



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2010)1933 final

Brussels, 27 October 2010

MINUTES

**of the 1933rd meeting of the Commission
held in Strasbourg
(Winston Churchill building)
on Tuesday 19 October 2010
(morning and afternoon)**

PV(2010)1933 final

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Attendance list	4-6
1. AGENDAS (OJ(2010)1933/3; SEC(2010)1208/2).....	7
2. WEEKLY MEETING OF CHEFS DE CABINET (SEC(2010)1933)	7
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND SPECIAL MINUTES OF 1931 ST MEETING AND MINUTES OF 1932 ND MEETING (7 AND 12 OCTOBER) (PV(2010)1931; PV(2010)1931, PART II; PV(2010)1932).....	7
4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS (SEC(2010)1221).....	7
4.1. LEGISLATIVE MATTERS	7
4.2. RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL	10
4.3. RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT	10
5. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS.....	12
5.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED (SEC(2010)1210 ET SEQ.).....	12
5.2. EMPOWERMENT (SEC(2010)1211 ET SEQ.)	12
5.3. DELEGATION AND SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS (SEC(2010)1212 ET SEQ.).....	12
5.4. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES (SEC(2010)1213 AND /2)	12
6. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS (SEC(2010)1209)	13
6.1. DG ENLARGEMENT – AMENDMENT OF ORGANISATION CHART AND APPOINTMENT OF AD15/16 ADVISER HORS CLASSE	13
6.2. DG ENLARGEMENT - APPOINTMENT OF AD15 DEPUTY DIRECTOR- GENERAL.....	13
6.3. DG ENLARGEMENT – APPOINTMENT OF AD15 DIRECTOR.....	14
6.4. DG INTERNAL MARKET AND SERVICES – PUBLICATION OF VACANCY NOTICES FOR THE POSTS OF GRADE AD15 CHAIRPERSON AND GRADE	

AD14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF EUROPEAN AUTHORITIES

(PERS(2010)143; PERS(2010)144; PERS(2010)145; PERS(2010)146;

PERS(2010)147; PERS(2010)148)..... 14

7. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS: STRATEGY FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHARTER OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS BY THE EUROPEAN UNION (COM(2010)573 TO /4; SEC(2010)1215)15
8. COMMUNICATION TO THE COMMISSION ON THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COURT OF AUDITORS FOR 2009 (SEC(2010)1228 TO /3; SEC(2010)1229) 15
9. RELATIONS WITH NON-MEMBER COUNTRIES.....15
PREPARATION OF THE G20 SUMMIT (SEOUL, 11 AND 12 NOVEMBER)
(SEC(2010)1254/2) 15
10. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE COURT OF AUDITORS, THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE, THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS AND THE NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS - THE EU BUDGET REVIEW (COM(2010)700 AND /2; SEC(2010)7000 AND /2).....16
11. OTHER BUSINESS.....22
UPDATE ON THE SITUATION AFTER THE TOXIC RED SLUDGE DISASTER IN KOLONTAR ON 4 OCTOBER 2010 22

Single sitting: Tuesday 19 October 2010 (morning and afternoon)

The sitting opened at 11.14 hours with Mr BARROSO, President, in the chair.

Present:

Mr BARROSO	President	
Baroness ASHTON	High Representative/Vice-President	Items 1 to 10
Ms REDING	Vice-President	Items 1 to 10 (in part)
Mr ALMUNIA	Vice-President	
Mr KALLAS	Vice-President	
Mr TAJANI	Vice-President	Items 10 (in part) and 11
Mr ŠEFČOVIČ	Vice-President	
Mr POTOČNIK		
Mr PIEBALGS		Items 10 (in part) and 11
Ms VASSILIOU		
Mr DE GUCHT		
Mr DALLI		Items 10 (in part) and 11
Ms GEOGHEGAN-QUINN		
Mr LEWANDOWSKI		Items 1 to 10
Ms DAMANAKI		
Ms GEORGIEVA		
Mr OETTINGER		Items 1 to 11 (in part)
Mr HAHN		
Ms HEDEGAARD		
Mr FÜLE		Items 10 (in part) and 11
Ms MALMSTRÖM		
Mr CIOLOŞ		

Absent:

Ms KROES

Vice-President

Mr REHN

Mr BARNIER

Mr ŠEMETA

Mr ANDOR

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

Mr WHELAN	Chef de cabinet to Ms KROES	Items 1 to 11 (in part)
Mr PESONEN	Chef de cabinet to Mr REHN	Items 1 to 11 (in part)
Mr RIEKELES	A member of Mr BARNIER's staff	
Mr BAUDRU	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr ŠEMETA	
Mr CSEREY	A member of Mr ANDOR's staff	

The following also sat in:

Mr LAITENBERGER	Chef de cabinet to the PRESIDENT	
Mr ROMERO REQUENA	Director-General, Legal Service	
Mr CARVOUNIS	Deputy Director-General, DG Communication	
Mr DOENS	Head of the Commission Spokesperson Service	
Ms AHRENKILDE HANSEN	Commission Spokeswoman	
Mr THEBAULT	Head of the Bureau of European Policy Advisers	
Mr FRUTUOSO DE MELO	Deputy Chef de cabinet to the PRESIDENT	Items 1 to 10
Mr PRETO	Chef de cabinet to Mr TAJANI	Items 1 to 10 (in part)
Ms SOEWARTA	A member of Mr PIEBALGS's staff	Items 1 to 10 (in part)
Mr LEMAÎTRE	Chef de cabinet to Mr LEWANDOWSKI	
Mr GIERING	A member of Mr FÜLE's staff	Items 1 to 10 (in part)
Mr JOUANJEAN	Director-General, DG Budget	Items 1 to 10
Mr LEHNER	DG Budget	Items 1 to 10

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

1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2010)1933/3; SEC(2010)1208/2)

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(2010)1933)

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

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND SPECIAL MINUTES OF 1931ST MEETING
AND MINUTES OF 1932ND MEETING (7 AND 12 OCTOBER)**

(PV(2010)1931; PV(2010)1931, PART II; PV(2010)1932)

The Commission approved the minutes of its 1931st and 1932nd meetings.

4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

(SEC(2010)1221)

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group held on Thursday 14 October (SEC(2010)1221).

It paid particular attention to the following points.

4.1. LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

i) Ordinary legislative procedure

(point 1.2 of the record)

Preparation of an agreement at first reading

- Prevention of the entry into the legal supply chain of medicinal products which are falsified in relation to their identity, history or source (Directive) – MATIAS report – 2008/0261 (COD)

The Commission authorised Mr DALLI to pursue contacts with Parliament and the Council in order to reach an agreement at first reading, following the line set out in SPI(2010)63 and /2.

ii) Preparations for October II part-session of Parliament

(point 1.3 of the record)

Ordinary legislative procedure – Codecision – 1st reading

- Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Union, as regards the European external action service (Regulation) – GRÄSSLE / RIVELLINI report – 2010/0054 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2010)7203.

- Implementation of the bilateral safeguard clause of the EU-Korea Free Trade Agreement (Regulation) – ZALBA BIDEAIN report – 2010/0032 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2010)7000.

- Scheme of control and enforcement applicable in the area covered by the Convention on future multilateral cooperation in the North-East Atlantic fisheries (Regulation) – FRAGA ESTÉVEZ report – 2009/0051 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2010)7002.

- Alternative investment fund managers (Directive) - GAUZÈS Report – 2009/0064 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2010)6998 and /2.

- Amendments to the Instrument for Stability (Regulation) – BRANTNER report – 2009/0058 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2010)6992 and /3.

- Establishment of a financing instrument for cooperation with industrialised and other high-income countries and territories (Regulation) – SCHOLZ report – 2009/0059 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2010)6993 and /3.

- Establishment of a financing instrument for development cooperation (Regulation) – MITCHELL report – 2009/0060A (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2010)6994 and /3.

- Establishment of a financing instrument for the promotion of democracy and human rights worldwide (Regulation) – LOCHBIHLER / GÁL report – 2009/0060B (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2010)6995 and /3.

- Establishment of a financing instrument for development cooperation (Regulation) – GOERENS report – 2010/0059 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2010)6996 and /2.

- Delegated and implementing acts in financing instruments for external action

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2010)7269/2.

- Indication of the country of origin of certain products imported from third countries (Regulation) – MUSCARDINI report - 2005/0254 (COD)

The Commission authorised Mr DE GUCHT to follow the line set out in SP(2010)7311.

Special legislative procedure

- Draft general budget of the European Union for 2011 – JĘDRZEJEWSKA / TRÜPEL report

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2010)7186 and /2.

4.2. RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL

**iii) Programming of Council business
(SI(2010)271)**

The Commission took note of the information in SI(2010)271 on the Council meetings between Thursday 21 October and Wednesday 3 November.

**iv) Preparation for Council meeting (Agriculture and Fisheries)
(Brussels, 26 October)**

- Fixing for 2011 of the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks applicable in the Baltic Sea (Council Regulation) – 2010/0247 (NLE)

The Commission authorised Ms DAMANAKI to pursue contacts with the Council in order to reach an agreement following the line set out in SI(2010)267/2.

4.3. RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT

**v) Preparation for October II part-session of Parliament –
Non-legislative matters
(point 3.1 of the record)**

- Oral questions O-0143/2010, O-0146/2010, O-0154/2010 and O-0155/2010 – Databases relating to racial or ethnic origin in the European Union

The Commission approved the draft answer in SP(2010)7227.

- Oral questions O-0149/2010 and O-0160/2010 – Data transfers to the United States by the Member States on the basis of memoranda of understanding

The Commission approved the draft answer in SP(2010)7228.

vi) Preparation for October II part-session of Parliament – Oral questions

(point 3.4 of the record)

- H-0453/10, H-0455/10, H-0458/10, H-0459/10, H-0461/10 (joined with H-0481/10, H-0487/10, H-0490/10, H-0502/10), H-0462/10 (joined with H-0466/10), H-0464/10, H-0467/10, H-0469/10, H-0472/10, H-0474/10, H-0475/10, H-0476/10, H-0477/10, H-0478/10, H-0479/10, H-0481/10, H-0482/10, H-0483/10, H-0484/10, H-0486/10, H-0487/10, H-0489/10, H-0490/10, H-0491/10, H-0493/10, H-0495/10, H-0497/10, H-0499/10, H-0500/10, H-0501/10, H-0504/10, H-0505/10, H-0507/10, H-0509/10, and H-0511/10

The Commission approved the draft answers set out in SP(2010)6987 to /3, following the agreement reached between the Chefs de cabinet, and certain draft supplementary answers, revisions to answers and draft answers as set out in SP(2010)6987/4 *et seq.*

vii) Action taken on legislative opinions and non-legislative resolutions adopted by Parliament at its September I and II part-sessions

(point 3.5.2 of the record)

The Commission approved document SP(2010)7193 on the action taken on the legislative opinions and non-legislative resolutions adopted by Parliament at its September I and II part-sessions, for transmission to Parliament.

5. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

5.1. *WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED* (SEC(2010)1210 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 11 and 15 October.

5.2. *EMPOWERMENT* (SEC(2010)1211 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 11 and 15 October.

5.3. *DELEGATION AND SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS* (SEC(2010)1212 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedure between 11 and 15 October, as archived in e-Greffe.

5.4. *SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES* (SEC(2010)1213 AND /2)

The Commission took note of the sensitive written procedures for which the time limit expired between 18 and 22 October and of the 'finalisation' written procedure initiated following the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet on 18 October.

**6. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS
(SEC(2010)1209)**

**ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
(PERS(2010)142)**

**6.1. *DG ENLARGEMENT – AMENDMENT OF ORGANISATION CHART
AND APPOINTMENT OF AD15/16 ADVISER HORS CLASSE***

On a proposal from Mr ŠEFČOVIČ, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr FÜLE, the Commission decided:

- to create an AD15/16 post of Adviser hors classe in DG Enlargement;
- to transfer to that post in the interest of the service, under Article 7 of the Staff Regulations, Mr Henrik HOLOLEI, an AD15 official, with a view to his secondment to the post of Chef de cabinet to Mr KALLAS;
- to abolish this post on the date of departure of its holder.

This decision would be backdated to 16 October 2010.

**6.2. *DG ENLARGEMENT - APPOINTMENT OF AD15 DEPUTY
DIRECTOR-GENERAL***

On a proposal from Mr ŠEFČOVIČ, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr FÜLE, the Commission decided to fill the post of Deputy Director-General of DG Enlargement by transferring in the interest of the service, under Article 7 of the Staff Regulations, Mr Stefano SANNINO, AD15 official and currently Deputy Director-General responsible for the Asia and Latin America Directorates in DG External Relations.

This decision would take effect on 1 November 2010.

6.3. DG ENLARGEMENT – APPOINTMENT OF AD15 DIRECTOR

On a proposal from Mr ŠEFČOVIČ, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr FÜLE, the Commission decided to fill the post of Director of the Resources Directorate in DG Enlargement by transferring in the interest of the service, under Article 7 of the Staff Regulations, Ms Colette COTTER, AD15 official and currently Director of the Resources and Communication Directorate in DG Enterprise and Industry.

This decision would take effect on 1 January 2011.

**6.4. DG INTERNAL MARKET AND SERVICES – PUBLICATION OF VACANCY NOTICES FOR THE POSTS OF GRADE AD15 CHAIRPERSON AND GRADE AD14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF EUROPEAN AUTHORITIES
(PERS(2010)143; PERS(2010)144; PERS(2010)145; PERS(2010)146; PERS(2010)147; PERS(2010)148)**

The Commission took note of the information in point 4 of PERS(2010)142 and, on a proposal from Mr ŠEFČOVIČ, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr BARNIER, decided:

- to authorise the publication of the vacancy notices in PERS(2010)143, PERS(2010)144, PERS(2010)145, PERS(2010)146, PERS(2010)147 and PERS(2010)148 for the posts of Chairperson (grade AD15) and Executive Director (grade AD14) of the European Banking Authority, the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority, and the European Securities and Markets Authority, respectively;
- to decide on the composition of the pre-selection committees, which would be made up of an equal number of senior managers from the Commission and members designated by the committees of regulators (Level 3 Committees) and chaired by a senior manager from the Commission.

These decisions would take effect immediately.

7. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS: STRATEGY FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHARTER OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS BY THE EUROPEAN UNION (COM(2010)573 TO /4; SEC(2010)1215)

The Commission approved the communication in COM(2010)573/4 for transmission to Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, and, for information, to the national parliaments.

8. COMMUNICATION TO THE COMMISSION ON THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COURT OF AUDITORS FOR 2009 (SEC(2010)1228 TO /3; SEC(2010)1229)

The Commission took note of the communication in SEC(2010)1228/3.

9. RELATIONS WITH NON-MEMBER COUNTRIES

PREPARATION OF THE G20 SUMMIT (SEOUL, 11 AND 12 NOVEMBER)
(SEC(2010)1254/2)

The Commission took note of the information note from the PRESIDENT in SEC(2010)1254/2.

**10. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE COURT OF AUDITORS, THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE, THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS AND THE NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS - THE EU BUDGET REVIEW
(COM(2010)700 AND /2; SEC(2010)7000 AND /2)**

The PRESIDENT introduced the Communication on the budget review, which he and Mr LEWANDOWSKI had submitted to the Commission for approval, and alluded to two recent discussions on the issue, at the seminar in September and during the policy debate on 7 October.

He pointed out that the presentation of the Communication signalled the start of a debate that was crucial for the EU as a whole and that it was now time for the Commission to outline and prepare future decisions, which would have an impact over the next 10 to 15 years. The Communication itself, however, did not entail any decisions; it merely launched the process.

The PRESIDENT stressed that this was a valuable opportunity for the Commission to establish and explain the link between its political objectives, as described in the Europe 2020 strategy, and the budgetary resources required to achieve them. The Commission had a special institutional role as it alone could respond to the wishes of the European Parliament and the Member States in matters related to the EU budget.

He acknowledged that the issue was sensitive and that it was difficult to start a process of reflection at a time when many Member States were making drastic spending cuts, but also reaffirmed that the Commission must do its job and plan for the future by combining ambition with realism.

In the PRESIDENT's opinion, the options presented shifted the emphasis back to the search for practical solutions and showed that, in the end, a budget based on quality and added value brought more benefits to citizens than one characterised by *juste retour*.

The document explained the purpose of the budget and the way it should work, while also demonstrating the scope for reform and showing how it could be made more intelligent and results driven. The Commission had clearly linked the discussion to the current economic crisis by suggesting innovations, such as the EU project bonds for the funding of projects, which could compensate for the lack of investment in key infrastructure, and by calling for greater flexibility. He also mentioned the discussion under way on own resources, which the Commission was helping to shape by proposing various possible reforms.

The PRESIDENT acknowledged that it was difficult to reconcile the different positions on all of these issues, but felt that the document struck the right balance; a balance that would need to be maintained over the coming months, when preparing for the next steps in 2011.

He thanked Mr LEWANDOWSKI and all the other Members for their comments and their efforts to produce an agreed text. As regards communication, it was important to highlight the added value of spending from the EU budget, especially now in a difficult financial and budgetary climate, and to give very practical examples of achievements that have brought clear benefits to European citizens.

Mr LEWANDOWSKI picked up on the specific context to this dossier and the need to be mindful of the debate triggered outside the Commission by the budget review. He thanked Members for their understanding of the special procedure followed and was pleased that the document had remained confidential up to that point.

The budget review was an opportunity for a genuine debate; one which had to take account of the lessons of the past, particularly the problems posed by the rigid structure of the budget and the time needed to react to unexpected events. More flexibility was therefore required.

There should also be a recognition of the new functions of the EU budget and especially of the role it could play in responding to the crisis and improving economic governance. A large part of the Communication was devoted to how the budget could help to achieve the priorities of the Europe 2020 strategy. In the

current climate, EU spending was gaining new legitimacy, the aim being to find common solutions to common problems, and could demonstrate its added value since it enabled better management of large-scale programmes.

Mr LEWANDOWSKI mentioned the different options put forward in the document, in particular regarding the duration of the budget and its structure, as well as the question of resources. He said that while the principles were outlined, the pros and cons of the different options were listed in a neutral way in the technical annexes, in order not to pre-empt possible future decisions.

He concluded by thanking the Secretariat-General, the Directorate-General for Budget and the cabinets for their constructive cooperation.

In the ensuing debate, there was general support for the approach taken and the following points were highlighted:

- difficulties had arisen as a result of the special procedure used for this dossier and, in future, all Members should be closely involved, including those who did not belong to the Commissioners' group on the budget;
- the own resources issue was sensitive and had been dealt with in a balanced way in the Communication;
- as regards the non-exclusive list of sources of financing that were potentially worth considering as new own resources, it was important to present the charge related to air transport as being in line with current technological possibilities and it might be useful to consider other sectors as well;
- doubts were expressed about whether some of the other suggestions for new own resources were realistic and there was strong support for an energy tax and for the tax on air transport to be levied on fuel and not on passenger tickets;
- there was some disappointment that the options outlined were not more numerous and more ambitious, in order to meet the challenges of the coming years, and especially that budgetary cuts had not already been announced; there was also an acknowledgement that it was difficult for the Commission to

reconcile the different positions and to suggest approaches that were acceptable to the other Institutions;

- there was a need to demonstrate to ordinary citizens the added value of European funding by formulating messages specifically addressed to them and emphasising the benefits it could bring them across all areas of their everyday lives; it was important, too, to encourage Member States to indicate clearly when they received European funding for certain projects;
- it was worth pointing out that by far the biggest share of the European budget was redistributed among the Member States and other European bodies in the public and private sectors;
- questions were raised about the advisability of some of the wording regarding the change in the share of the budget devoted to the common agricultural policy;
- there was a request that a more detailed discussion be planned on the future of the common agricultural policy and that of the cohesion policy, which was also an important tool for modernisation;
- strong support was expressed for a review of the funding and functioning of the Solidarity Fund, so that Member States could receive aid as quickly and in the same volumes as non-member countries affected by disasters;
- it was important to emphasise the priority attached to incorporating environmental considerations into all Commission policies;
- account should be taken of factors relating to enlargement and the neighbourhood policy;
- it was important to achieve a good match in policy terms between budget priorities and the priorities of the Europe 2020 strategy;
- a clear signal should be sent to European taxpayers and, in this context, there was a need for a pragmatic approach aimed at smart and inclusive growth;

- it would be useful to think more in terms of results and measure them throughout the decision-making process and not just at the outset;
- a bold approach should be adopted to simplifying administrative rules and methods in order to rationalise the regulatory tools available and improve efficiency;
- it was important, in the current and future budgetary debate, to factor in the new policies and structures introduced by the Lisbon Treaty;
- efforts should be made to rationalise and reduce to a minimum the costs and constraints on European companies, which must preserve their competitiveness; it was important, too, to examine systematically the marginal utility of each new piece of legislation;
- appropriate material on the line to be followed was needed quickly, so that everyone could communicate effectively on this issue.

The PRESIDENT thanked the Commission Members for their contributions and noted their agreement on the proposed communication, subject to the amendments set out below. He acknowledged the constraints of the procedure followed in terms of preparing, classifying and distributing the communication, but felt this had helped maintain confidentiality and had opened the way to an excellent and entirely free discussion at the meeting, with no outside interference. He also pointed out that enough time had been allowed at the meeting for each Member to express once again his or her views in detail.

As regards the next steps in the procedure, appropriate internal organisational arrangements would be put in place so that all the Members, whether or not they belonged to the group of Commissioners responsible for the budget and the financial perspective, could contribute to the preparation and discussion of the Commission's proposals in June next year, which would require a solid consensus.

He also felt it was important for each one of them to communicate effectively on this issue, adopting a positive and instructive tone and drawing on information that

would be supplied in good time by the Spokesman's Service; the messages conveyed should respond to the concerns expressed in the Member States and be tailored, where necessary, to specific circumstances.

With a view to future discussions, he asked the Members to examine further, with the help of the Services and Directorates-General under their authority, the scope for making horizontal budgetary savings along the lines of those being implemented in most of the Member States.

Mr LEWANDOWSKI thanked the other Commission Members for their contributions. He warned of the difficult discussions ahead in the budgetary field, mentioning the respective positions of Parliament and the Council.

Winding up the debate, the PRESIDENT noted the Commission's support for the communication and its agreement on the following amendments in the English language version of COM(2010)700/2:

- **on page 13, in the second paragraph of section 3.3 ("Inclusive growth"), the last sentence was amended to read as follows:**

"Clear priorities could be fixed to deliver smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, with work on: support for new businesses; innovation; reducing emissions; improving the quality of our environment; modernising universities; energy saving; the development of energy, transport and telecommunication networks with a common EU interest; investment in research infrastructure; human capital development; and active inclusion to help the fight against poverty.";

- **on page 17, in the penultimate paragraph of section 3.4 ("Citizenship"), the penultimate sentence was amended to read as follows:**

"For example, the Fund is not funded on a permanent footing and cannot help follow all kinds of major disasters.";

- **on page 25, in the second paragraph (first indent) of section 4.8 ("Simplifying and minimising unnecessary administrative burdens"), the last sentence was amended to read as follows:**

"Linking different instruments together in a common implementation framework is a good way to help the interface of citizens, businesses, especially SMEs, and governments with the EU budget.";

- **on page 29, the ninth and tenth indents of Chapter 7 ("Reform of EU financing") were amended to read as follows:**

"- EU revenues from auctioning under the greenhouse gas Emissions Trading System

- EU charge related to air transport".

Subject to inclusion of the above amendments and to final linguistic revision, the Commission approved the communication set out in COM(2010)700/2 for transmission to Parliament, the Council, the Court of Auditors, the European Investment Bank, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the national parliaments, together with the staff working paper distributed as SEC(2010)7000/2, the contents of which were noted.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

UPDATE ON THE SITUATION AFTER THE TOXIC RED SLUDGE DISASTER IN KOLONTAR ON 4 OCTOBER 2010

Following her visit to Hungary, Ms GEORGIEVA provided the Commission Members with an update on the situation and consequences of the spill which had occurred in Kolontar, Hungary, on 4 October after the collapse of a reservoir at the Ajka alumina factory containing toxic red sludge.

The response by the Hungarian authorities had been fast and efficient, and this had in particular prevented the Danube from being affected by the pollution and had enabled the reservoir concerned to be made secure. Following the emergency phase, it was now necessary to move on to the decontamination phase and rehabilitation of the areas affected.

Ms GEORGIEVA said that the immediate concern was the health of the local population and, in the longer term, the decontamination and rehabilitation of agricultural land and the return of the inhabitants. Some thought would have to be given also to the technology used at the site of the incident.

A European civil protection mechanism had been deployed at the request of the Hungarian authorities, and the European Union was willing to do more if necessary. However, the EU Solidarity Fund could not be used in this case as it was an industrial accident. Lessons should be learnt from this incident, in particular in relation to the relevant regulations at European level and the mechanisms in place. When such events occurred, the Commission must ensure effective communication concerning the measures taken.

Mr POTOČNIK pointed out that a comprehensive analysis of the exact causes of the accident was not yet available but, given that European regulation was quite sufficient, the way in which it was implemented by Member States should be looked at carefully. This had been an extremely grave accident, and was a warning which should be taken very seriously.

The PRESIDENT ended this item by thanking Ms GEORGIEVA and Mr POTOČNIK for their work. It was important to learn lessons from the spill in Hungary and to work on improving the implementation of European legislation by Member States and on the inspections to be carried out in the facilities and sites in question, bearing in mind that these were, however, the responsibility of Member States.

The Commission took note of this information.

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The meeting closed at 13.41 hours.