*14/15 DIRECTOR
(PERS(2005)136 to /4)

The Commission had before it the list of candidates for the post of Director of the Relations with Other Institutions, Communication and Documentation Directorate in the Agriculture and Rural Development Directorate-General, published under Article 29(1a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations (PERS(2005)136 and /2).

The Commission took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 21 and 27 October 2005 (PERS(2005)136/3 and /4).

The Commission proceeded to compare the applicants' qualifications for the post. It also considered the applicants' ability, efficiency and conduct in the service. the Commission, on a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms FISCHER BOEL, decided to appoint Ms Maria Angeles BENITEZ SALAS to the vacant post.

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

6.3. DG AGRI.D – APPOINTMENT OF AN A*14/15 DIRECTOR**(PERS(2005)135 to /3)**

The Commission had before it the list of candidates for the post of Director of the Direct Support, Market Measures, Promotion” Directorate in the Agriculture and Rural Development Directorate-General, published under Article 29(1a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations (PERS(2005)135).

The Commission took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 21 and 27 October 2005 (PERS(2005)135/2 and /3).

The Commission proceeded to compare the applicants' qualifications for the post. It also considered the applicants' ability, efficiency and conduct in the service. the Commission, on a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms FISCHER BOEL, decided to appoint Mr Hermanus VERSTEIJLEN to the vacant post.

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

6.4. DG EAC.D – APPOINTMENT OF AN A*14/15 DIRECTOR**(PERS(2005)61 to /3)**

The Commission had before it the list of candidates for the post of Director of the Youth, Sport and Relations with the Citizen Directorate in the Education and Culture Directorate-General, published under Article 29(1a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations (PERS(2005)61).

The Commission took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 28 and 30 June 2005 (PERS(2005)61/2 and /3).

The Commission proceeded to compare the applicants' qualifications for the post. It also considered their ability, efficiency and conduct in the service. On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr FIGEL’, it then decided to appoint Mr Pierre MAIRESSE to the vacant post.

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

**6.5. JRC.E – APPOINTMENT OF AN A*14/15 DIRECTOR
(PERS(2005)45; PERS(2005)55 to /4)**

The Commission had before it the list of candidates for the post of Director of the Institute for Transuranium Elements in the Joint Research Centre in Karlsruhe, published under Article 29(1a)(i) and (iii) and subsequently Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations (PERS(2005)45 and PERS(2005)55 and /2).

The Commission took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 20 October and 10 November 2005 (PERS(2005)55/3 and /4).

The Commission proceeded to compare the applicants' qualifications for the post. On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr POTOČNIK, it then decided to appoint Mr Thomas FANGHÄNEL to the vacant post.

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

**7. COMMISSION COMMUNICATION TO PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL,
THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE
OF THE REGIONS – INTERIM REPORT ON THE FOLLOW-UP TO THE
INFORMAL MEETING OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT AT
HAMPTON COURT (27 OCTOBER)
(COM(2005)645 and /2)**

The Commission approved the communication in COM(2005)645/2 for transmission to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

8. COMMISSION COMMUNICATION TO PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS ON THE SUPPORT OF ELECTRICITY FROM RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES

(COM(2005)627 to /3; (SEC(2005)1571 and /2; (SEC(2005)1603)

9. COMMISSION COMMUNICATION TO PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS – BIOMASS ACTION PLAN

(COM(2005)628 to /4; SEC(2005)1573 to /3; (SEC(2005)1603)

The Commission:

- approved the communications set out in COM(2005)627/3 and COM(2005)628/4;
- took note of the impact studies in the staff papers distributed as SEC(2005)1571/2 and SEC(2005)1573/3;
- decided to transmit these documents to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

10. OTHER MATTERS

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HIGH-LEVEL GROUP ON THE EXTENSION OF TRANS-EUROPEAN TRANSPORT NETWORKS TO NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

(SEC(2005)1636)

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

11. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

(SEC(2005)1576)

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group held on Friday 2 December (SEC(2005)1576).

It paid particular attention to the following points:

11.1. LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

(SI(2005)1195; SP(2005)4761)

i) Preparations for December 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 – Batteries and accumulators and spent batteries and accumulators COM(2003)723, 03/0282 (COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)4765 and /2.

- SCHWAB report – Machinery, COM(2000)899, 01/0004 (COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)4778/2.

- ROTHE report – Energy end-use efficiency, COM(2003)739, 03/0300(COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)4779 and /2.

- WORTMANN-KOOL report – Charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures (“Eurovignette”), COM(2003)448, 03/0175(COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)4780.

- COSTA report – Implementation of the International Safety Management Code within the Community, COM(2003)767, 03/0291(COD)

The Commission took note of document SP(2005)4781 and noted that, at this stage, no amendment had been tabled on the common position, which should enable this item to be concluded at second 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 – Batteries and accumulators and spent batteries and accumulators – SP(2005)4765 and /2
- SCHWAB report – Machinery – SP(2005)4778/2
- ROTHE report – Energy end-use efficiency – SP(2005)4779 and /2
- WORTMANN-KOOL report –Charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures (“Eurovignette”) –SP(2005) 4780

1st reading

- NUNO ALVARO report – Retention of data processed in connection with the provision of public electronic communication services, COM(2005)438, 05/0182(COD) – SI(2005)1195

Mr FRATTINI reported on the latest developments in the Council. There had been broad agreement by qualified majority on a compromise text from the Presidency at the Council meeting (Justice and Home Affairs) of 2 December. It was based on a first-pillar legal basis as proposed by the Commission and there were good prospects of agreement at first reading in plenary in Parliament in December 2005. Mr FRATTINI reviewed the various interests that the compromise under discussion in reconciled satisfactorily, viz. security level, compliance with fundamental rights, challenges for the economic sector concerned and compatibility with the state aid rules. If Parliament voted in favour, Mr FRATTINI pointed out that there would be a major innovation in the adoption of a first-pillar legislative instrument to combat terrorism.

Ms REDING stated that there had been excellent cooperation in the internal preparation and the interinstitutional progress of this matter, enabling good results to be achieved in good time.

The Commission took note of this information and authorised Mr FRATTINI and Ms REDING, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms KROES, to continue the negotiations following the line set out in SP(2005)4782, taking into account SP(2005)4782/2, with a view to reaching agreement at first reading on the basis of the compromise text approved by the Council on 2 December.

- ROURE report – European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (2007) – Towards a Just Society, COM(2005)225, 05/0107 (COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)4783.

- GARGANI report – Term of office of presidents, executive directors, directors and assistant directors of decentralised agencies, COM(2005)190,

05/0072 to 0076(COD), 05/0081 to 0083 (COD), 05/0085 to 0088(COD),
05/0077 to 0080(CNS), 05/0084 and 0089(CNS)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)4784.

- KAUPPI report – Markets in financial instruments, as regards certain deadlines, COM(2005)253, 05/0111(COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)4785 and /2.

- LEHIDEUX report – Measures for Sugar Protocol countries – COM(2005)266, 05/0117(COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)3926/2.

- EVANS report – Rights of persons with reduced mobility travelling by air – COM(2005)47, 05/0007 (COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)4242/2 and /3.

- LEHNE report – Annual and consolidated accounts of certain types of company, COM(2005)725, 04/0250 (COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SP(2005)4858.

ii) Action to be taken on Parliament's opinions

(SP(2005)4761)

The Commission empowered the Commission Members concerned, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms WALLSTRÖM and any other Members associated, to adopt the amended proposals as well as the opinions at second reading in the relevant codecision procedure and to transmit to the Council and Parliament (cf. SP(2005)4761).

11.2. RELATIONS WITH THE COUNCIL

(SI(2005)1197)

iii) Employment, Social Policy, Health, Consumers (8 and 9 December)

(point 1.3 of the record)

Organisation of working time, CERCAS ALONSO report, 04/0209(COD)

The Commission adopted the line set out in SI(2005)1158/2, taking into account the note SI(2005)1158/3.

iv) Extraordinary Council meeting (Competitiveness) (13 December)

(point 1.4 of the record)

Dossier “REACH”, SACCONI reports, 03/0256-0257(COD)

The Commission authorised Mr VERHEUGEN and Mr DIMAS to support a Presidency compromise which would obtain a qualified majority at the extraordinary Council meeting (Competitiveness) on 13 December, following the line set out in note SI(2005)1166/4 and in accordance with note SP(2005)4275/2.

v) Financial Perspective 2007-13 conclave (Brussels, 7 December)

The PRESIDENT opened the discussion on the dossier by reminding the meeting of the position he had taken publicly in the last few days replying to the presentation by the Council Presidency of its “negotiation box” on the financial framework 2007-13. He proceeded on the basis of four fundamental principles, namely the need:

- for an ambitious and open Europe showing solidarity, i.e. an enlarged, reformed and competitive Europe, which would entail certain costs;
- to make a success enlargement, including future accessions;
- to equip itself with a healthy budget management; and
- to establish a fair financing system and balanced burden-sharing.

The PRESIDENT felt that the solution presented satisfied none of these principles and, consequently, did not meet the EU’s real needs. Having stated

that it was unacceptable as it stood, he pointed out that agreement should ultimately be reached not only between the Member States but also between the institutions, Parliament being expected to play its institutional role to the full.

The PRESIDENT reviewed the aspects of the proposal which presented particularly serious problems for the Commission, such as the general sharp cut in expenditure, the inadequate level of investment, the failure to modernise the budget, the excessively timid answer to the question of the British rebate, and the surprising reduction in the amounts allocated to heading 3B (Citizenship). But the most disappointing factors of the “negotiation box” were the inequality of proposals for the new Member States, with heavy reductions in resources devoted to cohesion and an apparent flexibility which they would be granted by way of compensation, causing a real risk of a two-speed Europe, given also the prospects for the cohesion policy after 2014; and the negative affects of changes proposed by the current Council Presidency for sound financial management: a budget filled with exceptions, programmes functioning with more complicated rules and less transparency in implementation, which would only strengthen the uncertainty and the lack of rigour in programme management.

The PRESIDENT reminded the meeting of the ideas suggested recently by the Commission, which had been adopted in part and subject to qualifications in the “negotiation box”, and considered that the Council Presidency should be given the chance to lay the basis for an agreement before the European Council. In this connection, he emphasised the Commission’s responsibility to make an active and positive contribution to the conclusion of such an agreement, by promoting the general interest in favour of an ambitious, open and cohesive Europe.

Having mentioned the next stages of the negotiation, including the top-level contacts scheduled for the next few days, the PRESIDENT wished to have the

views of the whole Commission in order to decide on the position he would take at that day's conclave of Foreign Ministers.

The Commission held an in-depth exchange of views on the dossier, dealing with the following questions in particular:

- aspects linked to the negotiating strategy, such as the level of information available to the Commission; political time management, including possible adjustments to be made to the strategy as the European Council drew nearer; the position that Parliament could be expected to take; the role of the Council Presidency; domestic political constraints affecting all players in the negotiation;
- the role of facilitator that the Commission should play at defining moments in the European integration process such as this;
- the refusal to contribute to establishing a two-speed Europe and the need to seek an agreement advantageous to all the Union countries;
- the imaginative solutions that the Commission could present to the European Council, in the light of the development of the work;
- the effects, both political and operational, of failure to reach an agreement under the British Presidency, and the cost of absence of agreement, in particular for the multiannual programmes and the new policies.

Following this exchange of views, the PRESIDENT noted the Commission's unanimous support for the line which he had proposed and which he intended to follow at that day's conclave. He reminded the meeting that the Commission would have the opportunity to come back to this matter at its meeting of 13 December in Strasbourg, with a view to the European Council to be held in Brussels on 15 and 16 December. He wound up the debate by thanking the Commission Members for the support and trust they had offered Ms GRYBAUSKAITĖ and himself for the continuation of negotiations.

vi) Transport (5 December)

Mr BARROT summarised the results secured at the recent Council meeting (Transport) and drew particular attention to the unanimous political agreement on the 3rd railway package and on International rail passengers' rights and obligations. With regard to air transport, Mr BARROT reported on the progress of negotiations between the EU and the United States on an agreement concerning this sector and on progress on aviation safety, particularly as regards companies in non-member countries, and Galileo. He concluded by mentioning that the previous day, in the conciliation procedure, Parliament and the Council had reached an agreement on driving time and rest times of lorry drivers, thereby making considerable progress in social provisions in transport.

The Commission took note of this information.

vii) Economic and Financial Affairs (6 December)

Mr KOVÁCS outlined the results of the debate on reduced VAT rates at the last ECOFIN Council. In the absence of a (unanimous) decision at this stage, the Presidency had decided to refer the dossier to the European Council. If disagreement still persisted, certain Member States were concerned at the prospect of a legal void after 1 January 2006. They had asked the Commission to refrain from taking infringement proceedings against Member States who were acting contrary to the rules by failing to reinstate normal rates for labour-intensive services. Until agreement had been reached, Mr KOVÁCS was prepared to reply favourably to this request. Subject to the results of the European Council, the future Austrian Presidency had already indicated its intention of entering this item, as a priority, on the agenda for the first ECOFIN Council of its Presidency on 24 January 2006.

Following a brief discussion, the Commission authorised Mr KOVÁCS to follow the line set out above.

11.3. RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT

(SP(2005)4846)

viii) Action taken on Parliament's opinions and resolutions

(point 3.3.2 of the record)

Addition to the communication on the action taken on the opinions and resolutions of Parliament adopted during the October I and II part-sessions: action taken on the legislative resolutions on fluorinated gases (DOYLE reports)

The Commission adopted and decided to transmit to Parliament documents SP(2005)4593 and /2 on the action taken on the legislative resolutions on fluorinated gases (DOYLE reports) adopted at the October II part-session.

Addition to the action taken on the non-legislative resolutions of Parliament adopted during the October I part-session: action taken on the Resolution on “The urban dimension in the context of enlargement” (BEAUPUY report)

The Commission adopted and decided to transmit to Parliament document SP(2005)4849 on the action taken on the non-legislative resolution on “The urban dimension in the context of enlargement” adopted during the October I part-session.

ix) Meeting of Parliament on 30 November and 1 December

The Commission took note of the information presented to it on the results of the part-session of Parliament (cf. SP(2005)4846).

12. RELATIONS WITH NON-MEMBER COUNTRIES

12.1. WTO NEGOTIATIONS

(SEC(2005)1619)

Mr MANDELSON and Ms FISCHER BOEL reported, for the last time before the WTO ministerial meeting in Hong Kong, on the progress of the

negotiations concerning the Doha Development Agenda. Referring to the complexity and specific nature of the negotiations in progress as well as to the sensitive issues at stake and the interests of the multiple players involved, Mr MANDELSON expressed his disappointment with the progress made so far. He mentioned the final draft declaration prepared by the Director-General of the WTO, Mr Pascal Lamy, and emphasised the need to improve it, in particular by a more balanced consideration of all the areas being negotiated. Mr MANDELSON also mentioned the efforts made jointly with Ms FISCHER BOEL at the informal ministerial meeting of G4+ (European Community, United States, Brazil and India plus Australia and Japan) in Geneva on Friday and Saturday, which had produced no results concerning the arrangements for market access in the most important areas. Regarding the priority objectives to be achieved by the European Community in Hong Kong, Mr MANDELSON emphasised:

- the need to seek an agreement on the structure of the arrangements for access to markets rather than on the figures in order to facilitate the work;
- the need to maintain the proposal presented by the European Community on 28 October, and the request by the other parties to the negotiations for concessions as regards non-agricultural and industrial products (NAMA), services and commercial rules;
- as regards access to agricultural markets, the current proposal could be enhanced by a commitment by the European Community to make the treatment of sensitive products more predictable and transparent;
- the need for a cautious attitude to the request to set a cut-off date for withdrawing subsidies for agricultural exports, particularly in the context of the “development” package and the likelihood that the United States would offer to grant access free of customs duties and quotas to products exported by least developed countries (LDCs).

Without wishing to prejudice the development of the last stage of negotiations leading up to the ministerial meeting in Hong Kong, Mr MANDELSON explained the crucial role played by the communication on the eve of the meeting in Hong Kong: it should be more assertive and offensive in order to clarify the European position. He also mentioned the need for a strong political signal for the LDC and ACP countries. Regarding the follow-up to the negotiating round in spring 2006, Mr MANDELSON did not rule out the need to review the process, particularly by giving an increased role to the Director-General of the WTO as well as assessing the expectations of the European Community.

While agreeing with Mr MANDELSON's comments, Ms FISCHER BOEL drew the Commission's attention to the differences of opinion subsisting between two G4 countries concerning access to agricultural markets and the repercussions that an imbalanced opening of these markets could have on the LDC.

The Commission took note of these comments. It held a brief exchange of views on several aspects of the support given by the various Member States to the negotiations being carried out by Mr MANDELSON and Ms FISCHER BOEL, as well as on how best to ensure a high degree of transparency throughout the negotiation process.

The PRESIDENT concluded:

- by noting the need to avoid repeating the failure of Cancun at Hong Kong;
- by emphasising the willingness to increase in a balanced manner the level of ambition of the draft final declaration presented by the Director-General of the WTO, without losing sight of the offensive interests of the European Community;
- by highlighting the need to reach an agreement on the “development” package, which would undoubtedly confirm the commitment of the

European Community to the LDC and to their efforts to respond to the challenge of globalisation;

- by referring to the link between this dossier and the negotiations in progress on next financial perspective, the result of which would have more impact on the level of EU ambition in the later stages of the Doha round.

**12.2. MEETING OF G7 FINANCE MINISTERS AND GOVERNORS OF
CENTRAL BANKS (LONDON, 2 AND 3 DECEMBER)
(SEC(2005)1644)**

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

**12.3. EU-OPEC DIALOGUE (VIENNA, 2 DECEMBER)
(SEC(2005)1645)**

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

**12.4. EU– UKRAINE SUMMIT (KIEV, 1 DECEMBER)
(SEC(2005)1643)**

The Commission took note of the information note distributed by Ms FERRERO-WALDNER.

**12.5. VISITE TO PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES (29 AND 30 NOVEMBER)
(SEC(2005)1634)**

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

13. COMMISSION COMMUNICATION TO PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL: A STRONGER PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND LATIN AMERICA

(COM(2005)636 to /4; SEC(2005)1590 and /2; SEC(2005)1613 ET /2; (SEC(2005)1602)

Ms FERRERO-WALDNER briefly presented the communication on a stronger partnership between the European Union and Latin America, which the Commission planned to approve by the urgent written procedure on Thursday 8 December. She pointed to the need for the two regions to work together on a common approach based on dialogue and on their shared values in order to become stronger on the international stage, particularly in the multilateral field. She also expressed her firm conviction that the strengthened partnership between the EU and the countries of Latin America would make a valuable contribution to the efforts to tackle the social inequalities and exclusion that threatened the positive development initiated in this region some years ago. Underlining the importance of sending a positive signal to the Latin American partners clearly indicating the Union's interest in these countries, Ms FERRERO-WALDNER reported on the preparation in progress of the next EU – Latin America – Caribbean summit to be held in Vienna in May 2006.

Ms FERRERO-WALDNER stated more specifically that the objective of the communication was to tackle the four major challenges facing the partnership between the Union and Latin America, viz.: strengthening the influence of the two regions on the world stage through more targeted and better-quality dialogue; promoting regional integration as well as the growth of trade and of investment possibilities for European companies; supporting the fight in Latin America against social inequalities and drugs as well as upholding democracy; improving mutual understanding, particularly through increased educational exchanges.

The Commission took note of this information.

**14. GREEN PAPER – PROMOTING HEALTHY DIETS AND PHYSICAL
ACTIVITY: TOWARDS A EUROPEAN STRATEGY FOR THE
PREVENTION OF OVERWIEGHT, OBESITY AND CHRONIC DISEASES
(COM(2005)637 to /4; (SEC(2005)1601)**

Mr KYPRIANOU briefly presented the Green Paper on the prevention of overweight, obesity and chronic diseases, which the Commission plans to approve by the urgent written procedure on Thursday 8 December.

He pointed out that the situation as regards overweight and obesity required speedy action, since it gave rise to serious public health problems and could have negative effects on the operation of the internal market; certain Member States had already planned national legislative and regulatory measures in this area. In response to the requests of the Member States and industry for the Commission to take an initiative in this highly important area, Mr KYPRIANOU had chosen to draw up this Green Paper, the objective of which was to launch a public consultation on a strategy concerning healthy diets and physical activity.

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 ended at 1119 hours.