

# Daily News 24 / 09 / 2019

## **EU@UNGA74 on Tuesday**

This morning First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** and High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** will join President of the European Council Donald Tusk at the opening of the General Debate of the 74<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly in New York. In the afternoon, First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans**, together with Commissioner Neven **Mimica**, will represent the EU at the [UN Summit on Sustainable Development Goals](#) after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in 2015. The First Vice-President will deliver a speech between 16:00 – 17:00 local time, 22:00 – 23:00 CET. During the day, EU representatives will attend a series of high-level events and bilateral meetings. The High Representative/Vice-President will meet with permanent and non-permanent EU Member States present at the UN Security Council for a breakfast meeting (07:30 local time, 13:30 CET). Together with Commissioner Christos **Stylianides** she will host a new edition of the traditional side event on Syria, showcasing the EU's commitment to finding a political solution in Syria and address its regional challenges (13:30 local time, 19:30 CET). As highlighted in the [latest tracking report published on Monday](#), the EU has already contributed 92% of the pledges made for funding in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria for 2019. In the margins of the UN Summit on the SDGs, Commissioner Neven **Mimica** will hold a press conference together with representatives of the ACP countries on the [Joint ACP-EU Declaration on the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda](#) (UN Press Briefing room, 14:00 local time – 20:00 CET). Commissioner Vytenis **Andriukaitis** will participate in the 2019 Champions Strategy Meeting Breakfast on Food waste. Commissioner Karmenu **Vella** will participate in two Ocean events: the Ocean, Freshwater and Marine Ecosystem Hub event (09:00 local time, 15:00 CET) and the high-level event The Oceans in a changing climate (16:00 local time, 22:00 CET). He will also take part in the Champions for Nature meeting organised by the World Economic Forum (11:00 local time, 17:00 CET). This continues to showcase the EU's commitment as also demonstrated on Monday at the [UN Climate Summit](#) and its margins, where Commissioner Miguel **Arias Cañete** met with China's Special Representative on Climate Change Xie Zhenhua to underline the joint commitment to implement the Paris Agreement and the Montreal protocol (see the full readout of the meeting [here](#)). Later in the evening on Tuesday, First Vice-President **Timmermans**, High Representative/Vice-President **Mogherini** and Commissioners present in New York will attend the traditional EU Reception. Audio-visual coverage of all these engagements will be available on [EbS](#). (For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 2298 86570; Xavier Cifre Quatresols – Tel.: +32 229 73582)

## **The International Contact Group on Venezuela meets in New York**

The International Contact Group on Venezuela held a ministerial meeting in the margins of the 74<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly on Monday, welcoming Panama for the first time as a new member. At its 4<sup>th</sup> meeting the

Group reviewed the latest developments in Venezuela and its effects in the region and agreed to continue its outreach to all international actors to help Venezuelans restore democracy and constitutional order. At the meeting, the EU announced that it will hold a Solidarity Conference with the Venezuelan refugees and migrants on 28-29 October in Brussels. The conference, organised together with the UN Refugee Agency and the International Organisation for Migration, will aim at raising awareness about the crisis, reaffirming political support and calling for increased assistance of the international community. For more information, read the [opening remarks](#) by the High Representative/Vice-President and the [joint declaration](#) by the International Contact Group on Venezuela. The High Representative/Vice-President **Mogherini** and Commissioner Christos **Stylianides** will continue showcasing the EU's support in the region at a meeting on the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela and its impact on the region organised by Canada, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru in the margins of the UN General Assembly (11:00 local time, 17:00 CET). For more information on the EU's work for a political solution to the crisis in Venezuela, see [here](#). (For more information: *Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Christina Wunder – Tel.: +32 229 92256; Xavier Cifre Quatresols – Tel.: +32 229 73582*)

## **L'Union européenne soutient les victimes de violences sexuelles dans les conflits**

Le commissaire en charge de la coopération internationale et du développement, Neven **Mimica**, a annoncé aujourd'hui une contribution de deux millions d'euros de l'Union européenne au Fonds international pour les victimes de violences sexuelles en situation de conflits. L'annonce a lieu en marge de l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies à New York, où le commissaire **Mimica** rencontre Dr Denis Mukwege, lauréat du Prix Nobel de la paix. Le commissaire **Mimica** a déclaré: «*La violence à l'égard des femmes et des filles est l'une des plus graves violations des droits de l'homme, qui entraîne des coûts énormes pour les individus et la société. En contribuant aujourd'hui à ce fonds à hauteur de deux millions d'euros, nous souhaitons tendre la main aux femmes qui ont subi la douleur indescriptible des violences sexuelles dans des situations de guerre et de conflit, et leur fournir le soutien dont elles ont besoin pour reconstruire leur vie.*» Le fonds se fonde sur l'engagement des Nations Unies, sur le travail des lauréats du Prix Nobel de la paix, Dr Denis Mukwege et Nadia Murad, ainsi que sur les témoignages des survivantes de violences sexuelles liées aux conflits dans le monde. Il s'agit d'une collaboration novatrice entre de multiples partenaires visant à fournir aux victimes un accès à des réparations et à les aider à se réinsérer dans leurs communautés. Le lancement officiel du Fonds devrait avoir lieu le 30 octobre aux Nations Unies à New York. Le communiqué de presse complet est disponible [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: *Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tél.: +32 229 665322; Christina Wunder – Tél.: +32 229 92256*)

## **New Commission report on the impact of digitisation on the world of work in the EU**

Today the Commission's science and knowledge hub, the [Joint Research Centre](#), launched its [latest report, 'The changing nature of work and skills in the digital age'](#). The report offers an evidence-based analysis of the impact of technology on labour markets and the need to adapt education policies to boost digital skills. Tibor **Navracsics**, Commissioner for Education, Youth, Culture and Sport, responsible for the Joint Research Centre, said: *"Work and skills requirements are evolving rapidly as a result of technological progress, creating pressing policy challenges for the EU. Robust evidence is the first step to design future-proof policies that ensure everyone can use new technologies in a confident, creative and safe way. Today's report contributes to informing important initiatives I have launched over the past five years such as the Digital Education Action Plan and the European Education Area."* Marianne **Thyssen**, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility added: *"Technology changes labour markets by creating new forms of work. Intel on how this will affect workers is crucial to make sure that workers are equipped with the right skills on the one hand, and continue to be protected on the other. During my mandate I have worked hard to promote skills development, to guarantee access to social protection for all and to make sure all workers get predictable and transparent working conditions. We need to continue building on these achievements to ensure our labour and social policies are fit for purpose in the 21<sup>st</sup> century labour market."* The EU is responding to the challenge by prioritising education and Europe's social dimension as reflected among others by the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#) that was proclaimed in November 2017 by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission. In 2018, the Commission launched its [Digital Education Action Plan](#), a key part of the [European Education Area](#). The EU has also been rolling out concrete initiatives that help people thrive in a digital world, including the [Skills Agenda for Europe](#), new [EU rules on transparent and predictable working conditions](#) and a [Council Recommendation on access to social protection](#). Finally, as part of the [future long-term EU budget \(2021-2027\)](#), the European Commission has proposed a €9.2 billion [Digital Europe Programme](#) to respond to the arising digital challenges. More information on today's report is available [online](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel. +32 229 67 083; Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253)

## #OperationSharkBait: witness a real life rescue mission at sea with Galileo

Journalists are invited to join [#OperationSharkBait](#), a live demonstration of the [Galileo Search and Rescue Service](#), on 26 September in Oostende, on the Belgian coast. The Galileo Search and Rescue Service provides increased location accuracy from 10 km to less than 2 km in rescue operations around the world, coordinated by the international rescue programme Cospas-Sarsat. It has reduced the time it takes to detect a person equipped with a distress beacon to less than 10 minutes at sea, in mountains or deserts. In the future, the system will also confirm to the person that help is on the way. As part of "Shark Bait", social media influencer Tara Foster (@Taraaustralis) will be left alone on a life raft at sea, equipped only with a distress beacon. By activating this beacon, Galileo satellites will determine her position quickly and accurately. This will trigger a rescue operation featuring a rescue boat and a helicopter to save her, coordinated by the

Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre of Oostende. Elżbieta Bieńkowska, Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, said: “In rescue operations, every minute matters. Galileo, our European satellite system, has reduced the time it takes to localise a person in distress and save her. You will have the chance to see it for yourself in Oostende, thanks to Operation Shark Bait!” The Commission will organise a press trip for journalists who wish to follow the event from the Operational Centre of the Belgian Maritime Rescue, weather permitting. To register or get more information, you can write to [sophie.dupin-de-saint-cyr@ec.europa.eu](mailto:sophie.dupin-de-saint-cyr@ec.europa.eu). #OperationSharkBait will also be livestreamed on [EbS](#). Galileo, Europe’s satellite navigation system, provides so-called ‘initial services’ since December 2016, which already improve everyday life for citizens and businesses with accurate positioning, navigation and timing signals. It has reached more than [1 billion smartphone users](#) worldwide. (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

### **Commission’s report shows good performance of EU interoperability programme for public administrations, businesses and citizens**

The Commission published yesterday a report outlining that the [ISA<sup>2</sup> Programme](#) (i.e. Interoperability solutions for public administrations, businesses and citizens) is well on track. Running [from 1 January 2016 until 31 December 2020](#), the ISA<sup>2</sup> Programme supports the development of digital solutions that enable public administrations, businesses and citizens in Europe to benefit from interoperable cross-border and cross-sector public services. This is also the main instrument to support the implementation of the [European Interoperability Framework](#) and to meet the objectives of the [eGovernment Action Plan 2016-2020](#). The interim evaluation confirms that the implementation of ISA<sup>2</sup> is well-aligned to relevant EU initiatives such as the [Connecting Europe Facility](#) and the [Structural Reform Support Programme](#) and the overall EU policy framework related to the digitalisation of EU public administrations. Stakeholders using ISA<sup>2</sup> agree that the programme plays a central role in improving the interoperability landscape in the EU and complements and supports the efforts of European public administrations to foster the digitisation of the publicsector in Europe. Next steps of the programme will include more awareness raising and advisory efforts in regional and local administrations, improving the quality of existing solutions through a user-driven approach and ensuring that the results achieved by the programme are sustainable. After the conclusion of the ISA<sup>2</sup> programme in 2020, the Commission will continue to pursue these objectives under the proposed [Digital Europe programme](#) for 2021-2027, which will shape and support the digital transformation of Europe’s society and economy. More information on the ISA<sup>2</sup> interim evaluation can be found [here](#). The full report is available [here](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel. +32 229 67083; Marietta Grammenou – Tel. +32 229 83583)

### **Concentrations : La Commission autorise l’acquisition de Staci par Ardian**

La Commission Européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l’acquisition du groupe Staci par la société Ardian, tous

deux basés en France. Staci est un groupe actif dans le secteur de la logistique dans plusieurs pays européens et aux Etats-Unis. Ardian est une société d'investissement privé indépendante gérant des actifs en Europe, en Amérique du Nord et en Asie. La Commission a conclu que la concentration envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence, dans la mesure où les deux entreprises ne sont pas actives sur le même marché ou sur des marchés liés ou complémentaires. La transaction a été examinée dans le cadre de la procédure simplifiée de contrôle des concentrations. De plus amples informations sont disponibles sur le [site internet concurrence](#) de la Commission, dans le [registre public](#) des affaires sous le numéro d'affaire [M.9496](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Lucía Caudet – Tél. +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tél.: +32 229 90526)

#### **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of ADCO by Apax Partners**

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of ADCO Umweltdienste Holding GmbH (ADCO) of Germany by Apax Partners LPP of the UK. ADCO is primarily active in the manufacturing, sale and rental of mobile sanitary facilities mainly in Germany. Apax Partners is the parent company of a number of entities providing investment advisory services to private equity funds in a range of sectors at global level. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because the overlap between ADCO and Apax Partners' activities, as well as their market shares, are limited. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9513](#). (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

#### **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of the joint control of FC and CarMob by VWFS and TUV SUD AS**

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control of FleetCompany GmbH ("FC") and Carmobility GmbH ("CarMob") by Volkswagen Financial Services AG ("VWFS") and TÜV SÜD Auto Service GmbH ("TUV SUD AS"), all based in Germany. FC and CarMob are both brand-neutral providers of fleet management services to corporate customers. FC is active in more than 50 countries whereas CarMob is only active in Germany. VWFS is a wholly-owned direct subsidiary of Volkswagen offering dealers and customers financing, leasing, bank and insurance business services, as well as mobility solutions. As part of its mobility solutions, before the concentration, it provided fleet management solutions exclusively through its wholly-owned subsidiary CarMob. TUV SUD AS is a provider of inspection and product certification services. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because it will have a limited impact on competition both at European level and in Germany. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9490](#). (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

#### **STATEMENTS**

**Statement by Commissioner Margrethe Vestager following today's Court judgments on two tax State aid cases (Fiat in Luxembourg and Starbucks in the Netherlands)**

*"All companies, big and small, should pay their fair share of tax. If Member States give certain multinational companies tax advantages not available to their rivals, this harms fair competition in the EU. It deprives the public purse and EU taxpayers of much needed funds to fight climate change, to build infrastructure, to invest in innovation. Today's judgments give important guidance on the application of EU State aid rules in the area of taxation. At the same time, each case has its specificities and involves complex legal questions. We will study the judgments carefully before deciding on possible next steps. The judgments confirm that, while Member States have exclusive competence in determining their laws concerning direct taxation, they must do so in respect of EU law, including State aid rules. Furthermore, the General Court has also confirmed the Commission's approach to assess whether a measure is selective and if transactions between group companies give rise to an advantage under EU State aid rules based on the so-called "arm's length principle". The Commission will continue to look at aggressive tax planning measures under EU State aid rules to assess if they result in illegal State aid. At the same time, the ultimate goal that all companies pay their fair share of tax can only be achieved by a combination of efforts to make legislative changes, enforce State aid rules and a change in corporate philosophies. We have made a lot of progress already at national, European and global levels, and we need to continue to work together to succeed." The full statement is available [online](#). (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)*

[Upcoming events](#) of the European Commission (ex-Top News)