

Invitation letter by President Charles Michel to the members of the European Council ahead of their special meeting on 1-2 October 2020



Dear colleagues,

Our special meeting on Thursday and Friday will primarily focus on Europe's place in the world and our capacity to shape our own destiny.

Our meeting will start on Thursday at 15.00 with the traditional exchange of views with the President of the European Parliament, David Sassoli. We will then use our first working session for a debate on EU-China relations, following the EU-China leaders' meeting via video conference on 14 September. We want to work with China on tackling major global challenges such as the COVID 19 pandemic and climate change. We also want to insist on a more balanced and reciprocal economic relationship, ensuring a level playing field. And we will continue to promote our values and standards.

At the end of the session, we will discuss current issues requiring our attention, namely the situation in Belarus, the poisoning of Alexei Navalny and the Nagorno-Karabakh escalation.

The dinner will be entirely devoted to the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean and our relations with Turkey. Our objective is to create a space for a constructive dialogue with Turkey to achieve stability and security in the whole region, and to ensure full respect for the sovereignty and sovereign rights of all EU Member States. This will only be possible if Turkey engages constructively. All options remain on the table to defend the legitimate interests of the EU and its Member States.

The EU can only be strong on the international stage if it has a resilient and innovative economic base.

COVID-19 has undoubtedly revealed some of the EU's weaknesses. But I believe we should turn this into an opportunity, critically assessing together how to make the EU more resilient. Crucially, I would like us to discuss how we can best enhance the EU's strategic autonomy alongside an open and competitive social market economy.

Against this backdrop, we will have an in-depth discussion on Friday morning on unlocking the full potential of the Single Market, developing an ambitious industrial policy and exploiting the opportunities offered by the latest digital developments.

The exceptional recovery package, adopted in July, will help transform our economies and, along with the Green and Digital transitions, will support us

achieve these ambitions.

At the end of the meeting, we will provide a brief update on negotiations with the United Kingdom.

I look forward to seeing you in Brussels.