



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

**PV(2018) 2250 final**

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

Brussels, 16 May 2018

# TEXTE EN

## MINUTES

**of the 2250<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Commission**

**held in Brussels**

**(Berlaymont)**

**on Wednesday 11 April 2018**

**(morning)**

—

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Attendance list</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>5-6</b> |
| 1. AGENDAS (OJ(2018) 2250/FINAL; SEC(2018) 2250/FINAL) .....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 7          |
| 2. WEEKLY MEETING OF CHEFS DE CABINET (RCC(2018) 2250).....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 7          |
| 3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2248 <sup>TH</sup> AND 2249 <sup>TH</sup><br>MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSION (21 AND 28 MARCH 2018) .....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 7          |
| 4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS (RCC(2018) 52) .....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 7          |
| 4.1. LEGISLATIVE MATTERS .....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 8          |
| 4.2. RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL .....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 12         |
| 4.3. RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT .....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 13         |
| 4.4. OTHER BUSINESS.....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 13         |
| 5. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF<br>POWERS.....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 14         |
| 5.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED (SEC(2018) 172 ET SEQ.).....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 14         |
| 5.2. EMPOWERMENT (SEC(2018) 173 ET SEQ.) .....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 14         |
| 5.3. DELEGATION / SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS (SEC(2018) 174 ET SEQ.).....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 14         |
| 5.4. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES (SEC(2018) 175 AND /2) .....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 14         |
| 5.5. GRANTING OF AN EMPOWERMENT AND A DELEGATION RELATING TO<br>DECISIONS OR REGULATIONS REGISTERING NAMES AS PROTECTED<br>DESIGNATIONS OF ORIGIN, PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS,<br>TRADITIONAL SPECIALITIES GUARANTEED AND GEOGRAPHICAL<br>INDICATIONS AND APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS TO PRODUCT<br>SPECIFICATIONS UNDER REGULATIONS (EU) 1151/2012, (EU) 1308/2013,<br>(EC) 110/2008 AND (EU) 251/2014 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF<br>THE COUNCIL (C(2018) 2114)..... | 15         |

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |           |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 6. | PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL ON THE TRANSPARENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE EU RISK ASSESSMENT IN THE FOOD CHAIN AMENDING REGULATION (EC) 178/2002 [ON GENERAL FOOD LAW], DIRECTIVE 2001/18/EC [ON THE DELIBERATE RELEASE INTO THE ENVIRONMENT OF GMOS], REGULATION (EC) 1829/2003 [ON GM FOOD AND FEED], REGULATION (EC) 1831/2003 [ON FEED ADDITIVES], REGULATION (EC) 2065/2003 [ON SMOKE FLAVOURINGS], REGULATION (EC) 1935/2004 [ON FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS], REGULATION (EC) 1331/2008 [ON THE COMMON AUTHORISATION PROCEDURE FOR FOOD ADDITIVES, FOOD ENZYMES AND FOOD FLAVOURINGS], REGULATION (EC) 1107/2009 [ON PLANT PROTECTION PRODUCTS] AND REGULATION (EU) 2015/2283 [ON NOVEL FOODS] (COM(2018) 179 AND /2; SWD(2018) 97 AND /2; RCC(2018) 49)..... | 16        |
| 7. | OTHER BUSINESS.....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 16        |
|    | <i>SITUATION REGARDING THE RULE OF LAW IN POLAND .....</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <i>16</i> |
| 8. | COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL AND THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE – A NEW DEAL FOR CONSUMERS (COM(2018) 183 TO /3; RCC(2018) 51/2) .....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 17        |
| 9. | PROPOSAL FOR A DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL AMENDING COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 93/13/EEC OF 5 APRIL 1993, DIRECTIVE 98/6/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL, DIRECTIVE 2005/29/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL AND DIRECTIVE 2011/83/EU OF THE EUROPEAN                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |           |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL AS REGARDS BETTER<br>ENFORCEMENT AND MODERNISATION OF EU CONSUMER<br>PROTECTION RULES (COM(2018) 185 TO /3; SWD(2018) 96;<br>SWD(2018) 98; (SEC(2018) 185; RCC(2018) 51/2).....                                                                                            | 17 |
| 10. PROPOSAL FOR A DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT<br>AND OF THE COUNCIL ON REPRESENTATIVE ACTIONS FOR THE<br>PROTECTION OF THE COLLECTIVE INTERESTS OF CONSUMERS,<br>AND REPEALING DIRECTIVE 2009/22/EC (COM(2018) 184 TO /3;<br>SWD(2018) 96; SWD(2018) 98; (SEC(2018) 185; RCC(2018) 51/2) ..... | 17 |
| 11. OTHER BUSINESS (CONTINUED).....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 21 |
| 11.1. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN TRADE POLICY .....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 21 |
| 11.2. SITUATION IN SYRIA.....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 22 |
| 11.3. PREPARATION OF THE APRIL 2018 PART-SESSION OF PARLIAMENT.....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 23 |

**Single sitting: Wednesday 11 April 2018 (morning)**

The sitting opened at 10.49 with Mr JUNCKER, President, in the chair.

**Present:**

|                 |                                         |                           |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mr JUNCKER      | President                               |                           |
| Mr TIMMERMANS   | First Vice-President                    |                           |
| Ms MOGHERINI    | High Representative /<br>Vice-President | Items 1 to 11.3 (in part) |
| Mr ANSIP        | Vice-President                          |                           |
| Mr ŠEFČOVIČ     | Vice-President                          |                           |
| Mr DOMBROVSKIS  | Vice-President                          |                           |
| Mr KATAINEN     | Vice-President                          |                           |
| Mr OETTINGER    | Member                                  |                           |
| Mr HAHN         | 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                                  |                           |
| Mr STYLIANIDES  | Member                                  |                           |
| Mr HOGAN        | Member                                  |                           |
| Ms BULC         | Member                                  |                           |
| Ms BIENKOWSKA   | Member                                  |                           |
| Ms JOUROVÁ      | Member                                  |                           |
| Mr NAVRACSICS   | Member                                  |                           |
| Ms CREȚU        | Member                                  |                           |
| Ms VESTAGER     | Member                                  |                           |
| Mr MOEDAS       | Member                                  |                           |
| Sir Julian KING | Member                                  |                           |
| Ms GABRIEL      | Member                                  |                           |

PV(2018) 2250 final

The following also sat in:

|                      |                                                                                |                 |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Ms MARTÍNEZ ALBEROLA | Chef de cabinet to the PRESIDENT                                               |                 |
| Mr ROMERO REQUENA    | Director-General, Legal Service                                                |                 |
| Mr PESONEN           | Director-General, DG Communication                                             | Items 1 to 11.2 |
| Mr SCHINAS           | Head of the Spokesperson's Service and<br>Chief Spokesperson of the Commission |                 |
| Ms METTLER           | Head of the European Political Strategy<br>Centre                              | Items 1 to 11.2 |
| Mr SZOSTAK           | Deputy Chef de cabinet to<br>the PRESIDENT                                     | Items 1 to 11.2 |
| Mr GRASSI            | Adviser in the PRESIDENT's Office                                              | Items 1 to 10   |
| Ms ARKI              | PRESIDENT's Office                                                             | Items 1 to 11.2 |
| Mr SMULDERS          | Chef de cabinet to Mr TIMMERMANS                                               | Items 1 to 10   |
| Mr HAGER             | Chef de cabinet to Mr OETTINGER                                                | Item 11         |
| Ms NIKOLAY           | Chef de cabinet to Ms JOUROVÁ                                                  | Items 1 to 10   |
| Ms VILA NUÑEZ        | Secretariat-General                                                            | Items 1 to 11.2 |
| Ms ANDREEVA          | Commission Spokesperson's Service                                              |                 |

Secretary: Mr SELMAYR, Secretary-General (except for item 11.3), assisted by  
Mr AYET PUIGARNAU, Director in the Secretariat-General.

**1. AGENDAS**

**(OJ(2018) 2250/FINAL; SEC(2018) 2250/FINAL)**

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(2018) 2250)**

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Tuesday 10 April 2018.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2248<sup>TH</sup> AND 2249<sup>TH</sup> MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSION (21 AND 28 MARCH 2018)**

The Commission held over approval of the minutes of its 2248<sup>th</sup> and 2249<sup>th</sup> meetings for a later meeting.

**4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS**

**(RCC(2018) 52)**

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group (IRG) held on Monday 9 April 2018 (RCC(2018) 52).

It paid particular attention to the following points.

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

##### **i) Trilogues**

(point 3.1 of the IRG record)

- Use of the Schengen Information System for the return of illegally staying third-country nationals / Establishment, operation and use of the Schengen Information System (SIS) in the field of border checks, amendment of Regulation (EU) 515/2014 and repeal of Regulation (EC) 1987/2006 / Establishment, operation and use of the Schengen Information System (SIS) in the field of police cooperation and judicial cooperation in criminal matters, amendment of Regulation (EU) 515/2014 and repeal of Regulation (EC) 1986/2006, Council Decision 2007/533/JHA and Commission Decision 2010/261/EU (Regulations) – LENAERS and COELHO reports – 2016/0407 (COD) / 2016/0408 (COD) / 2016/0409 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 162.

- Establishment of a Union Resettlement Framework and amendment of Regulation (EU) 516/2014 of the European Parliament and the Council (Regulation) – BJÖRK report – 2016/0225 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 129.

- Establishment of ‘Eurodac’ for the comparison of fingerprints for the effective application of Regulation (EU) 604/2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person, for identifying an illegally staying third-country national or stateless person and on requests for the comparison with Eurodac data by Member States’ law enforcement authorities and Europol for law enforcement purposes (Regulation – recast) – MACOVEI report – 2016/0132 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 128/2.

- Amendment of Directive 96/71/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 1996 concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services (Directive) – MORIN-CHARTIER & JONGERIUS report – 2016/0070 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 163.

- Approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States as regards the accessibility requirements for products and services (Directive) – LØKKEGAARD report – 2015/0278 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 99.

- Establishment of the European Defence Industrial Development Programme aiming at supporting the competitiveness and innovative capacity of the EU defence industry (Regulation) – GROSSETÊTE report – 2017/0125 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 164.

- Rules on the making available on the market of CE marked fertilising products and amendment of Regulations (EC) 1069/2009 and (EC) 1107/2009 (Regulation) — ȚURCANU report — 2016/0084 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 169 and /2.

- Establishment of the European Electronic Communications Code (Directive – recast) – DEL CASTILLO VERA report – 2016/0288 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 172.

**ii) European Parliament dossiers – April 2018 part-session**

(point 3.2 of the IRG record)

- ‘Circular Economy’ Package – Amendment of Directives 2000/53/EC on end-of-life vehicles, 2006/66/EC on batteries and accumulators and waste batteries and accumulators, and 2012/19/EU on waste electrical and electronic equipment (Directive) – 2015/0272 (COD) / Amendment of Council Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste (Directive) – 2015/0274 (COD) / Amendment of Directive 2008/98/EC on waste (Directive) – 2015/0275 (COD) / Amendment of Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste (Directive) – 2015/0276 (COD) – BONAFÈ reports / Amendment of Council Directive 87/217/EEC, Directive 2003/87/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Directive 2009/31/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Regulation (EU) 1257/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Directive 86/278/EEC and Council Directive 94/63/EC as regards procedural rules in the field of environmental reporting and repeal of Council Directive 91/692/EEC (Decision) – GAMBÚS report – 2016/0394 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2018) 216, further to note SI(2017) 59, which it had already approved on 21 February 2018, and also took note of the compromise text in SP(2018) 190, further to note SI(2017) 533, which it had already approved on 22 November 2017.

- Binding annual greenhouse gas emission reductions by Member States from 2021 to 2030 for a resilient Energy Union and to meet commitments under the Paris Agreement and amendment of Regulation (EU) 525/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council on a mechanism for monitoring and reporting greenhouse gas emissions and other information relevant to climate change (Regulation) – GERBRANDY report – 2016/0231 (COD) / Inclusion of greenhouse gas

emissions and removals from land use, land use change and forestry into the 2030 climate and energy framework and amendment of Regulation (EU) 525/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council on a mechanism for monitoring and reporting greenhouse gas emissions and other information relevant to climate change (Regulation) – LINS report – 2016/0230 (COD)

The Commission took note of SP(2018) 191, further to notes SI(2017) 577 and SI(2017) 578/2, which it had already approved on 6 December 2017.

- Amendment of Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings (Directive) – BENDTSEN report – 2016/0381 (COD)

The Commission took note of SP(2018) 192, further to note SI(2017) 565, which it had already approved on 29 November 2017.

- Approval and market surveillance of motor vehicles and their trailers, and of systems, components and separate technical units intended for such vehicles (Regulation) – DALTON report – 2016/0014 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2018) 194 and took note of the compromise text annexed thereto.

- Amendment of Directive (EU) 2015/849 on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purposes of money laundering or terrorist financing and amendment of Directive 2009/101/EC (Directive) – KARIŇŠ & SARGENTINI report – 2016/0208 (COD)

The Commission took note of SP(2018) 195, further to note SI(2017) 602, which it had already approved on 12 December 2017.

- Amendment of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 1141/2014 of the European Parliament and the Council of 22 October 2014 on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations (Regulation) – WIELAND / BRESSO report – 2017/0219 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2018) 196 and took note of the compromise text attached to that document.

- Organic production and labelling of organic products – amendment of Regulation (EU) XXX/XXXX of the European Parliament and of the Council [Official Controls Regulation] and repeal of Council Regulation (EC) 834/2007 (Regulation) — HÄUSLING report — 2014/0100 (COD)

The Commission took note of SP(2018) 193/2, further to note SI(2017) 221, which it had already approved on 31 May 2017.

#### **4.2. RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL**

##### **iii) Programming of Council business**

(SI(2018) 175/2)

The Commission took note of the information in SI(2018) 175/2 on the Council meetings between Tuesday 10 and Wednesday 25 April 2018.

##### **iv) Non-legislative dossiers**

(point 4.1 of the IRG record)

- Draft Council conclusions on the reformed ITER project

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 165.

- Draft Council Conclusions on the European Court of Auditors' Special Report on 'Election Observation Missions – Efforts made to follow up recommendations but better monitoring needed'

The Commission took note of the information in SI(2018) 170.

- European External Action/Commission Services' Working Paper 'Enhancing people-to-people contacts between the European Union and Russia – April 2018 update'

The Commission took note of the information in SI(2018) 171 and /2.

- EU financial contribution – Brussels Conference ‘Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region’ (24 and 25 April 2018)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 168/2.

- Proposal of an EU candidate to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 173.

#### **4.3. RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT**

- v) Action taken on the non-legislative resolutions adopted by Parliament at its February I 2018 part-sessions**  
(point 5.6.2 of the IRG record)

The Commission approved documents SP(2018) 210 and /2 on the action taken on the non-legislative resolutions adopted by Parliament at its February I 2018 part-session, for transmission to Parliament.

#### **4.4. OTHER BUSINESS**

- vi) Digital Day 2 (Brussels, 10 April 2018)**  
(point 7 of the IRG record)

The Commission took note of the information in SI(2018) 145 and /2.

## **5. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS**

### **5.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED**

**(SEC(2018) 172 ET SEQ.)**

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 26 March and 6 April 2018.

### **5.2. EMPOWERMENT**

**(SEC(2018) 173 ET SEQ.)**

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 26 March and 6 April 2018.

### **5.3. DELEGATION / SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS**

**(SEC(2018) 174 ET SEQ.)**

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedure between 26 March and 6 April 2018, as archived in Decide.

### **5.4. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES**

**(SEC(2018) 175 AND /2)**

The Commission took note of the sensitive written procedures for which the time limit expired between 9 and 13 April 2018 and of the finalisation written procedure initiated following the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet on 10 April.

**5.5. GRANTING OF AN EMPOWERMENT AND A DELEGATION RELATING TO DECISIONS OR REGULATIONS REGISTERING NAMES AS PROTECTED DESIGNATIONS OF ORIGIN, PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS, TRADITIONAL SPECIALITIES GUARANTEED AND GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS AND APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS TO PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS UNDER REGULATIONS (EU) 1151/2012, (EU) 1308/2013, (EC) 110/2008 AND (EU) 251/2014 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL  
(C(2018) 2114)**

The Commission adopted the decision in C(2018) 2114 and, in particular, decided:

- to empower the Member of the Commission in charge of agriculture and rural development, to adopt, on behalf of the Commission and under its responsibility, the decisions and regulations referred to in Article 1 of Decision C(2018) 2114, subject to the conditions laid down in its Articles 3, 4 and 5;
- to delegate to the Director-General of DG Agriculture and Rural Development, on behalf of the Commission and under its responsibility, the adoption of the decisions referred to in Article 2 of Decision C(2018) 2114, subject to the conditions laid down in its Articles 3, 4 and 6.

- 6. PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL ON THE TRANSPARENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE EU RISK ASSESSMENT IN THE FOOD CHAIN AMENDING REGULATION (EC) 178/2002 [ON GENERAL FOOD LAW], DIRECTIVE 2001/18/EC [ON THE DELIBERATE RELEASE INTO THE ENVIRONMENT OF GMOS], REGULATION (EC) 1829/2003 [ON GM FOOD AND FEED], REGULATION (EC) 1831/2003 [ON FEED ADDITIVES], REGULATION (EC) 2065/2003 [ON SMOKE FLAVOURINGS], REGULATION (EC) 1935/2004 [ON FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS], REGULATION (EC) 1331/2008 [ON THE COMMON AUTHORISATION PROCEDURE FOR FOOD ADDITIVES, FOOD ENZYMES AND FOOD FLAVOURINGS], REGULATION (EC) 1107/2009 [ON PLANT PROTECTION PRODUCTS] AND REGULATION (EU) 2015/2283 [ON NOVEL FOODS]**  
**(COM(2018) 179 AND /2; SWD(2018) 97 AND /2; RCC(2018) 49)**

The Commission adopted the proposal for a Regulation set out in COM(2018) 179/2, for transmission to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the national parliaments, together with the staff working document distributed as SWD(2018) 97/2, the contents of which were noted.

## **7. OTHER BUSINESS**

### ***SITUATION REGARDING THE RULE OF LAW IN POLAND***

At the invitation of the PRESIDENT, Mr TIMMERMANS briefed the meeting on developments regarding respect for the rule of law in Poland following his visit to Warsaw on 9 April.

8. **COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL AND THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE – A NEW DEAL FOR CONSUMERS**  
(COM(2018) 183 TO /3; RCC(2018) 51/2)
9. **PROPOSAL FOR A DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL AMENDING COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 93/13/EEC OF 5 APRIL 1993, DIRECTIVE 98/6/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL, DIRECTIVE 2005/29/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL AND DIRECTIVE 2011/83/EU OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL AS REGARDS BETTER ENFORCEMENT AND MODERNISATION OF EU CONSUMER PROTECTION RULES**  
(COM(2018) 185 TO /3; SWD(2018) 96; SWD(2018) 98; (SEC(2018) 185; RCC(2018) 51/2)
10. **PROPOSAL FOR A DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL ON REPRESENTATIVE ACTIONS FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE COLLECTIVE INTERESTS OF CONSUMERS, AND REPEALING DIRECTIVE 2009/22/EC**  
(COM(2018) 184 TO /3; SWD(2018) 96; SWD(2018) 98; (SEC(2018) 185; RCC(2018) 51/2)

Ms JOUROVÁ presented the set of proposals with which the Commission intended to introduce a new deal for consumers.

The proposed measures were the fruit of intense cooperation with stakeholders and were based on extensive analysis, comprising the results of the Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT) programme for EU legislation in the field of consumer protection and the report on the implementation of the recommendation on common principles applicable to collective redress mechanisms. These studies and analyses

had shown that while consumers enjoyed a high level of protection in the European Union, the weak point continued to be ensuring enforcement of the regulations in the Member States. The measures to ensure enforcement of the law by the public authorities had already been strengthened under the previous reform of the regulations on cooperation in the field of consumer protection, aimed chiefly at facilitating cross-border cooperation between the competent authorities.

The purpose of the proposals being presented that day was to remedy the shortcomings identified in a balanced manner and adapt consumer protection to the digital age, while reducing the technical barriers for traders. Thus, they provided for the possibility of the public authorities imposing heavy fines in cases of cross-border infringements. They also addressed the rules applicable to free online services, and interactions between consumers and online markets. The Commission was also responding to more specific consumer concerns, for example by giving definitive clarification of issues such as the dual quality of products and aggressive doorstep selling practices, for which, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, it was leaving the Member States some room for manoeuvre.

Ms JOUROVÁ then went on to present in more detail the proposal on representative actions, a new initiative that would provide consumers with an important means of securing their rights. The ‘Dieselgate’ scandal had shown the need to provide European consumers with effective tools to claim their individual and collective rights if a large corporation failed to respect them. She pointed out that the approach chosen by the Commission was not intended to support a commercial model that would encourage lawyers or hedge funds to finance legal actions, as was the case with the group action system used in the US. On the contrary, the Commission’s objective was to ensure that the single market remained fair for all parties, which was why the proposal made provision for significant safeguards instruments. Thus, the possibility of bringing collective actions would be reserved for qualified entities that complied with strict criteria, in particular as regards the transparency of their financing; these criteria could be verified by a judge at any time. Furthermore, the proposal did not provide for the possibility of a judge imposing punitive damages

and interest on undertakings. Finally, legal traditions would be respected and the Member States would be able to decide how to structure the instrument, in particular as regards mandates.

Ms JOUROVÁ thanked the Members of the Commission who had helped to broaden the scope of application of this initiative, thereby increasing its added value for EU consumers. She hoped for a rapid conclusion of the negotiations on passengers' rights, which might make it possible to remove the provisions on this subject from the annex. She welcomed the proposal to cover the legislative act on accessibility and hoped that the proposal would facilitate the final adoption of the Commission's proposals on type approval of vehicles. In conclusion, she hoped that the set of proposals she was submitting to the College that day would be adopted before the end of the current Commission's term of office. In her view, these advances would give consumers better protection in the future should a case similar to 'Dieselgate' arise.

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

- the importance of informing the public effectively of these proposals, highlighting the significant new tools that the Commission was making available to all consumers;
- the need to draw up guidelines in order to ensure that the proposals were effectively implemented;
- a reminder of the numerous complementary initiatives proposed by the present Commission to enhance the protection of consumer rights in the EU, for example in the context of the Energy Union, the digital single market, agriculture and food safety;
- the case for encouraging greater convergence between the different consumer protection systems, to the benefit of consumers and associations operating in the Member States with weaker protection tools;

- public incomprehension of the different treatment of EU and US consumers in relation to the Dieselgate scandal;
- the hope that the proposal on representative action could constitute a dissuasive tool that could increase the discipline of operators in the single market;
- the particular context in which the Commission was presenting its Communication on the proposed new deal for consumers in view of the scandal involving the UK company Cambridge Analytica, accused of fraudulently using the personal data of users of the social networking platform Facebook and influencing the result of the 2016 American presidential election;
- regret that personal data protection was not sufficiently taken into account in consumer protection policy and was seen by certain economic operators as slowing down their growth, even though data collection could look like remuneration for services presented as free to consumers;
- the hope that EU rules on the protection of citizens would be applied as broadly as possible to ensure that people were protected both as consumers and as private individuals; from this standpoint, emphasis on the increased protection that would result from the General Data Protection Regulation applicable from 25 May 2018;
- a question about the way in which competition could be guaranteed in a digital world that seemed to encourage the creation of monopolies; the possibilities afforded by competition law to prevent the abuses of a dominant position resulting from success, without impeding the development of undertakings in the sector, as well as the need to give assurances to consumers regarding compliance with data protection rules, including the right to be forgotten.

Ms JOUROVÁ thanked the College for its support for the proposals adopted that day and reiterated the need, which was all the more pressing given the Cambridge Analytica scandal, for maximum attention to be paid to communicating the measures to consumers, clearly explaining the means of protection that the new deal

would give them once adopted.

The PRESIDENT thanked Mr TIMMERMANS and Ms JOUROVÁ for this excellent work.

The Commission:

- approved the Communication in COM(2018) 183/3, for transmission to Parliament, the Council and the Economic and Social Committee, and, for information, to the national parliaments;
- adopted the proposals for a Directive in COM(2018) 185/3 and COM(2018) 184/3 for transmission to Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the national parliaments, together with the impact assessment, the summary thereof and the opinion of the Regulatory Scrutiny Board in staff working documents SWD(2018) 96 and SWD(2018) 98 and in SEC(2018) 185, the contents of which were noted.

## **11. OTHER BUSINESS (CONTINUED)**

### ***11.1. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN TRADE POLICY***

At the invitation of the PRESIDENT, Ms MALMSTRÖM reminded the College that the USA had temporarily exempted, until 1 May 2018, European Union exports of steel and aluminium from the customs duties it now imposed on such imports.

Whilst noting the risk to the Union after 1 May 2018, she stressed that she was continuing her efforts to obtain a permanent exemption, in close cooperation with other partner countries affected by the unilateral measures of the USA, in particular Canada, Mexico and Japan. She said that at the same time, her departments were continuing work on the preparation of potential safeguarding measures in the event that the USA did not grant the Union a

permanent exemption. She added that any negotiation of an specific trade agreement would, from the Union's point of view, be subject to the granting of a permanent exemption and a Council mandate.

Ms MOGHERINI pointed out that in any case, the Union remained a partner and ally of the USA. She drew particular attention to the forthcoming timetable with the announcement of American measures in relation to Iran on 12 May, i.e. about 10 days after the expiry of the temporary exemption awarded to the Union. This was why it was important for the Union to have worked rigorously to establish its position and to coordinate its action with its partners, in particular Japan, which had already indicated that it would be in favour of an approach of this kind.

Ms MALMSTRÖM concluded by noting with satisfaction that, thanks to the full support of the Member States on this matter, the Union was speaking with one voice.

The Commission took note of this information.

### **11.2. SITUATION IN SYRIA**

At the invitation of the PRESIDENT, Ms MOGHERINI briefly presented the situation in Syria. She indicated that developments there were still relatively unpredictable and that military action in the region could not be ruled out entirely in the coming hours or days. In this respect, she noted the failure at this stage of the discussions in the United Nations Security Council following the presumed chemical attack that was attributed to the Syrian regime.

She said the General Affairs Council, which would next meet on 12 April, would discuss this issue.

The Commission took note of this information.

### **11.3. PREPARATION OF THE APRIL 2018 PART-SESSION OF PARLIAMENT**

In relation to the preparation of the following week's part-session of Parliament, Mr OETTINGER informed the College about the ongoing work with a view to the vote without discussion that would be held on Wednesday 18 April on the proposal for a resolution by the European Parliament's Committee on Budgetary Control concerning the Commission's integrity policy.

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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 12.59.