EU High Representative Catherine Ashton visits Tripoli and opens European Union Delegation

On 12 November, Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Commission Vice-President, officially inaugurated the new Delegation of the European Union in Libya. She also met the Chairman of the National Transitional Council, Mustafa Abdul Jalil, newly appointed Prime Minister, Abdurrahim al-Keib, and Ian Martin, the head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. She also addressed the first Libyan Women’s Rights Forum.

"I am delighted to visit Tripoli to express the EU’s continued support to the Libyan people’s efforts to build a new Libya based on the rule of law, democracy and human rights,” Catherine Ashton said. “Opening a fully fledged EU Delegation in Tripoli underlines the EU’s commitment to our close relationship with the Libyan people, both during the political transition and in the long term.

HRVP Ashton told the Libyan Women’s Rights Forum that the “EU was already supporting civil society in Libya, in particular women and young people, who have a major role to play in shaping Libya’s future.”

Additional EU support for humanitarian mine clearance actions

In view of the increased need for the rapid clearance of unexploded ordnances and booby traps in battleground areas in Libya, the European Commission announced on 7 November that it is to provide additional funding of €500,000. The new funding will be channelled through the Danish Refugee Council (Danish Demining Group) to clear mines, other unexploded devices and booby traps in Sirte and Bani Walid. It is expected that several Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams will be rapidly deployed to the affected areas in the coming days.

EU welcomes Mario Monti’s appointment

In a joint statement, Commission President Barroso and Council President Van Rompuy welcomed the decision by the President of the Italian Republic to ask Senator Mario Monti to form a government of national unity. "We believe that it sends a further encouraging signal – following the swift adoption of the 2012 Stability Law – of the Italian authorities’ determination to overcome the current crisis", they said.

As agreed at the Euro Summit on 26 October, the Commission will continue to monitor the implementation of
measures taken by Italy with the aim of pursuing policies that foster growth and employment.

On 11 November, President Barroso had also offered the Commission's congratulations to Lucas Papademus. In a joint statement President Barroso and Council President Van Rompuy said: "The agreement to form a government of national unity opens a new chapter for Greece. We have long stressed the need for a broad political consensus around measures to lift Greece out of this deep economic crisis. As such, we warmly welcome this news. Although this will be a transitional government, its workload will be extremely intense. A second programme of financial assistance must be rapidly concluded, as foreseen by the Euro Summit on 27 October. The voluntary bond exchange with private sector investors should take place as planned at the beginning of 2012. It is important for Greece's new government to send a strong cross-party message of reassurance to its European partners that it is committed to doing what it takes to set its debt on a steady downward path. Fiscal consolidation should go hand in hand with the structural reforms needed to transform Greece's growth potential and generate the jobs its people so urgently need. We reiterate that our European Institutions will continue to do everything within their power to help Greece. But Greece must also do everything within its power to help itself".

**Commissioner Michel Barnier laments incorrect rating of France**

The incorrect rating of France by Standard & Poors "is serious and it shows that in the current tense and volatile market situation, market players must exercise discipline and demonstrate a special sense of responsibility", said European Commissioner, Michel Barnier, who is responsible for the EU's Internal Market and Services.

"This is all the more important since we are not talking about just any market player but one of the biggest rating agencies, which, as such, has a particular responsibility".

"I do not want to comment on the error itself - which was acknowledged immediately by Standard & Poors. It will be up to ESMA (which is the European Supervisory Authority of rating agencies), in coordination with the AMF (the national) to establish the facts, assess them and draw conclusions. All this strengthens my conviction that Europe must adopt strict and rigorous rules, including but not limited to the rating agencies".

"The draft legislation that I will bring forward next week will strengthen the legislation on rating agencies on several levels: "Reduced reliance on ratings, and we can see again today just how important that is; Increased competition and elimination of conflicts of interest; Increased transparency and rigor in the rating of sovereign debt and finally creating a European framework for civil liability in the case of serious misconduct or gross negligence. "All these points, especially the latter, are relevant in the context of this case", said the Commissioner.

**EU-US summit on 28 Nov**

At the invitation of President Obama, President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy and President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso will represent the European Union at the next EU-US Summit on 28 November in Washington DC. EU High Representative Catherine Ashton will also accompany the Presidents. EU and US leaders will discuss, i.a. global economic issues, bilateral relations and opportunities to promote growth and jobs. They will also share views on foreign policy issues, including how best to contribute to the development of democracy and prosperity in European neighbourhood, including North Africa and the Middle East and the promotion of our common values in other regions of the world. The summit in Washington will also take stock of progress achieved since the previous summit in Lisbon in 2010, including, among others, on how best to address global challenges and strengthen the security of our citizens.
Financial Transactions Tax

"We just need to look at the demonstrations – across the EU and across the world – to see how greatly citizens want the financial sector to make a proper contribution to the economy and to society as a whole", Commissioner Algirdas Semeta said at the meeting EU Finance Ministers on 8 November. Presenting his proposal for an EU financial transactions tax, the Commissioner spoke of the fundamental "fairness" of the proposal, as well as highlighting the many benefits that it offers to Member States and citizens.

More: SPEECH/11/729

Autumn forecast 2011-13: Growth at a standstill

The recovery of the EU economy has stopped. Sharply deteriorated confidence is affecting investment and consumption, weakening global growth is holding back exports, and urgent fiscal consolidation is weighing on domestic demand. GDP in the EU is now projected to stagnate until well into 2012. Growth for the whole of 2012 is forecast at about ½%. By 2013, a return to slow growth of about 1½% is expected. No real improvements are projected for labour markets, and unemployment is forecast to remain at the current high level of around 9½%.

Inflation is set to return below 2% over the coming quarters. Fiscal consolidation is forecast to progress with public deficits set to decline to just above 3% by 2013 under an assumption of unchanged policies.

Commission Vice-President for Economic and Monetary Affairs Olli Rehn said: "Growth has stalled in Europe, and there is a risk of a new recession. While jobs are increasing in some member states, no real improvement is forecast in the unemployment situation in the EU as a whole. The key for the resumption of growth and job creation is restoring confidence in fiscal sustainability and in the financial system and speeding up reforms to enhance Europe's growth potential. There is a broad consensus on the necessary policy action. What we need now is unwavering implementation. On my part, I will start using the new rules of economic governance from Day one."


"Europe's political and economic challenges in a changing world": Herman Van Rompuy

In a speech at the University of Zurich at the Special Winston Churchill Lecture 2011, the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy highlighted Europe's political and economic challenges in a changing world. Presently the European Union is struggling with the aftershock of the financial crisis: the public debt crisis. Van Rompuy said "The EU has a double duty: dealing with the current crisis, and preventing a new one from arising. Taking emergency action, while putting together, step-by-step, a new economic governance to help avoid future problems". "Our duty is not only to guarantee the financial stability of the euro area. It is also and at the same time to stimulate economic growth. The European Phoenix, arisen out of the ashes in 1945, needs growth to stay on course. "It is in the own self-interest of non-euro-players that we put the Eurozone's difficulties behind us. But inversely, it is also in Europe’s interest that the U.S. stabilises its public debt situation, or that China stimulates its domestic demand and make its exchange rate more flexible. Growth is a global responsibility. Some tend to forget this".

In the changed landscape of international affairs, three main trends affect the European Union and, after sketching some lines on how to respond to these trends, the President reminded that "the further steps are a matter of political debate among European leaders".

"Firstly, the rise of the "emerged" economies, the BRICS countries: we should find a way to better engage them"."Secondly, power and influence in the world are more and more a matter of economy, less of weapons:
the EU champions a preventive approach, linking security, development aid and human rights, for instance. "Concerning the Iranian nuclear issue: the EU is committed to work for a diplomatic solution. It was in this spirit that the 23 Oct. European Council urged Iran to enter into constructive and substantial talks." Thirdly, the strategic shift from the Atlantic to the Pacific: Europe's relationship with the US, EU's potential to contribute to the stability of the Pacific region.

Watch the video here.

"The State of Europe": President Barroso

In a speech to the Berliner Europa-Rede on 9 November, Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso made the case for a stronger European Union. With the EU at a cross-roads, he urged European leaders to take the political decisions Europe needs to restore its prosperity and its proper place in the world.

President Barroso made the following key points:

"Provided there is the political will, the greatest emerging power in the world will be the European Union."

"The European Union does not promise paradise. But it is our best chance for prosperity."

"Europe must either transform itself or it will decline."

"The speed of the European Union, and a fortiori of the Euro area, cannot be the speed of its slowest or most reluctant member. It is one thing not to go along, and another thing entirely to hinder others to move forward."

"It is precisely the supranational institutions that are the best guarantee for the respect of the agreed principles and rules in a union of sovereign states."

"The European Union and the euro area belong together. A split union will not work. To create the idea that we have two unions means disunion. It means separation of the members of euro area from those who are not yet members of the euro area. Why should we now create more conditions for the countries who want to be in the core of the Union? I do not think it would be fair for those countries."

"The Treaties define the euro area as the core of the European Union. The challenge is how to further deepen Euro area integration without creating divisions with those who are not yet in it."

"Before the end of this month, the Commission will come forward with a package of further measures to deepen European Union and Euro area economic governance."

"Deepening convergence and integration of the European Union must also involve deeper democracy. The agenda for Europe must be a positive one. It must not be a reluctant intervention to avoid the worst, but an enthusiastic plan to create the best."

The full text of the speech click: SPEECH/11/738

**EU - Turkey review progress towards accession**

AT a meeting in Brussels on 9 November, Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, Štefan Füle, met with the Turkish Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator Egemen Bağış. They agreed that defining a positive agenda as set out in the 2011 Progress Report is the way forward to provide new momentum to EU-Turkey relations. They also concurred that this positive agenda is not to replace, but to complement the accession process. Mr Füle repeated that Turkey continues to be a key country for the EU and that the accession process remains the most effective tool to frame the relations of the European Union with Turkey. He
also praised Turkey's ongoing efforts towards constitutional reform.

Commissioner Füle expressed his condolences to the people of Turkey following the earthquake that struck the Van province in Southeast Turkey, and expressed hope that the support from the European Union, including the supply of some 1,200 temporary housing units able to accommodate 6,000 persons, would offer some relief.

As regards the talks on a comprehensive settlement for Cyprus, both parties welcomed the encouraging progress the Secretary-General of the United Nations reported during the recent meeting in New York end October. Commissioner Füle also referred to the recent arrests of Turkish intellectuals, noting that both the Turkish anti-terror legislation and its interpretation raise concerns in the European Union.

Commissioner Füle also stressed that the EU stood side by side with Turkey in its resolve to fight against terrorism, including acts perpetrated by the PKK, and that the EU remained committed to strengthen its cooperation with Turkey on this issue.

Read More: MEMO/11/772

Russia set to joint WTO

At the formal Working Party meeting on Russia's accession to the WTO, the Russian Federation completed its 18-year long negotiations for WTO accession. Now, the results will be considered in the capitals of all WTO Members prior to a final decision at the 8th WTO Ministerial Conference on 15-17 December 2011.

Read More

EU and IOM streamline their cooperation

On 8 November the European Commission and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) agreed to strengthen their cooperation in the area of migration and mobility. The new Framework provides for simpler and more efficient methods of cooperation by simplifying and streamlining the procedure for contractual negotiations between the EU and the IOM. It is applicable to any operation, programme or project administered by IOM and financed or co-financed by the European Union.

At the signing ceremony, Commissioner Cecilia Malmström said: "IOM is a key partner of the European Union. The EU and IOM work together on a daily basis on projects which promote international cooperation in areas such as legal migration, irregular migration and development. This new agreement will facilitate day-to-day cooperation between our two organisations, will remove bureaucratic hurdles, and make our work together much more efficient." For more information: See here

Turning ageing into an opportunity

On 8 November, the Steering Group of the pilot European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing agreed on joint actions in response to the societal challenge of an ageing European population. The Group is made up of people from the health and social sectors, businesses, civil society to public authorities. In today’s Strategic Implementation Plan, the Group sets out priority actions to meet the challenge of ageing through innovation. The overarching objective is to ensure that the average European citizen has two more active and healthy years to live by 2020. The implementation plan is the first step towards that objective, and focuses on three main areas of life events: prevention, care and cure, and independent living.

Read more: IP/11/1309
Every second foreign student in the world studies in Europe!

Europe is an increasingly attractive study destination for foreign students, whether they are from Europe or from a different part of the world. In fact, every second foreign student in the world studies in Europe!

A new study, ordered by the European Commission, has examined trends on student and teacher mobility within Europe. The study found that the level of mobility in Europe is high in global comparison and that it has risen in the past decade. The study covered 32 European countries, namely the EU member states, Turkey, Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Lichtenstein. The following are some of the key findings of the study:

- Europe is becoming more attractive as a study destination: in 2006/07, there were about 1.5 million foreign students enrolled in the Europe 32 area. This represents a ‘global market share’ of 50.9% (every second foreign student in the world was studying in the Europe 32 area).

- The number of foreign students in these 32 countries grew tremendously between 1998/99 and 2006/07. In the countries for which data for both years were available, growth was about 50%, while the overall average was 82.3%.

- The strong growth in foreign enrolment over the period was fuelled mainly by foreign students which were not from the region. In 2006/07, about 58% of all foreign students did not come from one of the 32 countries in the study.

- The vast majority of the exchange students from these countries study in another country within the region (85.5%). Study abroad outside of the region is very rare. The share of study abroad students within the zone has even increased since 1998/99, from 82.2% to 85.5%.

- ERASMUS plays a very important role in supporting student mobility in the European context. ERASMUS incoming students accounted for, in the academic year 2006/07, about one-tenth of all foreign students in the 32 countries, while as many as one quarter of students from these countries that went abroad to other countries of this region did so with ERASMUS.

The study is available on [http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc922_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc922_en.htm)

Academic news and events

**Australia and European Integration: Historical Perspectives**, 17 November, 2011 - 10:30 - 18 November, 2011 - 16:00 . ANU Centre for European Studies, Canberra. Speech of Mr David Daly, Ambassador and Head of Delegation, Delegation of the European Union to Australia and to New Zealand. Registration to europe@anu.edu.au before Monday 14 November 2011. To view the flyer for this event please see: [Australia and European Integration: Historical Perspectives](http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc922_en.htm).

**Encounter Europe – Visit Germany**, a DAAD Seminar for Students from Australia and New Zealand at the European Academy Otzenhausen - an introduction to the political, economic and environmental issues of European integration from 4 – 17 December 2011. Scholarships for a two-week course dealing with a variety of issues regarding the European Union (in English). daad.australia@gmail.com or [http://ic.daad.de/sydney/](http://ic.daad.de/sydney/)

**StudyPortals** is the European Study Choice platform, bringing transparency for students to the wealth of study opportunities in Europe's unifying Higher Education Market. It stimulates and inform students on (inter)national study choice and helps Universities with easier and more effective international marketing & recruitment. Almost all large international student associations are official partners. [http://www.studyportals.eu/](http://www.studyportals.eu/)

**Is the Nordic Social Model under Threat from the Current Crisis in Europe?** on 22 November, 2011 - 11:00 - 12:30, ANU Centre for European Studies, Canberra. What lessons can be learnt from Sweden and the other Nordic countries? What are the competitive advantages of the Nordic social model? Mr. Pär Nuder held several ministerial positions in the former Swedish Labour Government. He was also a member of the Parliament from 1994-2009. He is currently Chairman of the Board of the Third Swedish National Pension
The Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association unites all the students and graduates of the Erasmus Mundus programme. The Oceania Chapter has launched a Facebook page and a Webpage. If you are a newly selected Erasmus Mundus student, we encourage you to join EMA - the registration is free of charge.

**Upcoming cultural events**


[More events](#)

For more information on the items covered in [news@eu](mailto:news@eu), contact Roger Camilleri +61 2 6271 2744 roger.camilleri@eeas.europa.eu or Jan Skorich +61 2 62712747 jan.skorich@eeas.europa.eu

While the Commission aims to keep its network free from viruses, you are strongly encouraged to check this email and any attachments to it for viruses, as the Commission accepts no responsibility with regard to any computer virus transferred by way of this email.

**European Union Delegation: publications available online**

The following publications are available from our website. If, however, you would like to receive hard copies of any of these publications, please send an email to delegation-australia@eeas.europa.eu specifying the name of the publication(s) and the number you would like to receive.

- [EU-Australia Economic Relationship 2011](#)
- [Key facts: update September 2011](#)
- [EU Insight: European External Action Service](#)
- [Study in Europe 2011](#)
- [EU Insight: Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS)](#)
- [EU Insight: Lisbon Treaty](#)
- [European Union Australia Partnership Framework](#)

Copyright 2011. Please properly accredit the Delegation of the European Union to Australia and New Zealand when reproducing any of the content of [news@eu](mailto:news@eu).