

Press point by Michel Barnier in advance of his meeting with Dominic Raab, UK Secretary of State for Exiting the EU

I am very happy to welcome the Secretary of State to the Commission – Dominic, it is a pleasure to meet you!

We have a lot of work to do, with our teams.

There are thirteen weeks left before the October European Council.

During this time, we have two things to do:

- We must finalise the Withdrawal Agreement. We are not yet there.
- We must prepare a political declaration on our future relationship.

On the Withdrawal Agreement, it is a matter of urgency to agree on a legally operative backstop for Ireland and Northern Ireland: we need an all-weather insurance policy.

On the future relationship, the EU proposed in March an unprecedented partnership.

- Not only on trade, where we want an ambitious Free Trade Agreement that respects the integrity of the single market;
- But also on internal and external security, where a close partnership between us is more important than ever, given the geo-political context.

Our challenge will be to find common ground between the fundamental principles that define the EU and the UK positions.

That's all for now.

More is to come. Stay tuned.

I will see you again tomorrow after the General Affairs Council.

Swiss and Dutch authorities take

[action against voice phishing](#)

18 July 2018

Yesterday, an action took place in the Netherlands against an internationally active group involved in voice phishing. In the presence of Swiss authorities, two suspects were arrested and several searches were carried out in the Netherlands.

The crimes occurred when bank customers in various countries received e-mails and telephone calls claiming to be from their bank, asking for banking log in information. With this information, the group was able to illegally transfer money out of the customers' accounts.

Swiss authorities began an investigation into the group, and asked the Dutch authorities for assistance. The Dutch authorities also opened their own investigation.

Eurojust held three coordination meetings, in March, April and June 2018, to prepare for today's action. Eurojust also facilitated the discussions regarding mutual legal assistance requests.

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Remarks by President Donald Tusk after his meeting with Prime Minister of Georgia Mamuka Bakhtadze

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I am very happy to welcome today Prime Minister Bakhtadze in Brussels and to congratulate him on his appointment as Prime Minister of Georgia. Thank you for your choice, this is your very first visit as new Georgian Prime Minister, very symbolic and I really appreciate.

Let me first of all express my condolences to the families and friends of those killed in the recent mining accident in Tkibuli and wish those who are wounded a speedy recovery.

The European Union and Georgia are close partners and friends. In our meeting today, the Prime Minister and I confirmed our determination to further deepen our cooperation on the basis of the ambitious Association Agreement and take into account the strategic character of Georgia's political association and economic integration with the Union.

The EU remains a strong supporter of Georgia's successful reform process. We agreed on the need to keep up these efforts.

I took great interest in our discussions on the regional situation. Georgia is situated in a challenging neighbourhood, where it plays a crucial role as facilitator and bridge builder. The EU appreciates Georgia's efforts in this respect and we look forward to continuing to work together to advance stability, security and development in this region. Furthermore, there is great appreciation for Georgia's constructive role in the Eastern Partnership and as a security provider to both European and transatlantic missions abroad.

As we will soon be commemorating the 10th anniversary of the war between Georgia and Russia in August 2008, let me reiterate the European Union's unwavering support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders. It is important to note that in these past ten years, Georgia has succeeded in strengthening its democratic institutions and developing a thriving economy. The European Union

will continue to provide support to Georgia and to reinforce the country's resilience and capacity to find a peaceful resolution of the conflicts. In this context, we welcome the initiative "a step to a better future", which provides people living in Abkhazia and South Ossetia with new trade and education opportunities. We stand ready to provide further assistance to support its implementation.

Dear Prime Minister, let me wish you every success in your new office. I look forward to working with you.

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