Joint Statement on the occasion of the World Day Against Child L

Across the world, hundreds of millions of children who should be in school are forced to work, often in dangerous conditions. As the European Union, we have been staunchly engaged in the fight to end child labour worldwide, boost access to education and strengthen child rights. This is why, as we mark the World Day Against Child Labour, we reaffirm our commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development's target to end child labour in all its forms by 2025. In order to achieve this target, we have taken action across the world.

Getting more children access to education is a top priority for the EU. To help, we have allocated over €700 million to provide access to education for children displaced by the Syria crisis. In the Philippines, we support a community-based approach in combatting child labour in hazardous industries such as sugarcane plantations and mining. In Bangladesh, we are fighting the worst forms of child labour. In Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Palestinian Territories, Sudan and Lebanon we support actions to help children associated with armed forces, groups and gangs who've suffered from violence.

The EU further works to strengthen the systems that protect children. In order to provide specialised protection of unaccompanied and separated minors, the project 'Better Migration Management' aims at improving migration management at regional level in the Horn of Africa. For example, systems of birth registration, make it easier to effectively enforce compulsory education and labour rights. This is one of the reasons why the European Union is working to ensure children's access to an identity, for example through projects in Mozambique and Niger. In the current context of the refugee crisis where many children are displaced, protecting children at all stages of migration is a key priority for the EU. In April this year, the Commission set out a strategy to protect all children in migration and ensure children don't fall in the hands of criminal networks using them as workers.

As part of its integrated approach to children's rights, the European Union advocates for and supports the ratification and effective implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the ILO [International Labour Organisation] Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labour and the ILO Convention 138 on the minimum age for employment. We will continue to support our partner countries in eliminating child labour in global supply chains through integrated interventions such as better jobs for youth and adults of working age and advocating for responsible production and consumption. Continuing to deliver on social protection floors is also a key factor contributing to a decline in child labour.

The European Union will continue to cooperate with international organisations, with the United Nations' agencies, in particular UNICEF, and relevant Civil Society Organisations. We welcome the IV Global Conference on Child Labour to be held in Argentina from 14-16 November 2017 as an important opportunity to agree on effective and urgent plans to achieve the sustainable elimination of all forms of child labour by 2025.

G7 Environment Ministers' Meeting – Press Statement, on behalf of the European Union, by Commissioner Karmenu Vella

I would like to echo the other colleagues and thank Minister Galletti for his excellent hospitality and skillful chairing, as well as the citizens of Bologna for their warm welcome.

We in the EU think that a more resource-efficient, low-carbon and circular economy is the way forward, not only for Europe but also for the whole world. I am very glad that this view is confirmed at G7 level.

Today we adopted the five year Bologna Roadmap on resource efficiency in continuity with what was agreed in Toyama last year. Using our resources better will also help address marine litter. An issue on which the G7 is advancing.

There was agreement among G7 members on certain, I bet if very important issues, relating to the environment and sustainable development: the importance of implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals agenda; the need of scaling up sustainable finance in particular for our Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) encouraging public private partnership; the need to actively promote and develop an ambitious agenda on resource efficiency and the circular economy as an opportunity for innovation, growth and jobs.

On the issue of climate change, the European Union deeply regrets President Trump's announcement to withdraw the United States from the Paris Agreement.

We therefore also regret that the United States have not been able to join the rest of us in the climate change part of the communique.

Let me be very clear on the point of the irreversibility of the Paris Agreement: the European Union will not renegotiate the Paris Agreement. Now it is time for action, the world's priority is implementation.

The European Union is a climate leader and we will continue to lead through ambitious climate policies (we have the world's most ambitious climate target) and through continued support to the poorest and most vulnerable countries (we are the world's largest climate finance provider). And we are also leading in terms of emissions reductions. Overall, the EU has reduced emissions by 24% since 1990 while our economy has grown by 50%.

The clear message from this G7 Environment Ministerial is that, with the exception of the United States, we are all determined to move forwards and implement the Paris Agreement swiftly and effectively.

I would like to inform you that the European Union will host the fourth high-level Our Ocean Conference in Malta on 5 and 6 October 2017.

Allow me to conclude by confirming to Minister Galletti, our support to implement the decisions made here today and express my best wishes to Minister McKenna for Canada's Presidency in 2018.

Let me repeat President Juncker's words that, in Europe the planet comes first.

G7 Communique:
http://www.minambiente.it/sites/default/files/archivio_immagini/Galletti/G7/communique_g7_environment_-_bologna.pdf

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Concentrations: la Commission autorise sous conditions l'acquisition d'Intrum Justitia par Nordic Capital

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Fusionskontrolle: Kommission genehmigt Übernahme von Intrum Justitia durch Nordic Capital unter Bedingungen

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Mergers: Commission approves acquisition of Intrum Justitia by Nordic Capital, subject to conditions

The Commission's investigation focused on the markets for **debt collection** and **debt purchasing** where both Intrum Justitia and Lindorff, a portfolio company of Nordic Capital, are active. The Commission was concerned that the takeover would reduce competition in both markets in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Norway and Sweden.

Debt collection involves the recovery of outstanding debt. The Commission's investigation revealed that Lindorff and Intrum Justitia are very strong players on this market. Both companies are unique in their scale, reputation and ability to serve large customers that generate high volumes of claims (e.g. banks, utility and telecoms companies). A merger between Lindorff and Intrum Justitia in the five countries concerned could have led to insufficient competition in the market, resulting in lower quality of services and higher prices.

Debt purchasing involves the transfer of a creditor's debt portfolios to another party, the debt purchaser. In most cases, the acquired debt is then collected by the purchaser itself. The Commission's investigation found there is a strong link between debt collection and debt purchasing as a strong position on the debt collection market helps a competitor to build a strong position on the debt purchasing market, and vice versa. The Commission discovered that there is a limited number of players able to purchase certain types and volumes of debt. In the five countries concerned, the companies are mostly active in the purchase of unsecured debt (i.e. debt not protected by collateral), in which large international investors are generally not present. The combination of Lindorff and Intrum Justitia in the five countries concerned could have reduced already limited number of potential debt purchasers and in result debt sellers could have been unable to sell their debt portfolios. Preserving competition in this market will allow debt sellers to better manage their assets and risks and thus to act more efficiently to the ultimate benefit of their customers including retail clients.

The proposed remedies

In order to address the competition concerns identified by the Commission, Nordic Capital offered to divest the whole of the debt collection and debt purchasing businesses of Lindorff in Denmark, Estonia, Finland and Sweden, and the whole of the debt collection and debt purchasing business of Intrum Justitia in Norway.

These commitments fully remove the overlap between Lindorff and Intrum Justitia in the five countries where the Commission had identified competition concerns.

The Commission was therefore able to conclude that the proposed transaction, as modified by the commitments, would no longer raise competition concerns. The decision is conditional upon full compliance with the commitments.

Companies and products

Nordic Capital is a private equity company headquartered in Jersey and primarily investing in large and medium-sized companies in the Nordic region and in German-speaking parts of Europe.

Lindorff, of Norway, is one of Nordic Capital's portfolio companies. It is active in the provision of credit management services, in particular debt collection, and in debt purchasing. Lindorff is present in a number of European countries.

Intrum Justitia, of Sweden, is active in the provision of credit management services, including debt collection, and in debt purchasing. Intrum Justitia is present in a number of European countries.

Merger control rules and procedures

The transaction was notified to the Commission on 12 April 2017.

The Commission has the duty to assess mergers and acquisitions involving companies with a turnover above certain thresholds (see Article 1 of the Merger Regulation) and to prevent concentrations that would significantly impede effective competition in the EEA or any substantial part of it.

The vast majority of notified mergers do not pose competition problems and are cleared after a routine review. From the moment a transaction is notified, the Commission generally has a total of 25 working days to decide whether to grant approval (Phase I) or to start an in-depth investigation (Phase II). This deadline is extended to 35 working days in cases where remedies are submitted by the parties, such as in this case.

More information will be available on the Commission's competition website, in the Commission's public case register under the case number M.8287.