



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2007)1772 final

Brussels, 24 January 2007

MINUTES

**of the 1772nd meeting of the Commission
held in Strasbourg
(Winston Churchill Building)
on Tuesday 16 January 2007
(afternoon)**

PV(2007)1772 final

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Single sitting: Tuesday 16 January (afternoon)

The sitting opened at 13.08 with Mr BARROSO, President, in the chair.

Present:

Mr BARROSO	President
Ms WALLSTRÖM	Vice-President
Mr VERHEUGEN	Vice-President
Mr BARROT	Vice-President
Mr KALLAS	Vice-President
Ms REDING	
Mr DIMAS	
Mr ALMUNIA	
Ms HÜBNER	
Ms GRYBAUSKAITĖ	
Mr POTOČNIK	
Mr FIGEL'	
Mr KYPRIANOU	
Mr MICHEL	
Mr KOVÁCS	
Ms KROES	
Ms FISCHER BOEL	
Mr McCREEVY	
Mr ŠPIDLA	
Mr PIEBALGS	
Ms KUNEVA	
Mr ORBAN	

Absent:

Mr FRATTINI

Vice-President

Mr BORG

Mr REHN

Ms FERRERO-WALDNER

Mr MANDELSON

The following sat in to represent absent Members of the Commission

Mr SANT	A member of Mr BORG's staff
Mr SCHWAIGER	Deputy Chef de Cabinet to Ms FERRERO-WALDNER

The following also sat in

Mr VALE DE ALMEIDA	Chef de cabinet to the President
Mr PETITE	Director-General, Legal Service
Mr CARVOUNIS	Deputy Director-General, Communication DG
Mr LAITENBERGER	Commission Spokesman
Mr GASPAR	Acting Director-General, Bureau of European Policy Advisers (BEPA)

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

1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2007)1772/3; SEC(2007)18/2)

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(2007)1772)

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Monday 15 January.

3. MINUTES OF 1771st MEETING (10 January)

(PV(2007)1771)

The Commission approved the minutes of its 1771st meeting.

4. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

4.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED

(SEC(2007)19 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 8 and 12 January.

4.2. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES
(SEC(2007)20)

The Commission took note of the sensitive written procedures for which the time limit expired between 15 and 19 January.

4.3. EMPOWERMENT
(SEC(2007)21 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 8 and 12 January.

4.4. DELEGATION AND SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation procedure between 8 and 12 January, as archived on the "Greffé 2000" (Registry) website.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS
(SEC(2007)22/2)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
(PERS(2007)8)

5.1. DG RELEX – INTERNAL PUBLICATION OF A VACANCY NOTICE
FOR AN AD15/16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL
(PERS(2007)6)

The Commission, on a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms FERRERO-WALDNER, authorised the publication, under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations, of the vacancy notice in PERS(2007)6 for a post of Deputy Director-General in the External Relations DG.

This decision would take effect immediately.

5.2. *DG RELEX – INTERNAL PUBLICATION OF A VACANCY NOTICE FOR AN AD15/16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL (PERS(2007)7)*

The Commission, on a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms FERRERO-WALDNER, authorised the publication, under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations, of the vacancy notice in PERS(2007)7 for a post of Deputy Director-General in the External Relations DG.

This decision would take effect immediately.

5.3. *DG DEV – APPOINTMENT OF AD14/15 DIRECTOR (PERS(2006)162 TO /3)*

The Commission had before it applications for the post of Director of Directorate C (ACP I – General Affairs) in the Development and Relations with African, Caribbean and Pacific States DG, published under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations (PERS(2006) 162).

The Commission took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 16 November and 7 December 2006 (PERS(2006)162/2 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 MICHEL, it then decided to appoint Mr Klaus RUDISCHHAUSER to the vacant post.

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

Notwithstanding this decision, the Commission also noted the sound qualifications of Ms Anne BUCHER.

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5.4. DG MARKT – TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR-GENERAL

The Commission, on a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr McCREEVY, decided, under Article 7(2) of the Staff Regulations, to appoint temporarily Mr Thierry STOLL, a grade AD16 official and Deputy Director-General, to the post of Director-General, Internal Market and Services for the period from 1 July 2006 to 31 December 2006.

This decision would take effect immediately.

5.5. DG MARKT – TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR

The Commission, on a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr McCREEVY, decided, under Article 7(2) of the Staff Regulations, to appoint temporarily Ms Pamela BRUMTER-CORET, a grade AD14 official and Head of Unit D.3 (Regulated professions), to the post of Director, Directorate D (Knowledge-based economy) in the Internal Market and Services DG for the period from 1 August 2006 to 15 December 2006.

This decision would take effect immediately.

OTHER MATTERS

5.6. REPORT ON THE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF INITIAL RECRUITMENTS AND APPOINTMENTS OF OFFICIALS IN CATEGORY AD SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE CALENDAR YEAR, BROKEN DOWN BY SEX (1 JANUARY – 31 OCTOBER 2006) (SEC(2007)44 AND /2)

The Commission took note of the report and its conclusions, distributed as SEC(2007)44/2.

6. MEDIA PLURALISM IN THE MEMBER STATES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

(SEC(2007)30 TO /4; SEC(2007)32 TO /3; SEC(2007)33)

The Commission

- took note of the communication distributed as SEC(2007)30/4;
- took note of staff paper SEC(2007)32/3, authorised its publication on the Internet, and decided to transmit it to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, and to the national parliaments.

7. COMMISSION DECISIONS CONCERNING THE NATIONAL PLANS FOR THE ALLOCATION OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION ALLOWANCES NOTIFIED BY BELGIUM AND THE NETHERLANDS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARLIAMENT AND COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 2003/87/EC

(C(2007)60 and /2; C(2007)63 and /2; SEC(2007)25; SEC(2007)34)

The Commission

- adopted, in the authentic languages (Dutch and French), the decision set out in C(2007)60/2 and authorised its notification to Belgium;
- adopted in the authentic language (Dutch) the decision set out in C(2007)63/2 and authorised its notification to the Netherlands.

8. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

(SEC(2007)17)

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group held on Friday 12 January (SEC(2007)17).

It paid particular attention to the following:

8.1. LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

i) Preparations for January I 2007 part-session

(point 1.2 of the record of the IRG)

In accordance with the rules in force, the Commission authorised the Members responsible, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and 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:

Codecision, 2nd reading

- SAVARY report – Community railways – Certification of train crews operating locomotives and trains on the Community's rail network - COM(2004)142 - 2004/0048 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2007)70 and /2 and authorised Mr BARROT to pursue contacts with Parliament and the Council in order to reach an agreement at second reading.

- JARZEMBOWSKI report – Community railways – Development – COM(2004)139 – 2004/0047(COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2007)69 and authorised Mr BARROT to pursue contacts with Parliament and the Council in order to reach an agreement at second reading.

- STERCKX report – Community railways – International rail passengers' rights and obligations – COM(2004)143 – 2004/0049(COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2007)71 and authorised Mr BARROT to pursue contacts with Parliament and the Council in order to reach an agreement at second reading.

- WALLIS report – Law applicable to non-contractual obligations ("Rome II") – COM(2003)427 – 2003/0168 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2007)72 and /2.

Empowerment

- SAVARY report – Community railways – Certification of train crews operating locomotives and trains on the Community's rail network – COM(2004)142 – 2004/0048 (COD)
- JARZEMBOWSKI report – Community railways – Development – COM(2004)139 – 2004/0047(COD)
- STERCKX report – Community railways – International rail passengers' rights and obligations – COM(2004)143 – 2004/0049(COD)
- WALLIS report - Law applicable to non-contractual obligations ("Rome II"), COM(2003)427 - 2003/0168 (COD)

Under Article 13 of its Rules of Procedure, the Commission empowered the Members responsible, 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 SP(2007)70 and /2, SP(2007)69, SP(2007)71 and SP(2007)72 and /2, once Parliament had given its opinion, and transmit them to the Council in accordance with Article 251(2)(c) of the Treaty.

8.2. RELATIONS WITH THE COUNCIL

(SI(2007)6)

The Commission took note of the information supplied in SI(2007)6 relating to Council meetings held from 11 to 24 January.

8.3. RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT

ii) General matters concerning the plenary session of January I 2007 – Election of new President of Parliament

On behalf of the Commission, the PRESIDENT conveyed his most sincere congratulations to Mr Hans-Gert POETTERING (PPE-DE, DE), who had been elected as the new President of Parliament by a very large majority. The President felt that the Commission should use this election as an opportunity to show its determination to build on its relations with Parliament and work with it in close partnership. He urged all Commission Members to become more involved and play a more constructive part in the work of the parliamentary committees and political groups directly concerning them.

Ms WALLSTRÖM endorsed the PRESIDENT's remarks. The fact that Mr POETTERING had been elected after the first round of voting was evidence of his great qualities and the very broad support he enjoyed in Parliament, and augured well for a productive Presidency between now and the end of the present legislature. She went on to mention the election of Mr Joseph DAUL as leader of the PPE-DE group, which would no doubt help to intensify cooperation with the Commission.

Ms WALLSTRÖM also referred to the solemn ceremony at which 53 new MEPS had taken up their seats in Parliament following the accession of Bulgaria and Romania.

Lastly, Ms WALLSTRÖM reported on the forming of a new political group - "Identity, Tradition, Sovereignty" – consisting of 20 MEPs, from seven different Member States, at the far right of the political spectrum.

The Commission took note of this information.

iii) Action taken on Parliament's opinions and resolutions
(point 3.4 of the record of the IRG)

- Action taken on Parliament's opinions and resolutions

The Commission approved SP(2007)54 listing the action taken on the opinions and resolutions adopted by Parliament at its November I and II 2006 session, for transmission to Parliament.

- Action taken on Parliament's non-legislative resolutions

The Commission adopted SP(2007)79 on action taken on non-legislative resolutions adopted by Parliament at its November I 2006 session, for transmission to Parliament.

8.4. OTHER MATTERS

iv) Follow-up to Commission seminar of September 2006
(SEC(2007)42 AND /2)

The PRESIDENT briefly presented the three long-term review exercises flowing directly from the communication of 10 May 2006, *A Citizens' Agenda – Delivering results for Europe*, viz: overhauling the internal market against the background of a globalised economy so as to ensure that citizens continued to reap the full benefits; taking stock of the reality of European society in order to improve the opportunities, access and solidarity of Europeans; and revision of the budget, in response to a request by the European Council, taking an imaginative view of all aspects of expenditure and resources.

The PRESIDENT drew the Members' attention to the following methodological aspects, to which he attached great importance: the work would have to be a collective effort involving a large number of Commission departments; all stakeholders outside the institutions would have to be

associated as closely as possible; the three reviews would be long-term exercises. He stressed that the outcome of these reviews would affect a wide range of fields and has an impact beyond the term of office of the present Commission. In the meantime, the Commission should take account of progress in all three review exercises in its proposals.

Lastly, the PRESIDENT outlined the next steps to be taken, in particular the drafting of two interim reports, one on the internal market and another taking stock of Europe's social reality, ahead of the European Council in Spring 2007.

The Commission paid special attention to the fact that two areas which were at the heart of the European project - the internal market and social policy - would have to be pursued in parallel and kept in balance.

The Commission took note of these observations and of the briefing note in SEC(2007)42/2.

v) Conclusion of negotiations to avoid the Russian import ban on animal products following accession of Bulgaria and Romania
(SEC(2007)58)

M. KYPRIANOU reported on the latest developments concerning exports of European animal products to Russia following the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU. Given the legal and institutional formulae that had been approved and the contacts established between the various authorities concerned, a positive outcome was to be expected very soon.

Mr KYPRIANOU explained that the agreement took the form of a new Annex to the Protocol of 2 September 2004 between the European Community and the Russian Federation on the veterinary certification of animal products to be exported to Russia from the European Community. This Annex would be backed up by a political declaration signed jointly by the

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Russian Minister, the German Minister - on behalf of the Council Presidency - and himself.

The Commission took note of these observations and of briefing note SEC(2007)58. It authorised Ms Paola TESTORI COGGI, acting Deputy Director-General in the Health and Consumer Protection DG, to sign Annex II to the above-mentioned Protocol of 2 September 2004, on the Commission's behalf.

Mr KYPRIANOU took this opportunity to inform the Commission of progress in the ongoing negotiations on Russia's embargo on meat exports from Poland. After reminding the meeting of the data underlying the embargo imposed by the Russian authorities, he reported that a final solution to the problem could now be envisaged in the near future as a result of the inspections carried out. He was prepared to give the necessary assurances to the Russian authorities.

The PRESIDENT stressed that this was a sensitive issue and welcomed the efforts made by Mr KYPRIANOU, on behalf of the Commission, to break the deadlock. The public should be immediately informed.

The Commission took note of this information.

9. RELATIONS WITH THIRD COUNTRIES

MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP ON COTE D'IVOIRE (ABIDJAN, 10-12 JANUARY) (SEC(2007)57)

Mr MICHEL reported briefly on his visit to Abidjan from 10 to 12 January in connection with the Commission's participation in the ministerial meeting of the international working group set up by UN Security Council Resolution 1633 to oversee the transition process in Côte d'Ivoire and implementation of the road map.

He outlined the main results of his meetings, in particular the proposal by the President of Côte d'Ivoire, Mr Laurent Gbagbo, to engage in "direct dialogue" with the main opposition leader, Mr Guillaume Soro. This initiative was supported by the President of Burkina Faso, Mr Blaise Compaoré, who was a key player in the region on account of his influence, his proven mediation skills and his future position as President of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). While outlining the limitations of this proposal, Mr MICHEL stressed it was important for the Commission to lend its support to a initiative which might provide a means of implementing Security Council Resolution 1721 and thereby help Côte d'Ivoire to escape from the current impasse.

Mr MICHEL intended to inform the Commission soon of the situation in Somalia and his recent meetings with the authorities there.

The Commission took note of these observations and of the briefing note in SEC(2007)57.

10. OTHER MATTERS

INTRODUCTION OF THE EURO IN SLOVENIA ON 1 JANUARY 2007

The PRESIDENT and Mr ALMUNIA briefed the Commission on their participation in the ceremony marking the recent introduction of the single currency in Slovenia - "A welcome to the Euro" - held in Ljubljana on Monday 15 January and attended by many political leaders from the Member States and representatives of the European Central Bank.

The PRESIDENT highlighted the political dimension of this first enlargement of the euro area to a country which had declared its independence in 1991 and had still been part of the former Communist bloc little more than fifteen years ago.

In Mr ALMUNIA's view, this event had shown that the euro area was certainly not a closed shop, but remained open to all Member States which met the predetermined

conditions. He was also pleased at Slovenia's economic results over the last twelve months, which had been obtained partly as a result of its efforts to meet those conditions in full. Slovenia's preparations had been excellent: in particular it had organised the introduction of new banknotes and coins in less time than the countries which had founded the euro. However, both the Slovenian authorities and the Commission's departments needed to remain vigilant, particularly as regards possible abusive price increases. Lastly, he felt that Slovenia's adoption of the euro would serve as an encouragement to other Member States which had joined the EU in the fifth wave of enlargement.

During a brief exchange of views, the Commission discussed press reports that, in future, other Member States joining the euro would do so in groups. It confirmed that no such approach was planned and that each application to join would be assessed on its own individual merits.

The Commission took note of this information.

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The meeting closed at 14.16.