



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2021) 2392 final

- English translation of the French version which is authentic -

Brussels, 27 October 2021

TEXTE EN

MINUTES

of the 2392nd meeting of the Commission

held in Strasbourg

(Louise Weiss building)

on Tuesday 5 October 2021

(afternoon)

PV(2021) 2392 final

- English translation of the French version which is authentic -

EN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Attendance list	5-6
1. AGENDAS (OJ(2021) 2392/FINAL; SEC(2021) 2392/FINAL)	7
2. WEEKLY MEETING OF CHEFS DE CABINET (RCC(2021) 2392)	7
3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2386 TH , 2387 TH , 2388 TH , 2389 TH , 2390 TH AND 2391 ST MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSION (14 AND 20 JULY, 8, 14, 22 AND 29 SEPTEMBER 2021)	7
4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS (RCC(2021) 184)	7
5. COORDINATION OF EXTERNAL ACTION (RCC(2021) 41).....	9
6. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS.....	10
6.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED (SEC(2021) 331 ET SEQ.).....	10
6.2. EMPOWERMENT (SEC(2021) 332 ET SEQ.)	10
6.3. DELEGATION / SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS (SEC(2021) 333 ET SEQ.)	10
6.4. SIGNIFICANT WRITTEN PROCEDURES (SEC(2021) 334 AND /2)	10
7. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS (SEC(2021) 335 AND /2).....	10
7.1. DG JUSTICE AND CONSUMERS– APPOINTMENT OF AN AD15/16 DIRECTOR- GENERAL (PERS(2021) 102 TO /3)	11
7.2. PUBLICATIONS OFFICE – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD15/16 DIRECTOR- GENERAL (PERS(2021) 24 TO /4)	12
7.3. DG INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD14/15 DIRECTOR (PERS(2021) 96 TO /3)	12

7.4. <i>LEGAL SERVICE – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD14/15 PRINCIPAL LEGAL ADVISER (PERS(2021) 97 TO /3)</i>	13
7.5. <i>LEGAL SERVICE – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD14/15 PRINCIPAL LEGAL ADVISER (PERS(2021) 98 TO /3)</i>	13
7.6. <i>LEGAL SERVICE – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD14/15 PRINCIPAL LEGAL ADVISER (PERS(2021) 99 TO /3)</i>	14
7.7. <i>LEGAL SERVICE – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD14/15 PRINCIPAL LEGAL ADVISER (PERS(2021) 100 TO /3)</i>	14
7.8. <i>SECRETARIAT-GENERAL – AUTHORISATION FOR THE INTERNAL AND INTERINSTITUTIONAL PUBLICATION (AT GRADE AD14/15) AND EXTERNAL PUBLICATION (AT GRADE AD14) FOR THE POST OF DIRECTOR – CHIEF OF THE PROTOCOL SERVICE (PERS(2021) 101)</i>	15
8. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE, AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS – EU STRATEGY ON COMBATING ANTISEMITISM AND FOSTERING JEWISH LIFE (2021-2030) (COM(2021) 615 AND /2; RCC(2021) 188).....	16
9. OTHER BUSINESS.....	19
9.1. <i>LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN EXTERNAL RELATIONS</i>	19
9.2. <i>COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION ON THE REQUEST FOR REGISTRATION OF THE EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE ENTITLED 'STOP (((5G))) – STAY CONNECTED BUT PROTECTED' PURSUANT TO REGULATION (EU) 2019/788 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL (C(2021) 7293)</i>	24
9.3. <i>COMMISSION DECISION ON THE REQUEST FOR REGISTRATION OF THE EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE ENTITLED 'INICIATIVA</i>	

EVE PARA LA CREACION DEL DERECHO DE DECISION '

(PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT) (C(2021) 7294)24

Single sitting: Tuesday 5 October 2021 (afternoon)

The sitting opened at 13.13 with Ms von der LEYEN, President, in the chair.

Present:

Ms von der LEYEN	President	
Ms VESTAGER	Executive Vice-President	
Mr DOMBROVSKIS	Executive Vice-President	
Mr BORRELL i FONTELLES	High Representative / Vice-President	
Mr ŠEFČOVIČ	Vice-President	
Ms JOUROVÁ	Vice-President	
Ms ŠUICA	Vice-President	
Mr SCHINAS	Vice-President	
Mr HAHN	Member	
Ms GABRIEL	Member	
Mr SCHMIT	Member	
Mr WOJCIECHOWSKI	Member	
Mr BRETON	Member	
Ms FERREIRA	Member	
Ms KYRIAKIDES	Member	Items 1 to 9 (in part)
Mr REYNDERS	Member	
Ms DALLI	Member	
Ms JOHANSSON	Member	Items 8 and 9
Mr LENARČIČ	Member	
Mr VÁRHELYI	Member	
Ms URPILAINEN	Member	
Ms SIMSON	Member	

Absent:

Mr TIMMERMANS	Executive Vice-President
Mr GENTILONI	Member
Ms VĂLEAN	Member
Mr SINKEVIČIUS	Member
Ms McGUINNESS	Member

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

Mr MES	Member of Mr TIMMERMANS's staff	Items 8 and 9 (in part)
Mr PIANTINI	Expert in Mr GENTILONI's Office	
Ms PREISING	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr SINKEVIČIUS	
Ms O'HEA	Member of Ms McGUINNESS's staff	

The following also sat in:

Mr CALLEJA CRESPO	Director-General, Legal Service	
Ms AHRENKILDE HANSEN	Director-General, DG Communication	
Ms SPINANT	Deputy Chief Spokesperson of the Commission	
Mr VANDENBERGHE	Adviser in the PRESIDENT's Office	Item 9
Mr SAMPEDRO MARCOS	Policy Coordinator in the PRESIDENT's Office	
Mr ANDRESEN GUIMARÃES	Adviser in the PRESIDENT's Office	Item 9

Secretary: Ms JUHANSONE, Secretary-General, assisted by Ms DEPREZ, Director in the Secretariat-General.

1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2021) 2392/FINAL; SEC(2021) 2392/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(2021) 2392)

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Monday 4 October 2021.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2386TH, 2387TH, 2388TH, 2389TH, 2390TH AND 2391ST MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSION (14 AND 20 JULY, 8, 14, 22 AND 29 SEPTEMBER 2021)

The Commission decided to hold over approval of the minutes of its 2386th, 2387th, 2388th, 2389th, 2390th and 2391st meetings.

4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

(RCC(2021) 184)

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group (IRG) held on Friday 1 October 2021 (RCC(2021) 184).

The Commission approved the lines proposed for the following points:

- **Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 – Participation of the Union in the European Partnership on Metrology jointly undertaken by several Member States (Decision) – CARVALHO report – 2021/0049 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2021) 277/2.

- **Objection pursuant to Rule 112(2) and (3) – Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/1449 of 3 September 2021 amending Implementing Regulation (EU) No 540/2011 as regards the extension of the approval periods of active substances, including chlorotoluron and difenoconazole – 2021/2869 (RSP)**

Line set out in SP(2021) 629.

- **Objection pursuant to Rule 111(3) – Technical screening criteria for determining the conditions under which an economic activity qualifies as contributing substantially to climate change mitigation or climate change adaptation and for determining whether that economic activity causes no significant harm to any of the other environmental objectives**

Line set out in SP(2021) 632.

- **Fixing for 2022 of the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks applicable in the Baltic Sea, and amending Regulation (EU) 2021/92 as regards certain fishing opportunities in other waters (Council Regulation) – 2021/0278 (NLE)**

Line set out in SI(2021) 278.

- **Banking Union – Annual Report 2020 – HÜBNER report – 2020/2122 (INI)**

Line set out in SP(2021) 624/2.

- **Oral Question O-000060/2021 – Disinformation and the role of social platforms**

Line set out in SP(2021) 633.

- **Oral Question O-000054/2021 – Assessing the Union’s measures for the EU tourism sector as the end of the Summer season nears**

Line set out in SP(2021) 634/2.

The Commission approved the lines set out for the following points, for transmission to Parliament:

- **Commission replies to the non-legislative resolutions adopted by Parliament at its part-session of June 2021 (Part IV)**

Line set out in SP(2021) 625/2.

- **Commission replies to the non-legislative resolutions adopted by Parliament at its part-session of July 2021 (Part III)**

Line set out in SP(2021) 626/2.

The Commission took note of the following point:

- **Active monitoring and forecast of budget implementation (AMFBI) – Information note**

Information set out in SPI(2021) 48.

5. COORDINATION OF EXTERNAL ACTION (RCC(2021) 41)

The Commission took note of the operational conclusions in RCC(2021) 41 of the meeting of the Group for External Coordination (EXCO) held on Thursday 30 September 2021.

6. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

6.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED

(SEC(2021) 331 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 27 September and 1 October 2021.

6.2. EMPOWERMENT

(SEC(2021) 332 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 27 September and 1 October 2021.

6.3. DELEGATION / SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS

(SEC(2021) 333 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedure between 27 September and 1 October 2021, as archived in Decide.

6.4. SIGNIFICANT WRITTEN PROCEDURES

(SEC(2021) 334 AND /2)

The Commission took note of the significant written procedures for which the time limit expired between 4 and 8 October 2021 and of one finalisation written procedure.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

(SEC(2021) 335 AND /2)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**(SEC(2021) 95 AND /2)**

At the invitation of the PRESIDENT, Mr HAHN presented two proposals for administrative decisions that were being submitted directly to the College for approval.

He stated that it was proposed to appoint Ms Ana GALLEGO to the post of Director-General of DG Justice and Consumers and Ms Hilde HARDEMAN to the post of Director-General of DG Publications Office.

Mr HAHN highlighted the great skills, outstanding career and recognised expertise of Ms Ana GALLEGO and Ms Hilde HARDEMAN, which would be valuable assets in their new posts.

**7.1. DG JUSTICE AND CONSUMERS– APPOINTMENT OF AN AD15/16
DIRECTOR-GENERAL****(PERS(2021) 102 TO /3)**

The Commission had before it the list of applications under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii), Article 29(1)(b) and Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Director-General of DG Justice and Consumers (PERS(2021) 102).

It took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 17 February and 4 March 2021 (PERS(2021) 102/2 and /3).

The Commission then examined the applicants' qualifications for the post. On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and after consulting Mr REYNDERS and Ms DALLI, it then decided to appoint Ms Ana GALLEGO to the post.

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

**7.2. PUBLICATIONS OFFICE – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD15/16
DIRECTOR-GENERAL
(PERS(2021) 24 TO /4)**

The Commission had before it applications under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) and Article 29(1)(b) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Director-General of the Publications Office (PERS(2021) 24 and /2).

It took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 30 April and 3 June 2021 (PERS(2021) 24/3 and /4).

The Commission then examined the applicants' qualifications for the post. On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, it then decided to appoint Ms Hilde HARDEMAN to the post.

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

**7.3. DG INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS – APPOINTMENT OF AN
AD14/15 DIRECTOR
(PERS(2021) 96 TO /3)**

The Commission had before it the list of applications under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Director of the 'Sustainable Finance, Investment and Jobs; Economy that works for the People' Directorate in DG International Partnerships (PERS(2021) 96).

It took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 23 and 24 June 2021 (PERS(2021) 96/2 and /3).

The Commission then examined the applicants' qualifications for the post. It also considered their ability, efficiency and conduct in the service. On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, and after consulting Ms URPILAINEN, it then decided to appoint Mr Antti KARHUNEN to the post.

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

**7.4. *LEGAL SERVICE – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD14/15 PRINCIPAL
LEGAL ADVISER***

(PERS(2021) 97 TO /3)

The Commission had before it applications under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) and Article 29(1)(b) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Principal Legal Adviser responsible for the ‘AGRI Team (Agriculture and Fisheries)’ in the Legal Service (PERS(2021) 97).

It took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 8 April and 27 May 2021 (PERS(2021) 97/2 and /3).

The Commission then examined the applicants’ qualifications for the post. It also considered their ability, efficiency and conduct in the service. On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, it then decided to appoint Ms Chiara CATTABRIGA to the post.

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

**7.5. *LEGAL SERVICE – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD14/15 PRINCIPAL
LEGAL ADVISER***

(PERS(2021) 98 TO /3)

The Commission had before it applications under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) and Article 29(1)(b) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Principal Legal Adviser responsible for the ‘AIDE Team (State Aids and Dumping)’ in the Legal Service (PERS(2021) 98).

It took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 8 April and 20 May 2021 (PERS(2021) 98/2 and /3).

The Commission then examined the applicants' qualifications for the post. It also considered their ability, efficiency and conduct in the service. On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, it then decided to appoint Mr Leo FLYNN to the post.

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

**7.6. LEGAL SERVICE – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD14/15 PRINCIPAL
LEGAL ADVISER
(PERS(2021) 99 TO /3)**

The Commission had before it applications under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) and Article 29(1)(b) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Principal Legal Adviser responsible for the 'BUDG Team (Budget, Customs, Taxation)' in the Legal Service (PERS(2021) 99).

It took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 8 April and 27 May 2021 (PERS(2021) 99/2 and /3).

The Commission then examined the applicants' qualifications for the post. It also considered their ability, efficiency and conduct in the service. On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, it then decided to appoint Mr Bernd MARTENCZUK to the post.

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

**7.7. LEGAL SERVICE – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD14/15 PRINCIPAL
LEGAL ADVISER
(PERS(2021) 100 TO /3)**

The Commission had before it applications under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) and Article 29(1)(b) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Principal Legal Adviser responsible for the 'SOC Team (Employment and social affairs,

education and culture, health and consumer protection)' in the Legal Service (PERS(2021) 100).

It took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 8 April and 20 May 2021 (PERS(2021) 100/2 and /3).

The Commission then examined the applicants' qualifications for the post. It also considered their ability, efficiency and conduct in the service. On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, it then decided to appoint Ms Maria Isabel MARTINEZ DEL PERAL CAGIGAL to the post.

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

7.8. SECRETARIAT-GENERAL – AUTHORISATION FOR THE INTERNAL AND INTERINSTITUTIONAL PUBLICATION (AT GRADE AD14/15) AND EXTERNAL PUBLICATION (AT GRADE AD14) FOR THE POST OF DIRECTOR – CHIEF OF THE PROTOCOL SERVICE (PERS(2021) 101)

On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, the Commission decided to authorise the internal and interinstitutional publication, at grade AD14/15, and external publication, at grade AD14, of the vacancy notice set out in PERS(2021) 101 for the post of Chief of the Protocol Service in the Secretariat-General, in accordance with Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii), Article 29(1)(b) and Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**8. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE, AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS – EU STRATEGY ON COMBATING ANTISEMITISM AND FOSTERING JEWISH LIFE (2021-2030)
(COM(2021) 615 AND /2; RCC(2021) 188)**

At the invitation of the PRESIDENT, Mr SCHINAS presented to the College the EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life for the period 2021 to 2030. This strategy, the first of its kind, was the result of a commitment made by the Commission in January 2020 on the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

The idea behind this strategy was born of the need to keep alive the memory of the darkest hours of antisemitism in Europe, to raise awareness of the testimony of survivors of concentration camps and to establish a link between those tragic individual experiences and the lessons to be collectively drawn from them by younger generations.

Mr SCHINAS painted an alarming picture of current expressions of antisemitism in the EU, which encompassed a proliferation of conspiracy theories fostered by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the spread of antisemitism online. Against that background, the vast majority of Jewish people in Europe felt that antisemitism was on the rise in their country and that they no longer felt safe there. Some even said that they were prepared to leave.

The strategy proposed that day comprised three main pillars, namely: (i) preventing and combating antisemitism through the implementation of a European network of trusted fact-checkers and flaggers with the aim of raising alerts, removing antisemitic speech and preventing the sale of antisemitic books or other material online; (ii) protecting and fostering Jewish life in the EU in order to ensure that Jewish people can feel safe and participate fully in European life and to raise

awareness of their traditions and culture; and (iii) education, research and Holocaust remembrance.

As regards this last point, Mr SCHINAS stressed the importance of having more robust measures in Europe to support teacher training and the adaptation of teaching courses. The Commission was also proposing the creation of a network of Holocaust memorials in Europe and a European Research Centre on contemporary antisemitism and Jewish life. Lastly, to promote European Jewish heritage, the Commission would invite cities applying for the title of European Capital of Culture to address the history of their minorities, including that of the Jewish community.

The fight against antisemitism had to be a global effort, something which the EU intended to encourage in its cooperation with third country partners, including Israel, and international organisations, particularly within the United Nations family.

Mr SCHINAS concluded by noting that the proposed strategy laid the foundations for future actions that would require support from all parties concerned, and stressed that the fight against antisemitism was obviously not only a matter for Jewish people, but for all European citizens.

A discussion followed, in the course of which the following points were raised:

- the fact that the sources of antisemitism varied across the Member States, which underlined the need for the latter to develop appropriate national strategies;
- the duty of Member States to actively anticipate the risk of racist and xenophobic acts and to adjust their response to specific threats;
- the need to engage with the rapidly growing virtual world, while bearing in mind that online threats often made the leap into the real world;
- a reminder of the tools available at European level for combating antisemitism, for example the 2008 Framework Decision on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia, which should be better implemented by

Member States, the 2015 European Agenda on Security and the 2016 Code of Conduct on countering illegal hate speech online;

- the importance of preserving the memory of the Holocaust and not trivialising it, but also of addressing the situation of today’s Jewish communities, whose members all too often experienced insecurity and apprehension;
- support for the establishment of a network of places connected to the history of the Holocaust, in cooperation with local communities, and the suggestion to reflect on the possibility of including the places where it was planned;
- the shared view that combating antisemitism was also a global battle, of which the proposed strategy took due account;
- a reminder of projects to combat antisemitism financed by European funds in the EU’s neighbouring countries;
- the desirability of pursuing the important work carried out to date on education, research and culture, thanks in particular to teachers, schools and digital platforms, and of embracing any cultural opportunity to raise awareness of the fight against antisemitism;
- the need to actively prevent antisemitism through education and textbooks, in Europe and elsewhere, and the case for revising the UNESCO standards in this regard;
- the commitment to integrate some of the initiatives and actions proposed in the strategy into other Commission sectoral policies, for example, in the context of the Union of equality and the fight against discrimination.

The PRESIDENT warmly thanked all those who, within the scope of their respective competences, had helped to develop the proposed strategy, and in turn stressed the importance of preserving and keeping alive the memory of the Holocaust. By way of example, every 27 January, the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, the

German Parliament observed a minute's silence, followed by a ceremony in the presence of a Holocaust survivor. The duty to remember could take several forms that should be developed and encouraged, and the EU should take an active approach to combating antisemitism and ensuring that Jewish life flourished in Europe.

Following these presentations, the Commission approved the Communication in COM(2021) 615/2 for transmission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions and, for information, to the national parliaments.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

9.1. LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN EXTERNAL RELATIONS

The PRESIDENT asked Mr BORRELL to brief the College on the latest developments in external relations, after which she would report on her telephone call with the US President Joe Biden and her visit to the six partner countries in the Western Balkans ahead of the EU-Western Balkans summit on 6 October.

Mr BORRELL began by talking about the situation in Afghanistan. He drew attention once again to the risk of economic collapse and humanitarian disaster facing the country, which could destabilise the region and have serious consequences for global security. He stressed how difficult it was for the EU, together with the international community, to actively seek ways of averting such a collapse without however recognising the Taliban regime. He mentioned the humanitarian initiatives taken by various bodies, which needed to be stepped up, while at the same time pointing to the international legal constraints that stood in the way of support for the Afghan economy. He announced that the European development cooperation ministers would meet very soon. He wrapped up this point by saying that the evacuation operations

had not ended and that a high-level European forum on resettlement would be held on 6 October, which he would be co-chairing with Ms JOHANSSON.

Ms JOHANSSON took the opportunity to report that to date the Member States had provided protection to 22 000 evacuees from Afghanistan.

Mr BORRELL then spoke briefly about his recent visit to Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia from 30 September to 3 October.

As regards the Sahel, he noted that the question of continuing European support for Mali would be discussed that evening at an informal dinner of the EU Heads of State or Government.

He expressed his fear of renewed tensions in the Mediterranean. He recommended stepping up contacts with the Turkish authorities.

Meanwhile, the serious tensions at the border between Serbia and Kosovo* had been defused at the meeting held in Brussels on 30 September between the two negotiators as part of the dialogue facilitated by the EU. He welcomed this good news.

Lastly, Mr BORRELL spoke about energy prices, which was a matter of concern worldwide. He stressed that the predicted rise in gas prices could drive up the demand for coal. Both these factors needed to be taken into account in the EU response.

On this last point, the PRESIDENT said that the Commission was currently working on drafting a Communication on energy prices that would be discussed by the College on 13 October, ahead of the European Council on 21 and 22 October. She noted that the main cause of the rising cost of energy was the large increase in gas prices. She pointed out here that the EU

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

imported 90% of the gas and 97% of the oil it consumed, which made it dependent on the operation of global markets, while at the same time it produced on its own territory renewable energies whose prices had been stable or indeed falling for a number of years.

She then asked Mr DOMBROVSKIS and Ms VESTAGER to report to the College on the outcome of the first meeting of the EU-US Trade and Technology Council held on 29 September in Pittsburgh.

Mr DOMBROVSKIS said that, on the US side, the meeting had been jointly organised by the Secretary of State, Antony BLINKEN, the Trade Secretary, Gina RAIMONDO, and the Trade Representative, Katherine TAI.

He pointed out that the aim of the EU-US Trade and Technology Council was to enable the two parties to coordinate their approach to major global issues in the fields of technology, economy and trade, and to forge closer bilateral economic and trade relations based on their shared values.

This first meeting had been very fruitful and the US participants had taken the opportunity to reiterate the great importance they attached to the transatlantic partnership, emphasising their willingness to engage in dialogue with the EU.

He briefly summed up the results of the meeting in relation to trade. The EU and the US had agreed to work together to boost transatlantic trade and investment, to strengthen their technological and industrial leadership, to join forces to develop resilient and sustainable supply chains, particularly for semiconductors, and to tackle the challenges facing global trade, in particular unfair practices.

Mr DOMBROVSKIS said that, after the meeting proper, Ms VESTAGER and himself had attended a number of meetings in Pittsburgh with the interested parties and members of civil society, who had expressed a keen interest in the work being done in the context of the

EU-US Trade and Technology Council.

Ms VESTAGER welcomed the fact that the US President had paid great attention to this transatlantic event. She then turned her attention back to the discussions in Pittsburgh.

First she noted with satisfaction that her US interlocutors had endorsed the EU's approach to artificial intelligence and the idea of developing corresponding measuring tools.

She then said that the EU and the US had done a joint analysis of the long-term shortages that would affect supply chains and that the US wanted to cooperate with Europe on this matter.

Lastly, she stressed the ambitious work programme that had been entrusted to the ten working groups set up under the Trade and Technology Council.

Mr BRETON took the floor to describe the salient points from his recent visit to Japan and South Korea.

He began by observing that there was a lack of awareness in these two countries of the EU's important contribution to the global fight against COVID-19, even though Japan and South Korea had received nearly 300 million doses of vaccines exported from Europe. He therefore recommended that the EU delegations improve the flow of information on this subject as part of their communication activities.

Turning to the question of semiconductors, he noted that the current shortage was causing a significant increase in prices, which would probably continue for around 12-18 months and would have implications for EU industry. There was therefore a need to develop cooperation in this sector with Japan and South Korea, which were both major producers.

Lastly, he reported that Japan and South Korea had great expectations of the

Indo-Pacific partnership.

With regard to bilateral relations between the EU and the United States, the PRESIDENT informed the College of her telephone conversation with US President Joe BIDEN on 4 October.

The first item discussed had been the highly successful first meeting of the EU-US Trade and Technology Council, which, in her view, augured well for a positive cooperation programme in line with the EU's political objectives.

In addition, the EU and the US now had a shared ambition to contribute to efforts to accelerate vaccination worldwide, jointly address issues of vaccine hesitancy and disinformation, and step up their cooperation on vaccine manufacturing capabilities.

On combating climate change, she had discussed financing with the US President ahead of the COP26 conference in Glasgow at the end of October. Out of the USD 100 billion needed each year to help developing countries adapt to climate change, the EU had paid its own contribution of USD 25 billion. However, the US had not yet done so, although it was announcing that it now wanted to double its contribution to USD 11 or 12 billion. In any case, there was still a financing gap of around USD 8 to 9 billion to be filled.

The PRESIDENT also said that the Privacy Shield issue had been raised during her discussion with the US President and that a solution should be found within the limits of EU legal constraints.

The conversation had also focused on defence matters. She had referred to the capabilities the EU needed in this area, which it wished to develop to supplement those of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). She also referred to the capabilities the EU intended to acquire to address cyber threats and hybrid attacks.

Finally, the PRESIDENT stressed that Joe BIDEN had expressed interest in her analysis of her meeting with the six Western Balkans partners on 28-30 September.

On this point, her talks with the Western Balkans leaders ahead of the EU-Western Balkans summit on 6 October had shown their strong wish to join the EU and speed up the accession process as much as possible. She highlighted the importance of the economic and investment plan adopted by the EU to help the Western Balkans in their green and digital transition, which demonstrated European added value compared to other powers. She pointed out that they must be allowed to move forward at a comparable speed to the EU in this twin transition. She also welcomed the numerous concrete projects undertaken to this end on the ground. In conclusion, the PRESIDENT felt that the Western Balkans partners should be encouraged to make solid progress towards integrating their regional market.

The Commission took note of this information.

9.2. COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION ON THE REQUEST FOR REGISTRATION OF THE EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE ENTITLED 'STOP (((5G))) – STAY CONNECTED BUT PROTECTED' PURSUANT TO REGULATION (EU) 2019/788 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL (C(2021) 7293)

9.3. COMMISSION DECISION ON THE REQUEST FOR REGISTRATION OF THE EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE ENTITLED 'INICIATIVA EVE PARA LA CREACION DEL DERECHO DE DECISION' (PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT) (C(2021) 7294)

Ms JOUROVÁ presented two draft Decisions being tabled for approval by the College concerning the registration of two European citizens' initiatives,

the first entitled, in the authentic language (English) ‘*Stop (((5G))) – Stay Connected but Protected*’ and the second entitled, in the authentic language (Spanish) ‘*Iniciativa EVE para la creación del derecho de decisión*’.

The ‘*Stop (((5G))) – Stay Connected but Protected*’ initiative essentially calls on the Commission to propose legislation to protect citizens and the environment from radio frequency and microwave radiation and from all the impacts of 5G and the digital transition, and to enact effective data protection to safeguard our privacy, security and freedom.

Ms JOUROVÁ pointed out that the College’s task that day was to decide only on the registration of the initiative and not at this stage to analyse its substance or political expediency.

She explained that the conditions for registering European citizens’ initiatives were set out in Article 6(3) of Regulation (EU) 2019/788 of 17 April 2019 on the European citizens’ initiative, which had repealed and replaced Regulation (EU) No 211/2011 with effect from 1st January 2020. One of those conditions was the requirement that no part of the citizens’ initiative should manifestly fall outside the framework of the Commission’s powers to submit a proposal for an EU legal act for the purpose of implementing the Treaties.

The request made by the promoters of the ‘*Stop (((5G))) – Stay Connected but Protected*’ initiative fell within the Commission’s powers to propose legal acts for the purpose of implementing the Treaties under Articles 153, 114, 168(5), 192(1) and 16(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

The Commission therefore confirmed that the ‘*Stop (((5G))) – Stay Connected but Protected*’ initiative met the conditions for registration. It therefore decided, in accordance with document C(2021) 7293, to notify the group of organisers of this and authorised Ms JOUROVÁ to sign the reply on behalf of the College in the authentic language (English) and send it to the organisers of

the initiative.

Ms JOUROVÁ underlined that if, within a period of twelve months, the proposals gathered the minimum support required, in other words at least one million signatures from citizens of at least a quarter of the Member States, the Commission would then analyse the substance of the proposals.

In accordance with the new Regulation (EU) 2019/788, proposed initiatives registered now benefited from more user-friendly arrangements for organisers to gather support and easier access for European citizens. The Commission would have a period of six months to submit its reasoned decision whether or not to take any action.

Following this presentation, the Commission, on a proposal from the PRESIDENT, confirmed that the proposed Decision in C(2021) 7293 would be formally adopted by the finalisation written procedure, the deadline for which was set at 10.00 on Thursday 7 October 2021 (PE/2021/7448).

Turning to the '*Iniciativa EVE para la creación del derecho de decisión*' initiative, Ms JOUROVÁ said that it basically called on the Commission to establish decision-making rights which would entail setting up a system of direct democracy whereby voters could decide on issues of common or public interest on the basis of solidarity, and thereby exercise popular sovereignty, with or without representatives.

First, she said that the request made by the promoters of the '*Iniciativa EVE para la creación del derecho de decisión*' initiative was loosely worded and required clarification.

Second, establishing decision-making rights along the proposed lines would imply modifying the current system of representative democracy on which both the constitutional systems of the Member States and the functioning of the European Union were based, and therefore the Treaties.

As such, in its current form, the proposed initiative did not fulfil the requirements enshrined in Article 6(3)(c) of Regulation (EU) 2019/788 and it could not therefore be registered.

However, she explained that in order to encourage participatory democracy in the Union through the use of the European Citizens' Initiative, the registration procedure introduced by Regulation (EU) 2019/788 provided that, if the requirement referred to above was not fulfilled, the Commission informed the group of organisers of its assessment and the underlying reasons so that the organisers had the choice of amending the initiative to take into account the Commission's assessment, maintaining it in its current form or withdrawing it.

The Commission confirmed that, as it stood, the '*Iniciativa EVE para la creación del derecho de decisión*' citizens' initiative did not fulfil all the requisite conditions for registration. It therefore decided, in accordance with document C(2021) 7294, to notify the group of organisers of its assessment and the reasons underlying it pursuant to Article 6(4) of Regulation (EU) 2019/788, and authorised Ms JOUROVÁ to sign the corresponding letter on behalf of the College and to send it, in the authentic language (English), to the organisers of the initiative.

*

* *

The meeting closed at 14.54.