



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2023) 2445 final

- English translation of the French version which is authentic -

Brussels, 22 March 2023

TEXTE EN

MINUTES

**of the 2445th meeting of the Commission
held in Brussels
(Berlaymont)
on Wednesday 8 February 2023
(morning)**

PV(2023) 2445 final

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Single sitting: Wednesday 8 February 2023 (morning)

The sitting opened at 9.05 with Ms von der LEYEN, President, in the chair.

Present:

Ms von der LEYEN	President
Mr TIMMERMANS	Executive Vice-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
Mr SCHINAS	Vice-President
Mr GENTILONI	Member
Mr WOJCIECHOWSKI	Member
Mr BRETON	Member
Mr REYNDERS	Member
Ms DALLI	Member
Ms JOHANSSON	Member
Mr LENARČIČ	Member
Ms VÁLEAN	Member
Ms SIMSON	Member
Ms McGUINNESS	Member

Absent:

Ms ŠUICA	Vice-President
Mr HAHN	Member
Ms GABRIEL	Member
Mr SCHMIT	Member
Ms FERREIRA	Member

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Ms KYRIAKIDES	Member
Mr VÁRHELYI	Member
Ms URPILAINEN	Member
Mr SINKEVIČIUS	Member

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

Mr SCICLUNA	Head of Cabinet to Ms ŠUICA	
Mr MÜLLER	Head of Cabinet to Mr HAHN	
Ms ROUCH	Head of Cabinet to Ms GABRIEL	
Mr KASEL	Head of Cabinet to Mr SCHMIT	
Mr ROSSIDES	Head of Cabinet to Ms KYRIAKIDES	
Mr KRISTÓFFY	Head of Cabinet to Mr VÁRHELYI	
Mr LAHTI	Head of Cabinet to Ms URPILAINEN	Items 8/9 (in part) and 10
Mr ŠATŪNAS	Head of Cabinet to Mr SINKEVIČIUS	

The following also sat in:

Mr CALLEJA CRESPO	Director-General, Legal Service
Ms AHRENKILDE HANSEN	Director-General, DG Communication
Mr MAMER	Head of the Spokesperson's Service and Chief Spokesperson of the Commission
Ms PETKOVA	Director of Coordination and Administration in the PRESIDENT's cabinet
Ms ALLOUIS-LE LOSTEC	Head of Unit in the Secretariat-General
Mr VALERO	Secretariat-General

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

1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2023) 2445/FINAL; SEC(2023) 2445/FINAL)

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

2. WEEKLY MEETING OF HEADS OF CABINET

(RCC(2023) 2445)

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Heads of Cabinet held on Monday 6 February 2023.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Commission held over approval of the minutes of its 2439th, 2440th, 2441st, 2442nd, 2443rd and 2444th meetings of 30 November, 7 and 13 December 2022, 17 and 25 January and 1 February 2023 for a later date.

4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

(RCC(2023) 61)

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group (IRG) held by videoconference on Friday 3 February 2023 (RCC(2023) 61).

The Commission approved the lines proposed for the following points:

- **‘Fit for 55’ – Deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure, and repeal of Directive 2014/94/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council (Regulation) – ERTUG report – 2021/0223 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2023) 20/2.

- **‘Fit for 55’ – Amendment of Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Directive 98/70/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the promotion of energy from renewable sources, and repeal of Council Directive (EU) 2015/652 (Directive) – PIEPER report – 2021/0218 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2023) 11/2.

- **Energy Charter Treaty – Commission position and non-paper regarding the EU’s, Euratom’s and Member States’ membership**

Line set out in SI(2023) 14.

- **European Union - United Kingdom Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) – Endorsement of the letter formally proposing to the United Kingdom the list of individuals selected by the EU to serve as panellists and chairpersons of a panel of experts under Article 409 TCA**

Line set out in SI(2023) 22.

- **Oral Question O-000051/2022 – Adequate minimum income ensuring active inclusion**

Line set out in SP(2023) 68.

- **Oral Question O-000001/2023 – The Commission Communication on ensuring availability and affordability of fertilisers**

Line set out in SP(2023) 69.

The Commission approved the line proposed for the following point, for transmission to the European Parliament:

- **Commission replies to the non-legislative resolutions adopted by the European Parliament at its November II 2022 and December 2022 plenary sessions**

Line set out in SP(2023) 57/3.

The Commission approved the line proposed for the following point, for transmission to the European Economic and Social Committee:

- **Follow-up to opinions of the European Economic and Social Committee – Plenary session of October 2022**

Line set out in SC(2023) 4/2.

The Commission approved the line proposed for the following point, for transmission to the Committee of the Regions:

- **Follow-up to opinions of the Committee of the Regions – Plenary session of October 2022**

Line set out in SR(2023) 2/2.

The Commission took note of the following points:

- **‘Fit for 55’ – Amendment of Regulation (EU) 2019/631 as regards strengthening the CO₂ emission performance standards for new passenger cars and new light commercial vehicles in line with the Union’s increased climate ambition (Regulation) – HUITEMA report – 2021/0197 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2023) 61, further to note SI(2022) 439, which the Commission had already approved on 30 November 2022.

- **‘Fit for 55’ – Amendment of Decision (EU) 2015/1814 as regards the amount of allowances to be placed in the market stability reserve for the Union greenhouse gas emission trading scheme until 2030 (Decision) –**

ENGERER report – 2021/0202 (COD)

Compromise text in SP(2023) 62, further to note SI(2023) 7, which the Commission had already approved on 25 January 2023.

- **Rules for the exercise of the Union’s rights in the implementation and enforcement of the Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, of the one part, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, of the other part (Regulation) – HÜBNER & KELLY & SCHIEDER report – 2022/0068 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2023) 63, further to note SI(2022) 476, which the Commission had already approved on 7 December 2022.

- **Amendment of Regulation (EU) 2015/760 as regards the scope of eligible assets and investments, the portfolio composition and diversification requirements, the borrowing of cash and other fund rules and as regards requirements pertaining to the authorisation, investment policies and operating conditions of European long-term investment funds (Regulation) – HOOGEVEEN report – 2021/0377 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2023) 64, further to note SI(2022) 385 which the Commission had already approved on 16 November 2022.

- **Establishment of the Union Secure Connectivity Programme 2023-2027 (Regulation) – GRUDLER report – 2022/0039 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2023) 65, further to note SI(2022) 408 which the Commission had already approved on 22 November 2022.

- **Electoral rights of mobile Union citizens in European Parliament elections**
 - **Detailed arrangements for the exercise of the right to vote and stand as a candidate in elections to the European Parliament for Union citizens residing in a Member State of which they are not nationals (Council Directive - recast) – BOESELAGER report – 2021/0372 (CNS)**
 - **Detailed arrangements for the exercise of the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in municipal elections by Union citizens residing in a Member State of which they are not nationals (Council Directive – recast) – BRUDZIŃSKI report – 2021/0373 (CNS)**

Information set out in SP(2023) 66/2.

- **Rules to prevent and combat child sexual abuse (Regulation) – ZARZALEJOS report – 2022/0155 (COD)**

Information set out in SP(2023) 46/2.

- **Results of the European Parliament’s February I 2023 plenary session**

Information set out in SP(2023) 59.

5. COORDINATION OF EXTERNAL ACTION (RCC(2023) 9)

The Commission took note of the operational conclusions in RCC(2023) 9 of the meeting of the Group for External Coordination (EXCO) held on Wednesday 1 February 2023.

6. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

6.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED

(SEC(2023) 80 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 30 January and 5 February 2023.

6.2. EMPOWERMENT

(SEC(2023) 81 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 30 January and 5 February 2023.

6.3. DELEGATION / SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS

(SEC(2023) 82 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedures between 30 January and 5 February 2023 archived in Decide.

6.4. SIGNIFICANT WRITTEN PROCEDURES

(SEC(2023) 83 AND /2)

The Commission took note of the significant written procedures for which the time limit expired between 6 and 10 February 2023.

6.5. GENERAL EMPOWERMENTS – COMMISSION DECISION EXTENDING THE PERIOD OF VALIDITY OF DECISION C(2016) 974 AND DECISION C(2016) 2797 GRANTING EMPOWERMENTS *(C(2023) 951)*

The Commission decided to extend the period of validity of two Decisions:

- Decision C(2016) 974 on an empowerment relating to the implementation of Article 13 of Directive 2011/70/Euratom establishing a Community framework for the responsible and safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste;
- Decision C(2016) 2797 on an empowerment relating to the adoption of the implementing rules concerning technical measures provided for in Article 21 of Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/443 and Article 60 of Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444, and the development of security notices setting out security guidelines and best practices.

The Commission adopted the decision in C(2023) 951.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS (SEC(2023) 84)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS (PERS(2023) 16)

7.1. DG ENVIRONMENT – LIST OF CANDIDATES FOR THE POST OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY (EEA), AT GRADE AD14 (PERS(2023) 17 TO /3)

On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and after consulting Mr SINKEVIČIUS, the Commission decided:

- to endorse the list of two candidates, presented in alphabetical order, set out in point 1 of PERS(2023) 16, for the post of Executive Director of the European Environment Agency (EEA) in Copenhagen, and to consider this list as the Commission proposal;

- to ask Mr SINKEVIČIUS, the Member of the Commission in charge of the environment, to communicate this decision, and also the list of candidates, to the Management Board of the European Environment Agency.

These decisions would take effect immediately.

7.2. LEGAL SERVICE – TRANSFER OF AN AD14 OFFICIAL UNDER ARTICLE 7 OF THE STAFF REGULATIONS

On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, and after consulting Mr SINKEVIČIUS, the Commission decided to transfer in the interest of the service, under Article 7 of the Staff Regulations, Mr Gilles GANTELET, currently Director of the ‘General Affairs, Knowledge and Resources’ Directorate (ENV.A) in DG Environment, to the post of Director of the ‘Resources and Performance Management’ Directorate (SJ.R) in the Legal Service.

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

8. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS – EUROPEAN UNION DISASTER RESILIENCE GOALS – ACTING TOGETHER TO DEAL WITH FUTURE EMERGENCIES

(COM(2023) 61 AND /2; RCC(2023) 63)

9. COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON UNION DISASTER RESILIENCE GOALS

(C(2023) 400 AND /2; RCC(2023) 63)

The PRESIDENT introduced the College’s discussion on the EU’s disaster

resilience goals by highlighting how topical the issue was in light of the tragic events in southern Türkiye and northern Syria, which had been hit by a devastating earthquake. She shared her great sadness at the number of people who had lost their lives in the earthquake and the scale of material damage it had caused. She considered that the EU had a crucial role to play in delivering help to those in need, given its extensive experience in disaster management. She then invited Mr BORRELL to present the initiatives being tabled that day, placing them in the context of the devastating earthquake.

Mr BORRELL said that these events were evidence of the need to bolster the EU's ability to respond to disasters, inside and outside the EU, and to provide vital aid to those in need. He congratulated Mr LENARČIČ on the major efforts that had been made to coordinate humanitarian aid under the Union Civil Protection Mechanism. Moreover, that same week, in response to a request from Chile, the Union Civil Protection Mechanism had been triggered to fight the forest fires that had ravaged the country.

Disasters, whether natural or man-made, knew no borders, as shown by the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. In the EU itself, many citizens were now facing extreme weather events, such as forest fires, heatwaves, droughts and flooding.

Given the worrying and rapid changes in terms of the risk landscape, Mr BORRELL welcomed the focus on improving disaster resilience and bolstering the response capabilities of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism. The aim of the Mechanism was to strengthen cooperation, not only between EU countries, but also with the eight other participating countries, namely Iceland, Norway, Türkiye and five countries in the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia and Serbia). Ukraine and Moldova had also expressed an interest in joining the Mechanism.

Lastly, he noted that the disaster resilience goals complemented the EU's

commitment under the Strategic Compass to improve civil and military cooperation to support rescue efforts in the event of a disaster. Starting in 2023, live joint exercises would be carried out covering scenarios such as disaster relief and humanitarian aid. Given its experience in this field, Spain had offered to host the first of these exercises, which would take place in the second half of the year.

Mr LENARČIČ then presented the key points of the initiatives submitted to the College that day, which were designed to ensure that the EU and its Member States could better prepare for any future emergency situations.

He stressed the unprecedented nature of the disasters that the current Commission had dealt with since 2019, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic which had begun only a few weeks into its term of office. In the early days of the pandemic, there had been a lack of coordination at EU level while the Member States focused on their own needs, competing to purchase the first shipments of masks and personal protective equipment. He highlighted the Commission's swift intervention at that time to coordinate action by the Member States, as well as the progress that had been made since then, particularly with regard to the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and the rescEU strategic reserve.

Just when the worst of the pandemic had appeared to be over, Russia had launched its war of aggression against Ukraine, creating a further shock for European society and the economy. Mr LENARČIČ noted that the EU's response to the huge scale of the humanitarian and logistical needs in Ukraine was the largest, longest and most innovative civil protection operation in the history of the EU.

However, 'traditional' disasters had not gone away and had in fact become more frequent in recent years. Referring to the devastating earthquake that had struck Türkiye and Syria at the beginning of the week, he praised how swiftly the Union Civil Protection Mechanism had been mobilised to respond to the urgency of the situation and provide emergency humanitarian assistance. As a result, some 1 500 rescue workers and search dogs from around 20 EU Member States were on

the ground. He also informed the College that a new request had been received that same morning from Türkiye for assistance to help deal with aftershocks.

Mr LENARČIČ said that the majority of EU Member States and the countries participating in the Civil Protection Mechanism considered earthquakes to be a particularly unpredictable risk that could strike at any time. The same was true of many other disasters, including those that were man-made; despite this, it was necessary for the public and the EU institutions to be prepared for all eventualities.

In his view, the greatest challenge facing the EU was the need to prepare for the impact of climate change. There had been many warning signs in recent years; for example, in 2022, the proportion of forests burned in forest fires was 3.5 times higher than the average figure for the previous 15 years. The forest fire season was now longer and the geographical area affected larger than it had been in the past.

Moreover, in 2021, deadly floods had affected Belgium and Germany, and storms and droughts were on the increase in many regions of Europe. In 2022, the EU had received more than 120 requests for assistance from Ukraine in different areas. Furthermore, the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, which was triggered when national systems were overwhelmed, had been activated more than 100 times a year in the last 3 years, compared with an average figure of around 20 times per year in the past.

Mr LENARČIČ then set out the four messages that the EU wished to send its citizens. First, he stressed the importance of a coordinated response at EU level, as recent crises had shown that the Member States could not respond effectively to all crises and disasters on their own. Second, civil protection support during disasters was one of the most tangible examples of solidarity inside and outside the EU. Third, the people of the EU needed to be at the heart of resilience efforts, in particular because their involvement would ensure that the EU was better prepared to deal with disasters. Lastly, there was a need for cross-border and cross-sectoral cooperation between the Member States and for the available instruments and

funding programmes to be used to strengthen disaster response capabilities as well as prevention-related aspects.

Mr LENARČIČ said that the Recommendation proposed five flagship initiatives corresponding to the five goals that had been identified in order to better prepare the EU and its Member States for future disasters. The goals in question were to:

- (i) **anticipate** by improving the assessment and anticipation of risks, as well as disaster risk management planning, and by drawing up EU-wide scenarios to know what to prepare for. The Commission was currently working on 10 disaster scenarios covering 16 main hazards, such as fires, health threats, earthquakes and conflicts;
- (ii) **prepare** citizens based on the different scenarios identified. Making people more risk aware and improving their preparedness helped to reduce the impact of disasters. To achieve this aim, he proposed developing a pan-European disaster risk awareness programme called preparEU. This programme could include activities such as disaster risk icons and visuals for schools, a ‘European Risk Atlas’ and a ‘Disaster Preparedness Month’. He also suggested tapping into community engagement and volunteering initiatives focusing on disaster prevention and response;
- (iii) **issue alerts** when disasters were imminent, using effective early warning systems such as those that informed people about the potential impact of an upcoming storm or heatwave. He stressed that the national authorities would remain responsible for issuing early warnings to their populations, but that the EU could help the Member States to identify and address weak points in their early warning systems, particularly by developing coordination between global early warning systems and action at local level;
- (iv) **respond** to crises and disasters, which were becoming more frequent, by scaling up response capabilities at national and EU level, particularly through the Union Civil Protection Mechanism. This would apply to areas such as

search and rescue and health emergencies, as well as response capabilities in the event of floods and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) incidents. One aspect of particular note was that the rescEU aerial firefighting fleet would be doubled by 2023, as announced by the PRESIDENT in her last State of the Union address;

- (v) **secure** the civil protection system so that it could remain operational during and after a disaster. He stressed the need to ensure business continuity at the Emergency Response Coordination Centre. With that in mind, he proposed carrying out stress tests on emergency operations centres across the EU, with the first pilot stress tests already planned for 2023.

By way of conclusion, Mr LENARČIČ said that disasters did not stop at the EU's borders; this had been made clear by the high levels of interdependence, at EU level and worldwide, revealed during the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. He highlighted the vital importance of the joint efforts undertaken at EU level on climate change adaptation and resilience. Lastly, he stressed the need to continue the work already under way in order to be ready for the next disaster, and not to wait for it to strike. He welcomed the important step taken that day to strengthen Europe's collective disaster prevention and preparedness capabilities.

Following these presentations, the Commission:

- approved the Communication in COM(2023) 61/2 for transmission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and, for information, to the national parliaments and the Missions of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Montenegro, Norway, the Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye to the European Union;

- adopted the Commission Recommendation in C(2023) 400/2:
 - for transmission to the Member States and to the Missions of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Montenegro, Norway, the Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye to the European Union and, for information, to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions;
 - and for publication, for information, in the Official Journal of the European Union.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

10.1. PREPARATION OF THE SPECIAL EUROPEAN COUNCIL SUMMIT (BRUSSELS, 9 AND 10 FEBRUARY 2023)

The PRESIDENT touched on the preparation of the special European Council Summit that would be held on 9 and 10 February 2023.

The Summit would focus in particular on three matters: relations with Ukraine, competitiveness and migration.

The PRESIDENT started by referring to the meeting in Kyiv between the College and the Ukrainian Government, on 2 February, the eve of the EU-Ukraine Summit. She expressed satisfaction with the intensive, high-quality cooperation developed between the EU and Ukraine since the start of Russia's war of aggression. She also praised the Ukrainian Government's courage and professionalism in such extreme circumstances.

She then reminded the meeting that the question of the EU's competitiveness had been discussed in depth by the College the previous week when approving the Green Deal Industrial Plan for the Net-Zero Age.

As regards migration, the PRESIDENT underlined the importance of steering the discussions by Heads of State or Government towards specific targets, and warned against falling into the trap of focusing solely on the 330 000 or so irregular border crossings into the EU. This figure should be put into perspective and viewed in the context of the 3 million legal migrants whom the EU was proud to welcome each year. Moreover, approximately 4 million Ukrainian nationals had been given refugee status under the Temporary Protection Directive.

It was crucially important to ensure that the co-legislators adopted all the elements of the European Pact on Migration and Asylum by the end of this Commission's term of office if migration flows were to be managed efficiently.

By the same token, it was essential to continue implementing measures on the ground to reinforce EU border controls, building on the lessons learnt from the pilot project conducted on the Bulgarian-Turkish border, and to speed up border checks and increase the rates of return of illegal migrants to their countries of origin.

The PRESIDENT said that most asylum seekers in the EU did not need international protection. The asylum rules applicable must be scrupulously followed to safeguard the system, and people who could not be granted refugee status must be returned efficiently to their countries of origin. Return rates were very low, standing at an average of 20% to 21% for the EU as a whole. Improving these rates would require not only greater willingness on the part of the countries of origin to take back their nationals, but also stricter application of return decisions by Member States. She therefore called for a joined-up government approach in order to tackle migration as a whole.

The Commission took note of this information.

10.2. LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Mr BORRELL briefed the Members of the College on the latest developments in EU external relations.

First, he reported on his visit to South Africa and Botswana the previous week, and on the twenty-third Political Dialogue Meeting at ministerial level between ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) and the EU held in Brussels on 6 February. He underlined in particular the talks held on the situation in the Sahel and in the Gulf of Guinea, in view of the current political developments that were undermining the situation further.

He noted that these meetings also provided an opportunity to obtain a reality check on the positions of the various partner countries as regards the situation in Ukraine, which in some cases were at variance with that of the EU. He welcomed the agreement obtained with the ECOWAS countries on a joint statement reaffirming the signatory parties' attachment to the principle of territorial integrity.

Mr BORRELL went on to discuss the EU's diplomatic outreach with a view to the United Nations General Assembly meeting of 24 February, and the consultations under way in New York on the draft peace resolution. In order to obtain maximum support, Ukraine had dropped the text that it had initially put forward and had agreed on the resolution proposed by the EU which was based on the wording agreed in previous resolutions.

It was important to engage in outreach activities to garner support for the draft resolution, both in New York and in other countries, with an eye in particular on any alternative moves by Russia to call for a ceasefire and the halting of military assistance to Ukraine. Russian diplomats in Africa and New York were actively presenting deliveries of weapons to Ukraine and sanctions against Russia as actions that were fuelling the war in Ukraine rather than resolving it.

Mr BORRELL underscored the fact that it might prove difficult to achieve the same number of votes as for the UN resolutions adopted the previous year. The level of support for the resolution proposed by the EU might also depend on the fate of the Black Sea Grain Initiative. This key agreement for supplying the Global South would also need to be extended around the same time as the vote on the new resolution. It would therefore be necessary to convince Russia to allow the agreement to be extended, knowing that ammonia and fertilizer exports were an essential issue and therefore a basis for compromise.

EU Delegations would play a pivotal role in attracting the support of their host authorities for the draft resolution, in close cooperation with EU Member States and like-minded countries.

Mr BORRELL ended by referring again to the devastating situation in Türkiye and Syria. There was huge loss of life and an enormous number of people injured. The death toll and number of buildings destroyed were growing by the day, unfortunately, and the humanitarian needs were immense.

The Commission took note of this information.

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The meeting closed at 9.40.