

The Commission welcomes Council green light for EU-Singapore Trade and Investment Agreements

Today, EU Member States in the Council authorised the signature and conclusion of the trade and investment agreements between the EU and Singapore.

Commissioner for Trade Cecilia **Malmström** said: *"I am very pleased that Member States have given their formal backing to these agreements, paving the way for their signature on 19 October. Opening new opportunities for European producers, farmers, service providers and investors is a key priority for this Commission. These deals do precisely that, and more – Singapore is an important gateway to the whole Asia-Pacific area, and it is vital that our companies can have a foothold there. These agreements also promote sustainable development, as they include ambitious commitments on the protection of the environment and labour rights and uphold the right to regulate. They are yet another example of the EU's determination to work with like-minded countries to uphold rules-based international trade."*

Today's decision follows the proposal made in April of this year by the European Commission. EU and Singapore leaders will sign the agreements on 19 October in Brussels, on the margins of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). After signature, the European Parliament will vote on the agreements. Once approved by the European Parliament, the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement is expected to enter into force in 2019, before the end of the current mandate of the European Commission. The EU-Singapore Investment Protection Agreement will only enter into force following its ratification at EU Member States' level.

For more information

[EU-Singapore Trade Agreement – dedicated website](#)

EU conducts its biggest Civil Protection Mechanism exercise

The 2018 Modex Romania is the largest medical exercise ever conducted in the framework of the [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#) and is taking place in Bucharest, Romania until 18 October 2018. The simulation will mobilise over 1000 people and involve medical teams from Austria, Germany, Italy, Romania,

Slovakia, Sweden, Norway and Israel, and experts from other states participating in the Mechanism.

"This exercise is a unique opportunity to assess the functioning of our Civil Protection Mechanism and the common European response to disasters. This Mechanism has proven its value on countless occasions, such as during the devastating forest fires in Southern and Northern Europe this summer. But there is always room for improvement of our capacities and coordination to save lives in Europe and around the world. This is why Modex is so useful and important for us," said Christos **Stylianides**, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management.

The simulation

The exercise simulates a 7.5 scale earthquake hitting Bucharest causing widespread damage to infrastructure, with a large number of wounded. National capacities are overwhelmed and Romania activates the EU Civil Protection Mechanism through which assistance from participating countries is channelled. Urban search and rescue and medical teams need to be set up as well as evacuation planes to bring wounded people to safe places in Romania and other EU Member States.

Under concrete field conditions, the aim of this simulation is to assess the capacities of the medical teams and experts to operationally coordinate between teams from different countries.

Background

EU simulation exercises are designed to improve the operational cooperation in civil protection assistance. Contingency planning, decision-making procedures, communication to the public and the media in major emergencies can therefore be tested and it helps identifying further training needs and operational gaps.

This exercise is the fifth and last exercise of the 2017-2018 period. Previous exercises took place in the UK, Denmark, Bulgaria and Austria. Exercises at EU level are organised by the participating countries in the Mechanism with a financial contribution from the Commission.

The Civil Protection Mechanism facilitates cooperation in disaster response among 34 states (EU28, Iceland, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey). The participating countries pool the resources that are available to disaster-stricken countries all over the world. When activated, the Mechanism coordinates the provision of assistance inside and outside the EU. The Commission manages the Mechanism through the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC).

The Mechanism was activated for some of the most devastating disasters the world has faced in recent years, such as the earthquake in Haiti (2010), the tsunami in Japan (2011), typhoon Haiyan that hit the Philippines (2013), the Ebola outbreak (2014), the conflict in Ukraine (2014), the earthquake in Nepal (2015), and numerous floods and forest fires in Europe.

For More Information

[EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#)

[Emergency Response Coordination Centre](#)

Somalia: major step in EU support to state-building

Somalia is on a positive track towards stability and growth. The EU's move to budget support is a token of the partnership with Somalia to develop a viable federal system and fostering long-term recovery.

The date of signature coincides with the first anniversary of Somalia's worst terror attack, which killed over 500 people in Mogadishu. On this occasion, EU Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven **Mimica**, said: *"Budget support shows the EU's trust in Somali institutions. It gives the Government resources to implement reforms and build a stronger State able to deliver basic services to its people. Those 100M€ show the EU delivers quickly, a few months after the Somali Partnership Forum. It comes at a time where the Horn of Africa is going through unprecedented changes. And Somalia can seize this momentum for its own domestic transformation."*

The EU plays a leading role amongst the international community supporting Somalia. It co-hosted the [Somalia Partnership Forum](#) in Brussels in July 2018, when over €1 billion was mobilised to support the country. In September, the World Bank also agreed a \$80 million pre-arrears clearance package. The engagement of the EU, IMF and World Bank will not only help accelerating national reforms, but also the process towards concessional loans and debt relief.

The financing agreement is a €100 million package dedicated to Somalia's state and resilience building, which will also support access to basic services. Up to €92 million will go to the federal government through budget support. The remaining €8 million will support capacity building to the federal and states' governments and oversight institutions.

The disbursement of funds will be sequenced and closely monitored through political dialogue, regular assessment of progress achieved against indicators and dedicated safeguard measures.

The agreement was signed on 14 October in Mogadishu by European Commission's Director-General for International Cooperation and Development, Stefano Manservigi, and the Prime Minister of Somalia, Hassan Ali Khayre.

Multilateral banks reaffirm pledge to support resilient, sustainable infrastructure

The heads of the leading multilateral development banks (MDBs) meeting at the Global Infrastructure Forum 2018 (GI Forum) today expressed their condolences following the tragic loss of lives and livelihoods in Sulawesi, Indonesia and reaffirmed their commitment to work together to deliver infrastructure that is resilient, inclusive, and sustainable.

The important role of technology in this goal was at the heart of discussions at the GI Forum under the theme “Unlocking Inclusive, Resilient, and Sustainable Technology-driven Infrastructure”. 2018 marks the first time this annual forum is being held outside of the US. Indonesia’s Vice President Jusuf Kalla opened the discussion.

The MDBs agreed that their joint efforts should be based around the following priorities:

- Increase technical assistance and advisory services for knowledge creation and knowledge transfer;
- Disseminate knowledge through collaborative events that support the delivery of bankable projects;
- Contribute to delivering sustainable infrastructure through the MDB Information Cooperation Platform;
- Mobilize sustainable finance at scale;
- Support sustainable public procurement;
- Identify infrastructure and capacity gaps, particularly in least-developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing states and African countries.

These pledges are included in the MDBs’ [Outcome Statement](#).

The GI Forum gathered private sector investors with representatives from the United Nations and leaders from the African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, International Finance Corporation, Islamic Development Bank, New Development Bank, and the World Bank.

The forum comprised two opening sessions. The first looked at how technology, such as solar energy systems, blockchain, and big data, can be used to make infrastructure more sustainable. The second discussed how to increase private infrastructure finance.

Other sessions looked at using technology to achieve the crucial but

difficult “last mile” of getting services to end users, good practices in scaling up investments in infrastructure, ways of financing the global infrastructure gap, and maximizing innovative climate finance for sustainable infrastructure.

The infrastructure needs across the world are huge. An estimated 1 billion people have no access to electricity while over 660 million people have no access to clean drinking water. These needs must be met if the global community is to meet commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals. New technologies and approaches such as smart transport systems and innovative climate finance can help to fill the infrastructure gap. They can also help build infrastructure that can withstand climate change and natural disasters.

A [joint report](#) by 13 development banks released in June noted that in 2017, MDBs and development finance institutions mobilized \$73.3 billion of long-term private and institutional investor cofinancing for infrastructure such as power, water, transportation, and telecoms. This compared with \$68.7 billion mobilized in 2016.

The full agenda of the Global Infrastructure Forum 2018 is available on the GI [Forum's website](#), along with other information from past fora and publications and other materials from participating MDBs.

The government of the Republic of Indonesia and the EIB strengthen cooperation on green infrastructure

A major agreement to further develop green infrastructure in support of climate change mitigation and adaptation projects in Indonesia was signed today by the Ministry of National Development Planning of the Republic of Indonesia and the European Investment Bank (EIB). The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which was signed on Saturday (10/13) afternoon at the Inaya Putri Bali Hotel, Nusa Dua, Bali, was also on the margins of the 2018 International Monetary Fund-World Bank Group Annual Meeting. The MoU, signed by the Minister of National Development Planning/Head of Bappenas Bambang Brodjonegoro and EIB President Werner Hoyer, in the presence of His Excellency Vincent Guérond, Ambassador of the European Union to Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam, will contribute to the 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as well as the European Union and Indonesia's climate action agendas.

“The Government of Indonesia is on track to mainstream the implementation of green economy to achieve inclusive development as well as to reduce greenhouse gasses emission. Driven by the New Climate Economy 2018 Report data which revealed that bold climate action could deliver US\$ 26 trillion in

economic benefits such as creating new jobs and providing better health outcomes globally, between present time and 2030 compared to business-as-usual routine, I am sure it is timely for Indonesia to put in place sustainable development principles that balance the economic, social and environmental aspects by using strategies such as implementing renewable energy and green financing mechanisms and initiating Low Carbon Development Program, to name a few, also with this Memorandum of Understanding signage with the European Investment Bank (EIB)," Minister Bambang said.

The development of renewable energy such as hydro, wind and solar energy infrastructure will support the country in its transition to a more diversified energy mix and improve energy supply to people living in both cities and rural areas. Urban transport is another area where projects could be financed to enhance people's mobility, cut journey times and improve safety. The EIB has a strong track record of Inter city and regional transport projects, is another area where the such as its investment in the Bangalore and Lucknow metros. "I welcome this landmark agreement. The focus of the European Investment Bank's operations on climate mitigation and adaptation will provide additional opportunities for important projects for low carbon development, resilient cities and infrastructures. This is a key element of the partnership between the European Union and Indonesia," His Excellency Vincent Guérond concluded.

The EIB-Indonesia MoU strengthens the collaboration between Indonesia and the EIB initiated in 1995 and fits into the partnership agreement between Indonesia and European Union which entered into force in 2014. The government of Indonesia and the EIB will focus on key investment in green infrastructure sectors that will increase the country's resilience to natural disasters in the medium and long term, and improve the lives of people in an immediate way. Areas of potential collaboration notably encompass: renewable energy, transport, including urban transport and waterways, lower carbon and efficient energy generation, forestry, waste and water management as well as low carbon technologies.

"I would first of all like to express my deepest sympathy to the government of Indonesia for all the human lives lost during the terrible disaster on the Lombok and the Sulawesi islands. This is a wake-up call for all of us to support the building of more resilient societies, and to do so in partnership. Collaboration is the only way to deal with the scale of the global challenges facing us today. This Memorandum of Understanding represents a new chapter in the partnership between the European Investment Bank and Indonesia. With this agreement we want to bring our expertise and support where it is most needed. As the European Union Investment partner, we intend to complement what other International Financial Institutions and foreign governments are already doing in the country to develop green infrastructure, supporting projects that help communities adapt to the effects of climate change and through investment in clean energy to mitigate its impact as well as improving people's daily lives," EIB President Werner Hoyer emphasized.