

Agenda of the European Commission

16 – 20 September 2013

**Background notes from the Spokespersons' service for journalists.
The European Commission reserves the right to make changes.**

Monday 16 September:

The conference "A new deal for Somalia" jointly co-hosted by the European Union and Somalia in Brussels, Egmont Palace

Tuesday 17 September:

European Commission takes decisive action against designer drugs

Wednesday 18 September:

European Commission to propose draft legislation on benchmarks

Thursday 19 September – Saturday 21 September:

European Cooperation Day 2013

Monday 16 September:

**The conference "A new deal for Somalia"
jointly co-hosted by the European Union and Somalia in Brussels, Egmont Palace**

The news:

The conference "A new deal for Somalia" is a high-level event organised jointly by the European Union and Somalia in Brussels.

Somalia's eight-year transition ended in September 2012, with the peaceful handover to a new Federal Government. The Conference's objective is to sustain the positive momentum in Somalia, to ensure that the country stays on the path to stability and peace and brings prosperity to its people.

The New Deal is the driver of this process. The Brussels Conference will therefore bring together the international community and Somalia to endorse the Compact – a key milestone of the process- pledge support to enable its implementation and, above all, re-commit to this new political process.

The background:

The New Deal for engagement in fragile states is a new approach for the stabilisation and reconstruction of countries in a fragile and/or post-conflict setting.

The new political context in Somalia requires a new approach in the relations and interaction between the Federal Government and the international community. Somalia and a large part of the international community have subscribed to using the New Deal in defining the future way of working together.

The New Deal helps determine priorities through five Peace-Building and State-Building Goals that provide impetus for the establishment of (1) **inclusive politics** (fostering inclusive political settlements by dialogue among the different Somali regions and social groups, finalising the Constitution, promoting reconciliation and resolving conflict), (2) **security** (establishing territorial security and strengthening people's security) (3) **justice** (establishing judicial structures, addressing injustices and human rights, and increasing people's access to justice), (4) **economic foundations** (generating employment and improving livelihoods) and (5) **revenues and services** (generating and managing revenue and building capacity for accountable and fair service delivery).

The New Deal also advocates development of a **Compact** as a tool to help agree on priorities, financing mechanisms and aid modalities through a mutual accountability framework. And it proposes a shift to country modalities to strengthen national capacity. The Compact will set out the most important priorities within the five Peace- and State-Building Goals for Somalia and associated commitments of the Federal Government, resulting from a consultation process among different regions and social groups.

The event:

The **opening session** will include speeches by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton, the President of Somalia, Mr. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and the President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy.

This will be followed by **three working sessions**, one focusing on the new political order, one on rebuilding the social and economic foundations and one on the rule of law and security. EU High

Representative Catherine Ashton, Development Commissioner Andris Piebalgs as well as representatives of various international organisations will co-chair these sessions.

Pledges will be during the **working sessions** at the end of each speaker's intervention.

The **closing session** will consist in the endorsement of the Compact by the President of Somalia, Mr. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, the President of the European Commission, Mr. José Manuel Barroso and EU High Representative Catherine Ashton.

Media events:

- A **technical briefing** on the record is organized on 13 September in the EEAS press room. The speakers are: EEAS MD for Africa Mr. Nick Westcott, DEVCO Deputy Director-General Mr. Marcus Cornaro and Alexander Rondos, The European Union Special Representative for Horn of Africa
- **Photo and TV opportunity** upon the arrival of the participants on the day of the conference, 16 September (outside, in the courtyard of Egmont Palace; entrance via Passage de Milan, Boulevard de Waterloo, 31, 1000 Bruxelles)
- **The closing press conference** by Somali President Mr. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on 16 September in the Library Room of the Egmont Palace.
- Available on EbS
- The opening and the closing sessions together with the session on Re-building Somalia's social and economic foundations will be broadcast live on the conference website and [Europe by Satellite](#).
- The press conference will be LIVE on EbS

The sources:

Conference website: www.somalia-newdeal-conference.eu

EU Relations with Somalia: http://eeas.europa.eu/somalia/index_en.htm

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Tuesday 17 September:

European Commission takes decisive action against designer drugs

The news:

The European Commission will present proposals to strengthen the European Union's ability to respond to 'legal highs' – new psychoactive substances used as alternatives to illicit drugs such as cocaine and ecstasy. Under the rules proposed by the Commission, the procedure for banning harmful drugs and removing them from the market will be quicker, simpler and more proportionate to the risks involved.

The background:

In recent years, one new psychoactive substance was detected every week in the EU on average, and the trend is expected to continue in the coming years. Since 1997, Member States have identified more than 300 substances and their number tripled between 2009 and 2012 (from 24 in 2009 to 73 in 2012). Around 80% of these substances were detected in more than one EU Member State.

These proposals respond to persistent warnings from the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) and Europol. They also follow calls from the European Parliament and Member States to update [Council Decision 2005/387](#).

The event:

- Vice-President Reding will give a press conference on the day;
- DG Justice experts will give an off the record technical briefing.
- IP and MEMO will be available on the day.

The sources:

Justice Newsroom: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/index_en.htm

Vice-President Reding's website: http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/reding

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Wednesday 18 September:

European Commission to propose draft legislation on benchmarks

The news:

On 18 September, the European Commission will adopt a draft regulation on benchmarks. The Commission's aim is to address the issues raised by the alleged manipulation of LIBOR and EURIBOR, and of other benchmarks for commodities and exchange rates. The proposal will set out new rules for the production and use of benchmarks referenced in financial instruments and financial contracts, in order to ensure their integrity by guaranteeing that they are not subject to conflicts of interest, reflect the economic reality that they are intended to measure and are used appropriately.

The background:

Benchmarks affect the value of trillions of euro worth of financial instruments globally, and millions of residential mortgages use benchmarks for reference. They determine the amounts of money to be paid out under financial contracts, affect the value of assets held by investors, and are used to assess the performance of investment managers. Doubts about the accuracy and integrity of benchmarks can undermine market confidence, cause significant losses to consumers and investors, and distort the real economy.

The new Market Abuse Regulation (see [MEMO/13/595](#)) will ensure that those who manipulate or try to manipulate benchmarks can be punished. This will have a deterrent effect, but deterrence is not enough. Benchmarks need to be calculated and supervised in an appropriate way.

The event:

- Press conference by Commissioner Barnier preceded by a technical briefing (details to be announced).
- Press release and MEMOs will be available on the day.
- Available on EbS

The sources:

http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/securities/abuse/index_en.htm

Commissioner Michel Barnier's website:

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/barnier/index_en.htm

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Thursday 19 September – Saturday 21 September:

European Cooperation Day 2013

The news:

"European Territorial Cooperation programmes will have more focus, more strategy and more support from 2014-2020", said Johannes Hahn, Commissioner for Regional Policy, in the lead up to the second annual European Cooperation Day on 21st September.

This year's campaign comes at a crucial time as the European Parliament and Member States near a final agreement on the package of regulations for the next round of Regional Policy funding, along with the Union's seven-year budget. As the proposed legislation stands, European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) is set to get €8.9 billion – an increase of €1bn from 2007-2013.

Commissioner Hahn will be discussing the future of ETC and other models of cooperation, such as EU Macro-Regional Strategies during a live Twitter chat on 19 September.

The background:

European Territorial Cooperation is a core objective of EU Regional Policy. Regions and cities from different EU Member States are encouraged to work together and learn from each other through joint programmes, projects and networks. From 2007-13, there are three types of cooperation programme:

- [cross-border co-operation programmes](#) along internal EU borders. ERDF contribution: €5.6 billion.
- [transnational co-operation programmes](#) cover larger areas of co-operation such as the Baltic Sea, Alpine and Mediterranean regions. ERDF contribution: €1.8 billion.
- [interregional co-operation programme](#) (INTERREG IVC) and 3 networking programmes (Urbact II, INTERACT II and ESPON) cover all 28 Member States of the EU. They provide a framework for exchanging experience between regional and local bodies in different countries. ERDF contribution: €445 million.

Future ETC programmes are required to embody the same focus as all other Regional Policy programmes, ensuring that investment is channelled into areas of real growth potential. However, unlike other programmes which must focus a certain amount of funding on research, information technologies, SMEs and the low-carbon economy, cross-border and transnational cooperation programmes can choose to focus 80% of their allocations on any four investment areas out of the 11 priorities laid out in the [draft regulations](#).

The event:

- Celebrating Territorial Cooperation — 'Sharing borders, growing closer', numerous EU programmes will join forces to showcase the results and benefits of cooperation between regions across borders, with more than 100 events taking place in 30 countries in the following days and weeks.
- Join Commissioner Hahn on [Twitter](#) to debate the issues from 14:00-15:00 on 19 September - #ECday and #EUChat
- IP will be available on 18 September.
- [I-071066](#) European Territorial Cooperation

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