

Joint statement by Presidents Donald Tusk and Jean-Claude Juncker on the passing away of Liu Xiaobo

13/07/2017 – Culture, education and youth / Justice and citizens' rights / Security and defence

The European Commission has today put forward new rules to clamp down on the illegal import and trafficking of cultural goods from outside the EU, often linked to terrorist financing and other criminal activity.

CALENDRIER du 17 juillet au 21 juillet 2017

(Susceptible de modifications en cours de semaine)

Déplacements et visites

Lundi 17 juillet 2017

Foreign Affairs Council

EU-Uzbekistan Cooperation Council

17-18/07 Agriculture and Fisheries Council

17-18/07 Informal meeting of competitiveness ministers

17-18/07 Agriculture and Fisheries Council

Ms Federica **Mogherini** chairs the Foreign Affairs Council, in Brussels.

Ms Federica **Mogherini** meets Mr Dragan Čović, Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr Andrus **Ansip** in Tallinn, Estonia (until 18/07): participates in „[Digital Single Market Conference on the Free Movement of Data](#)“; and delivers the closing speech; meets Mr Xavier Bettel, Prime Minister for Luxembourg, Minister for State and Minister for Communications and the Media; and Mr Boris Koprivnikar, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Public

Administration of Slovenia.

Mr Maroš **Šefčovič** in Portugal (until 18/07): on Energy Union Tour: meets Mr Jorge Seguro Sanches, Secretary of State of Energy; visits EFACEC Electric; the Institute for Systems Engineering and Computers (INESC); delivers a keynote speech at a conference on "Clean and efficient energy/innovative solutions" organised in collaboration with Mr João Pedro Matos Fernandes, Minister for the Environment; together with Mr Carlos **Moedas**, meets Mr Bertrand Piccard, Explorer and Chairman of Solar Impulse Foundation, representatives of companies from the energy sector, and prize winners of best Master theses on energy and on renewable energies from engineering faculties.

Mr Jyrki **Katainen** receives Mr Jorge Domecq, Chief Executive of the European Defence Agency (EDA).

Mr Günther H. **Oettinger** in Athens, Greece: meets Mr Alexis Tsipras, Prime Minister of Greece; Mr Giorgos Chouliarakis, Alternate Minister for Finance; and Mr Georgios Katrougalos, Deputy Minister for European Affairs; and visits the Hellenic Parliament to speak before the committees on European Affairs and on Budget.

Mr Johannes **Hahn** receives Mr Dragan Čović, Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr Neven **Mimica** in New York, the United States (until 18/07): delivers speeches at the [United Nations High-level Political Forum](#); meets Mr António Guterres, United Nations Secretary General; Mr Achim Steiner, Administrator of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP); and Mr Michael Bloomberg, UN Special Envoy for Cities and Climate Change.

Mr Miguel **Arias Cañete** in Madrid, Spain: has an exchange of views with the Board Members of Enagas; and meets Mr Ignacio Galán, Chairman of Iberdrola; Mr Francesco Starace, CEO and General Manager of Enel; and Mr Gérard Mestrallet, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Engie.

Ms Marianne **Thyssen** meets Mr Koen Geens, Federal Minister for Justice of Belgium, in Brussels.

Ms Marianne **Thyssen** receives Ms Valeria Ronzitti, General Secretary of the European Centre of Employers and Enterprises providing Public Services and Services of general interest (CEEP).

Mr Christos **Stylianides** receives Sir Mark Lowcock, future United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (OCHA).

Mr Phil **Hogan** receives Mr Harry Tseng, Representative of Taipei to the European Union.

Mr Phil **Hogan** receives the Grand Decoration of Honour for Services to the Republic of Austria, in Brussels.

Ms Elżbieta **Bieńkowska** in Słupsk, Poland: meets Mr Robert Biedroń , Mayor of Słupsk; and representatives of regional authorities.

Mr Carlos **Moedas** in Lisbon, Portugal (until 18/07): delivers a speech on "Health Research in the European Context" at Nova University.

Mr Julian **King** in Ireland (until 18/07): participates in a [citizens' dialogue](#) on "Responding to the security threats against Europe, its democracies and its citizens", in Glenties.

Mardi 18 juillet 2017

Agriculture and Fisheries Council

Informal meeting of competitiveness ministers

Agriculture and Fisheries Council

EU-Lebanon Association Council

EU-former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Stabilisation and Association Council

President Jean-Claude **Juncker** receives Mr Nicola Renzi, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Political Affairs and Justice of San Marino.

Ms Federica **Mogherini** chairs the EU-former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Stabilisation and Association Council, in Brussels.

Ms Federica **Mogherini** chairs the EU-Lebanon Association Council, in Brussels.

Ms Federica **Mogherini** receives Mr Abdulaziz Khafizovich Kamilov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan.

Mr Andrus **Ansip** in Tallinn, Estonia: participates in the informal meeting of competitiveness ministers; meets Mr Mounir Mahjoubi, Secretary of State at the Prime Minister's Office, in charge of Digital Affairs of France; and Mr Benjamin Griveaux, Secretary of State at the Ministry for the Economy and Finance of France.

Mr Maroš **Šefčovič** in Portugal: on Energy Union Tour: participates in a [Citizens' dialogue](#) together with Mr Carlos **Moedas**, and Mr Bertrand Piccard, Explorer and Chairman of Solar Impulse Foundation; together with Mr Carlos **Moedas**, meets Mr António Costa, Prime Minister; together with Mr Carlos **Moedas** and Mr Jorge Seguro Sanches, Secretary of State of Energy of Portugal, attends a presentation on ProDrone and meets representatives of ProDrone SA; and together with Mr Carlos **Moedas**, visits Lisbon Bike-sharing project.

Mr Valdis **Dombrovskis** delivers an address at the [Public Hearing on Sustainable Finance](#), organised by the European Commission, in Brussels.

Mr Valdis **Dombrovskis** receives Mr Luca Visentini, General Secretary of the

European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

Mr Jyrki **Katainen** delivers a speech at the [Public Hearing on Sustainable finance](#), organised by the European Commission, in Brussels.

Mr Jyrki **Katainen** participates in the “Cyber as the New Strategic Challenge” event, organised by the European Political Strategy Centre (EPSC), in Brussels.

Ms Cecilia **Malmström** receives Mr Raed Khoury, Minister for Economy and Trade of Lebanon; and Mr Hussein Hajj Hassan, Minister for Industry of Lebanon.

Ms Cecilia **Malmström** delivers a speech on trade and sustainable development, at the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), in Brussels.

Mr Miguel **Arias Cañete** receives Mr Dev Sanyal, Chief executive Alternative energy and Executive Vice-President Regions at British Petroleum Global (BP).

Mr Miguel **Arias Cañete** receives Mr Dejan Židan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Forestry of Slovenia.

Mr Karmenu **Vella** receives Ms Katherina Reiche, President of the European Centre of Employers and Enterprises providing Public Services and Services of general interest (CEEP).

Mr Karmenu **Vella** receives Mr Esben Lunde Larsen, Minister for the Environment and Food of Denmark.

Mr Karmenu **Vella** receives Mr Darmin Nasution, Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs of Indonesia.

Mr Vytenis **Andriukaitis** receives Mr Maurizio Martina, Minister for Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies of Italy.

Ms Marianne **Thyssen** and Ms Violeta **Bulc** receive representatives of the European Transport Workers’ Federation (ETF), the European Cockpit Association (ECA) and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

M. Pierre **Moscovici** à Lisbonne, Portugal: rencontre M. António Costa, Premier Ministre du Portugal; M. Carlos da Silva Costa, Gouverneur de la Banque du Portugal; et Mme Elisa Ferreira, Directrice de la Banque du Portugal.

Mr Phil **Hogan** receives Mr Stéphane Travert, Minister for Agriculture and Food of France.

Ms Věra **Jourová** receives representatives of the Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions (ČMKOS).

Ms Corina **Crețu** receives Mr Yannis Vardakastanis, President of European Disability Forum.

Mr Julian **King** in Dublin, Ireland: meets Mr Charles Flanagan, Minister for Justice and Equality of Ireland.

Mercredi 19 juillet 2017

College of Commissioners

Informal meeting of employment, social policy and health ministers

Mr Frans **Timmermans** receives the Directors of Green10 (the largest environmental organisations and networks active on European level).

Mr Frans **Timmermans** receives Ms Tsetska Tsacheva, Minister for Justice of Bulgaria.

Ms Federica **Mogherini** receives the [Hessischer Friedenspreis](#) 2016, at the Permanent Representation of the Land of Hessen to the EU, in Brussels.

Mr Johannes **Hahn** in Algiers, Algeria (until 20/07): on official visit.

Mr Neven **Mimica** in San Jose, Costa Rica (until 20/07): meets Mr Luis Guillermo Solís, President of Costa Rica; delivers a speech at “Costa Rica and the European Union: working together for gender equality/women empowerment” event; and visits EU-funded projects.

Mr Karmenu **Vella** receives members of Europêche, the representative body for fishermen in the European Union.

Ms Marianne **Thyssen** in Tallinn, Estonia (until 20/7): delivers a keynote speech at the opening of the Informal meeting of employment, social policy and health ministers; meets Ms Ylva Johansson, Minister for Employment and Integration of Sweden; and Mr Biser Petkov, Minister for Labour and Social Policy of Bulgaria.

Ms Violeta **Bulc** receives Mr Marios Demetriades, Minister for Transport, Communications and Works of Cyprus.

Ms Elżbieta **Bieńkowska** receives German, French and Belgian SME envoys.

Ms Věra **Jourová** receives Ms Tsetska Tsacheva, Minister for Justice of Bulgaria.

Ms Věra **Jourová** receives Ms Sandie Okoro, Senior Vice-President and General Counsel of the World Bank Group.

Ms Margrethe **Vestager** receives Ms Mateja Vraničar Erman, Minister for Finance of Slovenia.

Mr Julian **King** receives Ms Tsetska Tsacheva, Minister for Justice of Bulgaria.

Jeudi 20 juillet 2017

Informal meeting of employment, social policy and health ministers

Ms Federica **Mogherini** in Zagreb, Croatia: meets Ms Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, President of Croatia; Mr Andrej Plenković, Prime Minister of Croatia; and representatives of Parliament Committees at the Parliament of Croatia.

Mr Andrus **Ansip** and Mr Tibor **Navracsics** receive Ms Julia Goldin, Global Chief Marketing Officer at the LEGO Group.

Mr Jyrki **Katainen** in Sofia, Bulgaria (until 21/07): meets Mr Rumen Radev, President of Bulgaria; and delivers a keynote address at the conference “Flexible EU budget and financial instruments in support to the construction sector”, organised by Ms Iskra Mihaylova, Chair of the Committee on Regional Development of the European Parliament.

Mr Vytenis **Andriukaitis** in Tallinn, Estonia (until 21/07): participates in the Informal meeting of employment, social policy and health ministers; and meets Mr Nikolay Petrov, Minister for Healthcare of Bulgaria.

Ms Marianne **Thyssen** in Tallinn, Estonia: delivers a closing keynote speech at the Informal meeting of employment, social policy and health ministers; meets Ms Regina Doherty, Minister for Employment and Social Protection of Ireland; and Mr Alois Stöger, Minister for Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection of Austria.

Mr Phil **Hogan** delivers opening remarks at the launch event of the European Crops Market Observatory, in Brussels.

Mr Tibor **Navracsics** and Mr Carlos **Moedas** deliver speeches at the [launch of the Bioeconomy Knowledge Centre](#), in Brussels

Vendredi 21 juillet 2017

Informal meeting of employment, social policy and health ministers

President Jean-Claude **Juncker** attends the *Te Deum* on the occasion of the Belgian national day in the Cathedral of St. Michael and St. Gudula, in Brussels.

Ms Federica **Mogherini** in Athens, Greece: holds a speech at the Parliament of Greece; meets Mr Prokopios Pavlopoulos, President of Greece; Mr Alexis Tsipras, Prime Minister of Greece; Mr Panos Kammenos, Minister for National Defence; and Mr Nikolaos Kotzias, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Mr Jyrki **Katainen** in Sofia, Bulgaria: meets Mr Boyko Borissov, Prime Minister of Bulgaria; delivers a keynote address at the conference “Education Bulgaria 2030 – 21st Century Skills for Economic Growth: What Can We Achieve Together?”, organised by Ms Eva Maydell, Member of the European Parliament; meets Mr Kiril Valchev, Minister for Education and Science of Bulgaria; participates in a debate at the Bulgarian National Assembly on the “Future of Europe”; and in a [Citizens’ Dialogue on the “Future of Europe”](#), organised by the European Commission.

Mr Neven **Mimica** in Columbia (until 22/07): participates in the signing ceremony of the first EU-FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) programme; meets Mr Juan Manuel Santos, President of Columbia; and representatives of the FAO, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the International Peasants' Movement Via Campesina; and visits EU-funded projects in Bogota and Cartagena.

Mr Vytenis **Andriukaitis** in Tallinn, Estonia: participates in the Informal meeting of employment, social policy and health ministers; the Third Party of European Socialists (PES) Health Ministers' Network meeting; and meets Ms Annika Strandhäll, Minister for Social Security of Sweden.

M. Pierre **Moscovici** à Paris, France: rencontre des représentants du Club Ivy des Présidents, Directeurs Généraux et Directeurs du secteur de la technologie; Mme Nathalie Loiseau, Ministre chargée des Affaires européennes de la république française; et M. Edouard Philippe, Premier Ministre de la république française.

Mr Phil **Hogan** in Dublin, Ireland: delivers a speech at an event marking the success of the IFFPG – Irish company responsible for recycling farm plastics.

Prévisions du mois de juillet:

24/07 Economic and Financial Affairs Council

24-25/07 Informal meeting of competitiveness ministers

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[Daily News 14 / 07 / 2017](#)

Juncker Plan: EUR 300 million to retrofit homes in Germany

The [Juncker Plan](#) has backed a EUR 300 million European Investment Bank (EIB) loan agreement with Vonovia, a German real-estate management company. The loan will finance upgrades to the company's residential units to ensure they meet modern energy-efficiency standards. The agreement was made possible with the support of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI). The EFSI is the central pillar of the European Commission's Investment Plan for Europe, the so-called "Juncker Plan". European Commission Vice-President

Jyrki **Katainen**, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, added: *"Upgrading housing units to ensure that they meet the latest energy-efficiency standards is a process that demands investment. That is where the European Fund for Strategic Investments can play an important role. Today's agreement is another demonstration of the important role EU support plays in enabling investments that can help deliver on our broader objective of maximising energy efficiencies and, at the same time, improve the daily lives of thousands of families."* The Juncker Plan is now expected to trigger over €19 billion in investments in Germany and €209 billion across Europe. For the latest figures country-by-country, see [here](#). A full press release is available [here](#). (For more information: Vanessa Mock – Tel.: +32 229 56194; Enda McNamara – Tel.: +32 229 64976)

President Juncker in Thessaloniki, Greece: Awarded of Honorary Doctorate by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and meets with Prime Minister Tsipras

Speaking to guests attending the ceremony on his award of Doctor Honoris Causa, by the Faculty of Law, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, President **Juncker** said we must never lose sight of what keeps us together and thus the values that we share. The same goes for the compassion and solidarity that we show each other. This is what the European Union is built on. He said *"this is what we must keep fighting for as Europe looks forward to its future."* Addressing Greece's economic development, President **Juncker** commended the country for having turned the page, adding that progress is down to the wide-ranging reforms the country has put into place over the last years. *"Now we are moving to the future. It is a brighter future than the one we could have imagined years ago; prosperity is returning"* he said. Meeting bilaterally with Prime Minister Tsipras, President **Juncker** underlined his support for the country, reiterating the importance of Greece sticking to the reforms that are beginning to bear fruit for the country. President **Juncker's** full speech is available online [here](#). (For more information: Margaritis Schinas – Tel.: +32 229 60524)

Procédure rapide de règlement des petits litiges disponible à partir d'aujourd'hui

Grâce à la procédure européenne de règlement des litiges, les consommateurs et entreprises, en particulier les petites et moyennes entreprises, pourront régler les litiges transfrontaliers de façon rapide et peu onéreuse. Par exemple, si un consommateur achète une paire de ski en ligne d'un autre pays européen, qu'il ne les reçoit jamais et que le vendeur ne veut pas les lui rembourser, il pourra avoir recours à cette procédure. La Commissaire **Jourová** a dit: *" Grâce à une procédure simple et efficace de règlement des litiges, les consommateurs et les petites et moyennes entreprises pourront faire des achats dans d'autres pays européens en toute confiance. Ils pourront désormais obtenir rapidement le remboursement pour d'achats transfrontaliers allant jusqu'à 5000 euros, en cas de problème ou de non-livraison."* La procédure européenne de règlement des petits litiges existe depuis 2007 et a fait ses preuves: elle a permis, pour les petits litiges transfrontières, une réduction de la durée des procédures contentieuses de 2 ,5 ans avant son introduction à en moyenne 5 mois. La nouvelle procédure, entrant en vigueur

aujourd'hui, permettra d'augmenter le plafond à 5000 euros pour permettre à davantage de petites et moyennes entreprises d'en bénéficier. La procédure sera aussi plus simple grâce à l'usage de technologie et évitera au plaignant de se déplacer à la cour de justice. Enfin, les nouvelles règles garantiront que les frais de justice soient plafonnés et proportionnels, pour éviter qu'ils ne soient supérieures au montant de la demande. Plus d'informations sont disponibles [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Christian Wigand– Tel.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659)

AGRIFISH Council: Commission consults Ministers on fishing opportunities for 2018

On 17th July, Fisheries Ministers of the EU will discuss in Council the [Commission's Communication](#) setting out principles for healthy and profitable fishing quotas for 2018. For the first time, the consultative Communication looks at the progress made in the implementation of the reformed Common Fisheries Policy four years on. The Policy statement highlights noteworthy improvement in the overall economic performance of the EU Fleet, which registered record net profits of EUR 777 million in 2014, a 50% increase from 2013. The economic forecast for 2016 and 2017 remains upbeat. In terms of the state of fishing stocks, today in the Atlantic, North and Baltic Seas 61% of assessed stocks are exploited sustainably and fish stocks are being rebuilt. A notable example is the recovery of the Cod in the North Sea, which has almost tripled due to sustainable management between 2006 and 2016. By contrast, overfishing in the Mediterranean and the Black Seas remains an issue. As regards the obligation introduced with the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy, to land all fish and move away from the wasteful practice of discards, all fisheries in the Baltic and Black Seas, as well as all fisheries for pelagic and other industrial species in all EU waters are now under the landing obligation. The Communication is open for [consultation](#) to stakeholders and citizens. A [press release](#) and [Q&A](#) are available online. (For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: +32 229 56172; Aikaterini Apostola– Tel.: +32 229 87624)

State aid: Commission confirms Irish air travel tax exemption for transit and transfer passengers did not constitute state aid

The European Commission has found that the exemption for transfer and transit passengers from the Irish air travel tax was in line with EU state aid rules. The exemption did not selectively favour certain airlines and therefore involved no state aid within the meaning of EU rules. This concerns an excise duty, which was in place from March 2009 to April 2014, and applied to airlines operating in Ireland. The tax had to be paid for each passenger flying from an airport located in Ireland. However, departures of passengers in transfer or transit were exempted from the tax. On the basis of [its in-depth investigation](#), the Commission has now concluded that the exemption was in line with the underlying logic of the Irish air travel tax, which was to tax journeys by air originating from Ireland. If a passenger transfers or transits in Ireland they are on a single journey from their airport of origin to their airport of destination, and not on two separate journeys arriving in and originating from Ireland. The exemption also avoids that such a journey would be subject to taxation twice, both at the airport of origin and at the

airport where the transfer or transit took place, which can lead to double taxation. Moreover, a tax system aimed at taxing journeys by air, instead of individual flights constituting such journeys, did not in itself induce undue discrimination among airlines. This decision follows a judgment by the General Court (case [T-512/11](#)) annulling the Commission's 2011 decision that the exemption did not result in state aid, on the basis that the Court considered that the Commission should have initiated the formal investigation procedure in order to gather relevant information. The non-confidential version of the decision will be made available under case number [SA.29064](#) in the [State Aid Register](#) on the [Commission's competition](#) website once any confidentiality issues have been resolved. *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)*

State aid: Commission confirms no aid in Belgian public guarantee for nuclear risks

The European Commission has concluded that the Belgian state guarantee for nuclear operators that do not find sufficient civil liability coverage on private insurance markets does not involve state aid. It would improve compensation for potential victims without granting any advantage to operators. In March 2017, Belgium notified to the Commission for assessment under EU state aid rules a law to improve compensation for potential victims of a nuclear incident. Under this Belgian law, the liable nuclear operator would have to compensate victims up to €1.2 billion for up to 30 years after a nuclear incident occurred. Nuclear operators are obliged to financially secure their liability towards victims. The Commission found that, in the case of the Belgian measure, the premium to be paid by the nuclear operators to benefit from the state guarantee was set at such a level that it will not give them an economic advantage. The Commission also found that the premium is expensive enough to avoid crowding out the private insurance market – there are sufficient incentives for private players to develop competitive offers to replace the need for the State guarantee. The Commission established that the Belgian state guarantee aims to improve compensation of victims of a nuclear incident, without granting any economic advantage to nuclear operators and hence without any state aid within the meaning of EU rules. The full press release is available online in [EN](#), [FR](#), [DE](#) and [NL](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control over Redexis Gas by USSL and Goldman Sachs

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the proposed acquisition of joint control over Redexis Gas S.A. and Redexis Gas Finance B.V. (Redexis Gas) of Spain by Universities Superannuation Scheme Limited (USSL) of the UK and GS Global Infrastructure Partners II, LP and GS International Infrastructure Partners II, LP (Goldman Sachs) of the US. Redexis Gas is a regulated natural gas company, active in LPG transmission

and distribution in Spain. USSL is the corporate trustee responsible for managing a UK private sector pension scheme for academic and comparable staff in UK universities and other higher education and research institutions. Goldman Sachs is a global investment banking, securities and investment management firm that provides a range of financial services worldwide. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns as Goldman Sachs previously solely controlled Redexis Gas and USSL is not active in the same market as Redexis Gas. 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.8550](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice-President Šefčovič in Portugal for second Energy Union Tour

From 17-18 July, Vice-President for Energy Union Maroš Šefčovič will be travelling to Lisbon and Porto for the second Energy Union Tour. Vice-President Šefčovič will meet Portuguese Prime Minister António Costa, Minister for the Environment João Pedro Matos Fernandes and Secretary of State for Energy Jorge Seguro Sanches. He will also meet with actors from the financial sector, consumer associations, entrepreneurs and start-up owners and will visit several clean energy innovative projects. The main focus of his discussions will be the Energy Union and the Commission's "[Clean Energy for All Europeans](#)" package, including Portugal's preparation of its National Energy and Climate Plan, as well as the Smart Finance For Smart Buildings Initiative and improving interconnections between the Iberian Peninsula and the rest of Europe. During his visit, Vice-President Šefčovič will attend an international conference on clean energy and energy interconnections and participate in an [EU Citizens' Dialogue](#) with the theme of the tangible impact of the Energy Union on European citizens. In Lisbon, the Vice-President will be accompanied by Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation Carlos Moedas and Professor Bertrand Piccard, explorer and chairman of the Solar Impulse Foundation. Ahead of the trip, Vice-President Šefčovič said: *"I congratulate Portugal for becoming one of the EU's frontrunners in its usage of renewable energy. This is also helping it to decrease its dependency on energy imports from abroad. Moreover, new interconnections between Portugal, Spain and France could even help Portugal to become an exporter of renewable electricity. I also look forward to discussing low emission mobility and innovation with my Portuguese colleagues"*. Upcoming dates and more information on the 2017 Energy Union tour are available [here](#). More information on the Energy Union is available [here](#). *(For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Nicole Bockstaller – Tel.: +32 229 52589)*

Future of EU finances – Commissioner Oettinger visits Luxembourg, Greece

Commissioner Gunther H. Oettinger in charge of Budget and Human Resources is visiting Luxembourg today and Greece on 17 July to discuss the [Reflection paper on the future of EU finances](#). In Luxembourg, the Commissioner will meet with Prime Minister Xavier Bettel and his deputy Étienne Schneider, with Jean Asselborn, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs and with Pierre Gramegna,

Minister of Finance. He will also visit the Parliament of Luxembourg, where he will speak before the Committees of Foreign and European affairs, Defence, Cooperation and Immigration and of Budget and Finance. In Greece, Commissioner **Oettinger** will speak about the future of the EU budget with Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras and with Alternate Minister of Finance Giorgos Chouliarakis. The Commissioner will also meet Alternate European Affairs Minister George Katrougalos. He will visit the Hellenic Parliament and speak before the committees on European Affairs and on Budget. Commissioner **Oettinger** first [presented](#) the reflection paper on 28 June in Brussels. This is the final paper in the series of five reflection documents released following the publication on 1 March of the Commission's [White Paper on the Future of Europe](#). The Commissioner will now meet with different stakeholders in Brussels and in the European capitals to gather their feedback on the questions and options raised in the Reflection paper. This feedback will also feed into the Commission's proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework. Click here for the [German](#), [Greek](#) and [French](#) versions of the Reflection paper. (*For more information: Alexander Winterstein – Tel.: +32 229 93265; Andreana Stankova – Tel.: +32 229 57857*)

[Calendar](#)

The Commissioners' Weekly Activities

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

[**EU kündigt zusätzliche humanitäre Hilfe in Höhe von 30 Mio. EUR für Irak an**](#)

13/07/2017 – Culture, education and youth / Justice and citizens' rights / Security and defence

The European Commission has today put forward new rules to clamp down on the illegal import and trafficking of cultural goods from outside the EU, often linked to terrorist financing and other criminal activity.

[**EU announces additional €30 million in**](#)

humanitarian aid for Iraq

The European Commission is scaling up its response to the humanitarian crisis in Iraq with an additional €30 million. The money will enable the EU to continue its support for emergency relief in newly retaken areas, including for families who have recently lost their homes. It will also go towards emergency medical services providers attending to injured civilians on the frontlines.

Speaking in Washington today during a High-Level Meeting on the Internally Displaced Persons Crisis in Mosul (Iraq), Commissioner **Stylianides** said: *“The end of the Mosul military campaign marks the beginning of a new phase of international support to Iraq – one that requires our rock solid commitment to preserving humanity. Together we will ensure that all civilians are protected in Telafar, West Anbar and Hawidja, as well as in their locations of displacement.”*

This brings the total EU humanitarian assistance given to Iraq since 2015 to €340 million.

Background:

The humanitarian crisis in Iraq is one of the largest and most complex in the world. Since the beginning of this crisis, the EU has been at the forefront of the humanitarian response in Iraq, enabling life-saving operations throughout the country, especially in hard-to-reach areas and locations directly affected by the conflict.

In full respect of humanitarian principles, the EU channels its substantial aid through partner organisations to where needs are the highest. In addition to direct humanitarian funding, the European Commission supports the coordination and transport of emergency supplies, such as tents, blankets, hygiene kits, medical equipment and other material offered by Participating States to the [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#).

For more information:

[EU Humanitarian Assistance to Iraq](#)