



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2016) 2185 final

- English language version of the French text which is authentic -

Brussels, 25 October 2016

TEXTE EN

MINUTES

of the 2185th meeting of the Commission

held in Brussels

(Berlaymont)

on Wednesday 12 October 2016

(morning)

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PV(2016) 2185 final

- English language version of the French text which is authentic -

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Single sitting: Wednesday 12 October 2016 (morning)

The sitting opened at 10.17 with Mr JUNCKER, President, in the chair.

Present:

Mr JUNCKER	President	
Mr TIMMERMANS	First Vice-President	
Ms MOGHERINI	High Representative / Vice-President	Items 7 (in part) to 9 (in part)
Ms GEORGIEVA	Vice-President	
Mr ANSIP	Vice-President	
Mr ŠEFČOVIČ	Vice-President	Items 1 to 7
Mr DOMBROVSKIS	Vice-President	
Mr KATAINEN	Vice-President	
Mr OETTINGER	Member	
Ms MALMSTRÖM	Member	
Mr MIMICA	Member	
Mr ARIAS CAÑETE	Member	
Mr VELLA	Member	
Mr ANDRIUKAITIS	Member	
Mr AVRAMOPOULOS	Member	
Ms THYSSEN	Member	
Mr MOSCOVICI	Member	Items 1 to 8
Mr STYLIANIDES	Member	Items 1 to 7 (in part)
Mr HOGAN	Member	
Ms BULC	Member	
Ms BIENKOWSKA	Member	
Ms JOUROVÁ	Member	
Ms CREȚU	Member	
Ms VESTAGER	Member	
Mr MOEDAS	Member	
Sir Julian KING	Member	

Absent:

Mr HAHN

Member

Mr NAVRACSICS

Member

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

Mr KARNITSCHNIG	Chef de cabinet to Mr HAHN	Items 1 to 9 (in part)
Ms KIRALY	Chef de cabinet to Mr NAVRACSICS	

The following also sat in:

Mr SELMAYR	Chef de cabinet to the PRESIDENT	
Mr ROMERO REQUENA	Director-General, Legal Service	
Mr PESONEN	Director-General, DG Communication	
Mr SCHINAS	Head of the Spokesperson's Service and Chief Spokesperson of the Commission	
Ms METTLER	Head of the European Political Strategy Centre	
Ms MICHOU	Deputy Secretary-General	Items 9 and 10
Ms MARTÍNEZ ALBEROLA	Deputy Chef de cabinet to the PRESIDENT	
Mr THOLONIAT	Adviser in the PRESIDENT's Office	Items 1 to 8
Mr BIERVERT	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr ŠEFČOVIČ	Items 8 to 10
Mr SUARDI	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr DOMBROVSKIS	Items 7 and 8
Ms SCHMITT	Chef de cabinet to Mr AVRAMOPOULOS	Items 9 and 10
Mr HERMANS	Chef de cabinet to Ms THYSSEN	Item 7
Mr ELING	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr STYLIANIDES	Items 7 (in part) to 10
Mr MORRISON	Chef de cabinet to Sir Julian KING	Item 9
Ms ANDREEVA	Commission Spokesperson's Service	
Mr DEMARTY	Director-General, DG Trade	Items 1 to 6

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

1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2016) 2185/FINAL; SEC(2016) 411)

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

2. WEEKLY MEETING OF CHEFS DE CABINET

(RCC(2016) 2185)

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Monday 10 October.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES AND SPECIAL MINUTES OF THE 2183RD MEETING OF THE COMMISSION (28 SEPTEMBER) AND THE MINUTES OF THE 2184TH MEETING (4 OCTOBER)

(PV(2016) 2183; PV(2016) 2183, PART II)

The Commission approved the minutes of its 2183rd meeting, and decided to hold over for one week approval of the minutes of its 2184th meeting.

4. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

4.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED

(SEC(2016) 412 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 3 and 7 October.

4.2. EMPOWERMENT

(SEC(2016) 413 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 3 and 7 October.

4.3. DELEGATION / SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS

(SEC(2016) 414 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedure between 3 and 7 October, as archived in Decide.

4.4. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES

(SEC(2016) 415)

The Commission took note of the sensitive written procedures for which the time limit expired between 10 and 14 October.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

(SEC(2016) 416/2 AND /3)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

(PERS(2016) 104/2 AND /3)

5.1. DG HUMAN RESOURCES AND SECURITY – SPECIAL ADVISERS TO THE COMMISSION FROM 13 OCTOBER 2016 UNTIL 31 MARCH 2017 (PERS(2016) 105/2)

The Commission took note of the information in PERS(2016) 104/2 and, on a proposal from Ms GEORGIEVA, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, decided:

- to adopt the list of special advisers to Commission Members set out in PERS(2016) 105/2;
- to authorise the Director-General for Human Resources and Security to implement that decision by signing contracts of employment on behalf of the authority empowered to conclude contracts of employment.

These decisions would take effect immediately.

**5.2. DG BUDGET – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD15/16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL
(PERS(2016) 70/2 TO /5)**

The Commission had before it an application under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Deputy Director-General in charge of Directorates A, B and D in DG Budget (PERS(2016) 70/2 and /3).

The Commission took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 14 and Friday 30 September 2016 (PERS(2016) 70/4 and /5).

The Commission proceeded to consider the applicant's qualifications for the post. It also considered his ability, efficiency and conduct in the service. On a proposal from Ms GEORGIEVA, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, it then decided to appoint Mr Silvano PRESA to the post.

This decision would take effect on 16 October 2016.

6. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

(RCC(2016) 116)

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group (IRG) held on Friday 7 October (RCC(2016) 116).

It paid particular attention to the following points.

6.1. LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

i) Trilogue meetings

(point 3.1 of the IRG record)

- Framework for energy efficiency labelling and repeal of Directive 2010/30/EU (Regulation) – TAMBURRANO report – 2015/0149 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2016) 375/2.

ii) Council dossiers

(point 3.3 of the IRG record)

- Framework on market access to port services and financial transparency of ports (Regulation) – FLECKENSTEIN report – 2013/0157 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2016) 382.

- Amendment of Regulation (EU) 806/2014 in order to establish a European Deposit Insurance Scheme (Regulation) – LANGE report – 2015/0270 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2016) 384 and /2.

6.2. RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL

iii) Programming of Council business

(SI(2016) 387)

The Commission took note of the information in SI(2016) 387 on the Council meetings between 13 and 26 October.

iv) Non-legislative dossiers

(point 4.1 of the IRG record)

- Preparation of the fifth summit between Africa and the European Union in 2017 – *‘Africa-EU Summit 2017: How ambitious can we be? Food for thought’*

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2016) 377/2.

- Position to be adopted on behalf of the European Union at the International Maritime Organization during the 70th session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee and the 97th session of the Maritime Safety Committee on the adoption of amendments to *MARPOL* Annex VI, SOLAS Regulations II-1, SOLAS Regulations III/1.4, III/30 and III/37, SOLAS Regulations II-2/1 and II-2/10, SOLAS Regulation II-1/3-12, the STCW Convention and Code, the Fire Systems Safety Code and the 2011 Enhanced Survey Programme Code (Council Decision) – 2016/0263 (NLE)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2016) 378.

- Signing, on behalf of the European Union, and provisional application of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between Canada, of the one part, and the European Union and its Member States, of the other part (*CETA*) (Council Decision) – 2016/0206 (NLE) and 2016/0220 (NLE)

Mr KATAINEN and Ms MALMSTRÖM reported on the state of play of the discussions between the Member States concerning the proposal for a Council Decision on the signature and provisional application of the Trade Agreement between Canada, of the one part, and the European Union and its Member States, of the other part (*CETA*).

The Commission took note of this information and approved the line set out in SI(2016) 383/2.

6.3. RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT

v) Non-legislative dossier

(point 5.1 of the IRG record)

- European Parliament's Committee of Inquiry into 'Money Laundering, Tax Evasion and Tax Fraud' (*PANA*) – Preparation of the hearing of Ms JOUR-SCHROEDER, Acting Director in the Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers, on 13 October

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2016) 653/2.

vi) Action to be taken on Parliament's legislative resolutions and other resolutions of a legal nature

(SP(2016) 642)

The Commission decided to empower the Commission Members responsible for the sectors in question, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Mr TIMMERMANS and, if necessary, with the other Members concerned, to adopt the amended proposals for transmission to Parliament and the Council, as set out in SP(2016) 642, drawn up following the part-session of Parliament of 3 to 6 October, the contents of which were noted.

vii) Results of the October I part-session of Parliament

(SP(2016) 615; (SP(2016) 622)

The Commission took note of the information in SP(2016) 615 and SP(2016) 622 on the proceedings of the part-session of Parliament held in Strasbourg from 3 to 6 October.

7. FIRST POLICY DEBATE ON THE COORDINATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEMS**(SEC(2016) 431; RCC(2016) 118)**

Mr DOMBROVSKIS introduced the first Commission policy debate on the proposal to update the rules on the coordination of social security systems at European level – in particular to improve the free movement of workers – on the basis of the background paper distributed under his authority and that of Ms THYSSEN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT. The legislation to be revised dated from 2004, in the case of the general regulation, and 2009, in the case of the implementing rules.

Originally the Commission had planned to present simultaneously a whole set of initiatives to encourage the mobility of workers. In the end, however, it had decided to split the package into two parts: (i) a targeted revision of the Posting of Workers Directive, presented on 8 March and currently being examined by the European Parliament and the Council, and (ii) an updating of the regulations on the coordination of social security systems in certain areas where this was necessary in order to allow for developments in the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union, to take account of new social risks and to ensure coverage of new categories of allowances that had been introduced in the Member States. It was this second part that was to be discussed at that day's meeting.

Although the underlying principles of coordination remained unchanged, targeted

amendments were planned with regard to the situation of people who were not economically active, unemployment benefits, the inclusion of long-term care benefits, improvement of the implementing rules to enhance coordination between the national authorities responsible, and a technical update of the annexes to the relevant regulations.

Mr DOMBROVSKIS explained that the main aim of the review of the coordination of social security systems which was the subject of this first Commission debate was to clarify the conditions in which citizens who lived, worked or sought work in a Member State other than their own could have access to social benefits. He said that the initiative provided real added value as it sought to promote freedom of movement, which was at the heart of the European project, while at the same time ensuring that it was applied fairly, was perceived as a positive thing and enjoyed public support. He added that this second initiative was a follow-up to the revision of the Posting of Workers Directive, which he had mentioned earlier.

The future proposal would cover European citizens who lived, worked, or sought work in another Member State, which meant that it might affect 11 million people of working age, over 14 million people of all ages and all those who needed urgent medical treatment while travelling within the Union. This represented a very small proportion of Europe's population, which meant that the initiative would have a rather limited impact on Member States' public finances.

Mr DOMBROVSKIS emphasised another important aspect, i.e. that the European rules on social security were designed to coordinate systems, not to harmonise them. Consequently, the proposed revision did not set out to regulate the terms of affiliation to social security schemes or the right to benefits laid down in each Member State, nor did it seek to introduce a minimum level of protection, or to require Member States to introduce new benefits.

He noted that the revision proposal had been the subject of long preparations and wide-ranging consultation with the Member States, experts and stakeholders, and

had received a positive opinion from the Regulation Scrutiny Board in February 2016.

Ms THYSSEN took the floor to point out that the issue now being put to the Commission of updating the rules coordinating social security systems was not a new one. It had been raised during two policy debates in July and October 2015 on the package of initiatives to be presented on the mobility of workers, but had been put on the back burner because of the UK referendum on EU membership in June.

She then began by reaffirming the basic principle that the internal market was an indivisible whole, as reiterated by the PRESIDENT and other European leaders recently in the context of the future negotiations with the United Kingdom under Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union. This meant there could be no access to the internal market without free movement of people.

In the current political climate she therefore felt that it was important to clarify forthwith the rules on coordination of social security systems at European level and to ensure that these rules were fair and adapted to the realities facing citizens. She believed that such clarification measures were necessary, not only for the 11 million Europeans living in a Member State other than their own, but also for those who feared that the high level of benefits granted in their own country was attracting citizens from other Member States and that their affiliation might jeopardise the viability of their social security system.

With regard to the substance, Ms THYSSEN stressed that this initiative provided for balanced solutions for all the Member States by (i) reasserting the right of all workers to equal treatment on the principle that the same contributions paid into the same national social security system would give rise to the same benefits, (ii) extending the period during which unemployment benefits could be exported in order to help the unemployed in countries with very high unemployment to find a job in another Member State, (iii) authorising the Member States to restrict access to social protection systems for non-active persons, and (iv) providing everyone with

clarity and legal certainty.

Winding up her presentation, she said that she had had a great many contacts with a whole series of political figures from across the political spectrum, which had served to strengthen her belief that the Commission must adopt a clear position, displaying fairness and balance, in order to prevent populists from further poisoning the public debate on freedom of movement and access to social benefits in the EU. She firmly emphasised the need for the 27 to be united on this vital and sensitive issue.

In the course of the discussion that followed, the Commission raised the following key points:

- the full support of the Members of the College for the ideas presented by Mr DOMBROVSKIS and Ms THYSEN, which were deemed balanced and fair for all the Member States, and also their added value and timeliness;
- the importance of moving forward with the issues covered by the scope of the proposed review – despite the fact that some of these matters were sensitive for certain Member States – by taking a pragmatic and fair approach;
- the support of the Commission to defend unreservedly the free movement of workers and the general principle whereby all the beneficiaries coming under the same Member State should have the same entitlement to an allowance;
- this meant it was important to make a clear distinction between what came under free movement of workers, and matters relating to social security allowances in order to provide a framework for the public discussion, fight against misconceptions and dispel concerns, in a context that was more protectionist than ever;
- support, in particular, for the double objective of developing a social Europe and combating abuse of the system;

- support for the ideas presented on the transferability of unemployment benefits and the situation of beneficiaries of long-term care allowances;
- the wish not to include the matter of family allowance indexation in the scope of the review;
- the need to highlight the low percentage of the European population that would be concerned by the possible proposed review of the rules on coordination of social security systems, and therefore its limited budgetary impact for Member States; furthermore, a call to ensure that there were no gaps in social security systems in order not to leave the most vulnerable members of society without any protection;
- support for an ambitious plan but with some flexibility; the suggestion to give some leeway to each Member State to determine how it would organise the actual conditions for equal treatment;
- the need for in-depth preparation, with a full impact assessment and study of the budgetary aspects for the Member States; the desirability of sound governance, in particular for monitoring the impact of the future proposal;
- the suggestion, in the current political context, for a wide prior consultation of Member States before presenting concrete proposals in order to prevent creating unnecessary blockages;
- a reminder of the firmness and clarity of recent case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union;
- the case for making concrete review proposals quickly, since the last review dated back to 2004, just before a major enlargement which had changed the EU's economic and political landscape;

- the two-fold importance of such proposals if they could also facilitate other ongoing legislative work in the posting of workers dossier;
- the importance of carefully thought-out communication and explanations so that citizens were clearly informed of the scope of the proposed review and in order to thwart populist discourse.

Ms THYSSEN thanked the College for its support. She confirmed that the review proposal as envisaged would have a very limited budgetary impact and would represent, for example in the case of unemployment allowances, applying the aggregation method, 0.04 % of Member States' total expenditure for such allowances. However, she pointed out that the Commission could not disregard the way things were perceived. On the issue of the reactions that could result from a proposal to review the rules on coordinating social security systems, she reiterated the importance of the consultations that had been conducted for several months now with all the stakeholders concerned, including the national authorities in charge of social security. These talks were continuing through sustained dialogue with Member States. She considered that the future proposal would help ease the tensions that surrounded the proposal for a Directive on the posting of workers by clearly demonstrating that the Commission's initiative was aimed at all the Member States. Moreover, that was one of the reasons why she took note of the wish not to include the issue of family allowance indexation in the scope of the future proposal, added to which there was the technical complexity of such a measure. She concluded by indicating that the College would re-examine all these issues in a few weeks' time, on the basis of concrete proposals.

Mr DOMBROVSKIS took note of the comments made during the policy debate, which he understood as a collective call to keep moving in the same direction. He also highlighted the important consultation exercise carried out with the Member States. These sometimes held diverging opinions, although not to the same extent as on the proposal for a review of the Posting of Workers Directive. He

suggested not including the family allowance indexation in the scope of the proposed revision and keeping to the approach based on the principle of equal treatment, according to which the same contributions within a Member State gave entitlement to the same allowances.

The PRESIDENT concluded the policy debate by stating that the College would soon come back to this dossier, when the date of the future Commission proposal would be agreed jointly by Mr DOMBROVSKIS, Ms THYSSEN and himself.

The Commission took note of this information, the conclusions of the policy debate and the background note in SEC(2016) 431.

8. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS (CONTINUED) **(RCC(2016) 116)**

8.1. RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL

i) First review of the financial assistance programme for Greece

Mr MOSCOVICI reported on the Eurogroup meeting held on Monday 10 October at which the first review of the financial assistance programme for Greece, a programme made available to the country under the European Stability Mechanism, had been discussed. At the meeting, euro area Finance Ministers had decided to disburse an additional tranche of EUR 1.1 billion to Greece, which had undertaken to achieve the remaining 15 milestones needed to conclude the first review. He noted that the Greek Government had made significant progress in terms of the most complex reforms, which related to pensions, bank governance, the energy sector, privatisations and the tax collection authorities.

He then turned to the second, more complicated, topic discussed at the Eurogroup meeting, which concerned the clearance of State arrears. He reminded the meeting that Greece had already received EUR 1.8 billion in June for that purpose, and, according to available figures covering the period up to the end of August, those funds had been disbursed to suppliers or subcontractors and the results had been positive. He did however point out that not enough data was available to allow the institutions to gain a clear picture of the net arrears as of the end of September; as a result, the Eurogroup had not been able to reach an agreement on the disbursement of an additional EUR 1.7 billion. The European Stability Mechanism's Board of Directors was expected to reach a decision on 24 October and the Commission would continue to work with the Greek authorities to enable them to provide the required data, as the payments in question were an essential means of reducing pressures on the real economy.

Following the completion of the first review and the adoption of numerous laws, he was pleased to note that Greece was on the right track. It was now time for it to move into the implementation phase.

Mr MOSCOVICI announced that the Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund would return to Athens for two weeks in mid-October in order to begin the second review of the assistance programme, which included a number of sensitive issues, such as labour market reform and the 2017 budget.

In conclusion, he welcomed the fact that the first review had been carried out, as this was a positive development, although he acknowledged that the next phase would be difficult.

The Commission took note of this information.

ii) Financial Transaction Tax (FTT)

Mr MOSCOVICI took the opportunity to discuss the Financial Transaction Tax agreement reached on Monday 10 October by the Economy and Finance Ministers of the 10 Member States taking part in the enhanced cooperation in that area.

He pointed out that the Commission had tabled its first legislative proposal in 2011 for the 28 Member States. It had soon become apparent that it would be impossible to reach a unanimous agreement, and the Commission was asked to make a proposal for enhanced cooperation; 11 Member States (Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Austria, Belgium, Greece, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Estonia), all members of the euro area, had agreed to negotiations on the proposal. Of those 11 Member States, 10 remained, as Estonia had since decided not to take part in the negotiations.

He also noted that, when the current Commission had taken office two years previously, the negotiations were in deadlock, with each Member State presenting its options while the Commission was not invited to take part in the discussions. However, in Luxembourg the previous Monday, the Austrian chair of the group had tabled the various components of an agreement, largely prepared with the Commission, which had been concluded.

He explained that the Ministers of the 10 Member States in question had made significant progress by agreeing on a definition of the taxable base for the Financial Transaction Tax and choosing a broad base, which did nonetheless exclude transactions involving public debt. The Commission would draw up a proposal that would include the components of the agreement before the end of the year.

However, he acknowledged that work was still needed on sensitive issues, specifically (i) the cost of collecting the tax for Member States that did not

have large enough financial markets (ii) the tax rate, and (iii) the allocation of revenues, which was first and foremost a political and institutional matter.

He hailed the success of the Community method; the agreement was a major institutional step forward in terms of protecting enhanced cooperation in a policy area requiring unanimity; it was also a promising avenue for discussions on own resources in the EU budget and the deepening of the euro area.

The Commission took note of this information.

8.2. RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT

iii) Structured dialogue between Parliament and the European Commission on the application of macroeconomic conditionality under the Structural Funds – the case of Spain and Portugal

Mr KATAINEN informed the Commission of the structured dialogue taking place between Parliament and the Commission regarding the application of macroeconomic conditionality under the Structural Funds.

The Commission took note of this information.

9. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL – FIRST PROGRESS REPORT TOWARDS AN EFFECTIVE AND GENUINE SECURITY UNION (COM(2016) 670 AND /2)

Sir Julian KING presented the first report on progress towards an effective and genuine Security Union and informed the meeting that, at the request of the PRESIDENT, he would be briefing the Commission monthly on the progress made

in this area.

The report was a tool for measuring the progress achieved; it identified the problems to be solved, particularly as regards implementation, and outlined the activities planned for the coming months in order to develop a genuine Security Union.

The report being presented that day was structured around two pillars. The first concerned the fight against terrorism and organised crime and the means supporting them. It included the legislative framework developed by the European Union, efforts to counter radicalisation and the work of the EU agencies. The second concerned ways of strengthening our defence against terrorism and our resilience and included the exchange of information and the protection of external borders and critical infrastructure.

He noted that this first report focused on internal policies in the traditional sense of the term, but it contained numerous references to other broader, cross-sectoral aspects of security involving different players. Future monthly reports would deal with all of these aspects, based on the work of the specially created Task Force.

In the course of the discussion that followed, the Commission raised the following key points: (i) the crucial role of education in tackling insecurity in the broadest sense; (ii) the appearance of new threats to the internal security of the Union, with the emergence of violent far-right groups, a phenomenon that was all the more worrying because it was home-grown; (iii) the encouraging results achieved by mobilising online service providers, which had helped to restrict terrorist activities on the internet; (iv) the possibility of an initiative to restrict the dissemination of hate speech on social media and the complexity of finding a solution to this, not least on a technical level; (v) the importance of having included Eurojust in the European Union's anti-terrorist structures; (vi) a mention of the recent international agreements to strengthen security in aviation and maritime transport; and finally, (vii) a question about certain aspects of computer security in the Commission departments.

Sir Julian KING referred again to the various different threats to the EU's security, mentioning specifically the fact that the recent attacks in Europe had been committed by isolated individuals, without the support of any organisation. For this reason he stressed the need for stronger anti-radicalisation and de-radicalisation programmes on the ground, while at the same time continuing to emphasise integration policies within European societies.

He concluded by thanking the Members of the Commission for their active contribution to the development of the Security Union.

The PRESIDENT wound up the discussion by thanking Sir Julian KING for his presentation and saying that the Commission would revisit all of these questions when the next reports on progress towards an effective and genuine Security Union were presented.

The Commission approved the report in COM(2016) 670/2, for transmission to Parliament, the European Council and the Council and, for information, to the national parliaments.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

10.1. SECURITY OF COMMISSION STAFF AND BUILDINGS

The PRESIDENT asked Ms GEORGIEVA to outline the security measures taken at the Commission, but took the opportunity first to congratulate her, on behalf of the College and in a personal capacity, for getting so far in the selection process for the next UN Secretary-General.

Ms GEORGIEVA thanked the Members for their support.

She then briefed them on the situation as regards the security of the Commission's staff and buildings. She informed Members that the measures

taken for the alert state ‘yellow’ were still in force and that she herself remained in close contact with the authorities of the host state, Belgium, and the other EU institutions. The action plan to increase security at the Commission was being rolled out according to plan. She also mentioned ongoing and future measures, such as new equipment and additional security features. She expressed her satisfaction with the progress that had been made and promised to keep the College informed about the situation.

The Commission took note of this information.

10.2. OPERATIONALISATION OF THE EUROPEAN BORDER AND COAST GUARD

(INFO(2016) 102)

Mr AVRAMOPOULOS reported orally on the latest developments as regards the operationalisation of the European Border and Coast Guard, having promised to provide a weekly update in an information note.

He mentioned the success of the ceremony to launch the new agency, which had taken place at Bulgaria’s external border with Turkey on 6 October and had been attended by representatives of the Member States, the Bulgarian Prime Minister, Boyko Borissov, and the European institutions. He saw this as a symbol of how political will could ultimately be translated into a practical achievement, even in the most difficult and complex conditions. He hoped the Member States would now fulfil their commitments towards the new agency.

He thanked the Commission’s Spokesperson’s Service for its invaluable assistance in organising the opening ceremony.

The Commission took note of this information and of the note distributed as INFO(2016) 102.

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The Commission's other discussions on certain agenda items are recorded in the special minutes.

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The meeting closed at 12.41.