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Record EU Civil Protection operation helps Sweden fight forest fires

Over 360 fire-fighting personnel, 7 planes, 6 helicopters and 67 vehicles were mobilised through the [European Civil Protection Mechanism](#) in the past three weeks, to assist Sweden in combating the unprecedented forest fires. This is the largest European Civil Protection operation for forest fires in the last decade and the single biggest operation on forest fires in terms of deployment of staff. The operation included 815 flying hours and 8 822 drops of water. Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, **Christos Stylianides** currently visiting Sweden, said: *“Once again, Member States showed tangible European solidarity through the Civil Protection Mechanism. The devastating forest fires in Sweden have highlighted once again the impact of climate change and that we are facing a new reality. I deeply thank all Member States for their assistance and solidarity. Now is the time to collectively learn from these tragedies, and strive to strengthen Europe’s Civil Protection Mechanism, so that we are collectively better prepared and stronger in responding to multiple disasters across the continent.”* During the visit to Sweden, Commissioner Stylianides is traveling – along with Sweden’s Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, Mr. Morgan Johansson – to the areas mostly affected by the forest fires. He will meet some of the fire-fighters mobilised via the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, who have worked tirelessly for the past three weeks. The [press release](#) is available online. (For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz de Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Christina Wunder – Tel.: +32 229 92256)

First EU-China investment fund backed by the Juncker Plan raises €600 million for mid-sized companies

Cathay Capital has raised an initial €600 million for its fund Cathay Midcap II, which targets €1.2 billion to finance mid-cap companies. The fund is backed by the European Investment Fund under the Juncker Plan’s European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), as well as the China Development Bank, French national promotional bank Bpifrance, China’s Silk Road Fund, sovereign funds, institutional and other private investors. It is the first fund to be set up under the [China-EU Co-investment Fund \(CECIF\) programme](#), which was established by the EIF and SRF with the aim of developing synergies between the Belt and Road Initiative and the Juncker Plan. At the [EU-China Summit](#) in Beijing in July, the EIF and the SRF signed a Memorandum of Understanding to confirm this first co-investment. The fund will support mid-cap companies with high growth potential in Europe and China, in areas such as healthcare, high-end industries, consumer goods and business services. Jyrki **Katainen**, Commission Vice-President responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, said: *“We have been working towards this moment since we set up the EU-China working group in 2015 in Beijing. I am very pleased that we are now seeing the fruits of that labour and that the Cathay Midcap fund will finance European and Chinese high potential mid-cap businesses in strategically important sectors. This is a very good example of how private and public investors can work together.”* (Full press release can be

found [here](#). For more information: Christian Spahr – Tel.: +32 229 50055; Siobhán Millbright – Tel.: +32 229 57361)

Security Union: Commission increases support for Spain to fight terrorism with an additional €4.2 million

The Commission has awarded an extra €4.2 million in emergency assistance under the Internal Security Fund (ISF – Police) to support Spain's efforts to fight terrorism and organised crime. The additional funding will contribute to the purchase of equipment and technology to protect public spaces as well as to fight online crime. With this extra funding, the overall emergency assistance awarded to Spain since July to address migratory and security challenges amounts to €32.6 million. This financial assistance comes on top of €691.7 million allocated to Spain under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the Internal Security Fund (ISF) national programme for 2014-2020. (For more information: Tove Ernst – Tel.: +32 229 86764; Katarzyna Kolanko – Tel.: +32 299 63444)

Migration: A decrease of 15% in asylum applications lodged in the first half of 2018

New figures published today by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) show a slight decrease in the number of asylum applications made in the EU in 2018. In the first half of 2018, some 301,390 applications were lodged in the EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland, a 15% decrease when compared with the first half of 2017. During the month of June 1,600 fewer applications were made when compared with the figures in May. Today's figures show that the overall trends remain stable and there is a continuing decrease in the number of asylum applications made in the EU, following a 43% drop in 2017. More information can be found in the [press release](#) online. (For more information: Tove Ernst – Tel.: +32 229 86764; Kasia Kolanko – Tel.: +32 229 63444)

Mergers: Commission clears the joint acquisition of Eagleview by Clearlake and Vista

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over Eagleview by Clearlake and Vista, all of the US. Eagleview is a provider of aerial imagery, 3-D measurement software, data analytics, and geographic information system ("GIS") solutions for a wide range of users including governments, property and casualty insurance companies and residential contractors. Clearlake is a private investment fund. Vista is a private equity firm focused on investments in software, data and technology-enabled businesses. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns since Eagleview has negligible actual or foreseen activities in the European Economic Area. 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.9033](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Reifen Krieg Group by Bain Capital Investors

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition by Bain Capital Investors LLC of the US of Reifen Krieg GmbH, Secura Reifenservice GmbH, Reifen24 AG, Moti Reifen GmbH, SW Reifenhandel GmbH, Komplettradlager.de GmbH, Duro Reifenservice GmbH, and MUTAVI-Solutions GmbH (together "Reifen Krieg Group") of Germany. Reifen Krieg Group is primarily active in the wholesale supply of replacement tyres in Germany. Bain Capital is a private equity investment firm and two of its portfolio companies, European FinTyre Distribution Limited and Autodistribution Group, are also active in the wholesale and retail supply of replacement tyres and other automotive spare parts. The companies' activities overlap only in the wholesale supply of replacement tyres in Germany. The Commission found that, in this market, the companies' combined market position would be moderate and a significant number of competitors, including large vertically integrated groups, would continue to exert competitive pressure on the combined entity post-transaction. The Commission therefore concluded that the proposed acquisition would not raise competition concerns. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9000](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – Tel: +32 229 55344)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of two real estate joint ventures by OMERS, DV4, QIA and ABP

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of two real estate joint ventures, E1EV LLPs and E2LG LLPs, based in the UK by Oxford Jersey Holding Company Limited ("Oxford") of Jersey, DV4 Limited of the British Virgin Islands, Qatari Diar Real Estate Investment Company Q.P.S.C. ("QDREIC") of Qatar and Stichting Depository APG Strategic Real Estate Pool ("APG") of the Netherlands. E1EV LLPs and E2LG LLPs are two joint ventures managing and developing a portfolio of residential and retail real estate assets in the UK, notably in London (Tribeca Square LLP, East Village London LLP, Elephant and Castle LLP), Glasgow (Merchant City LLP) and Leeds (Holbeck Quarter LLP). Oxford is part of the wider OMERS Administration Corporation of Canada, which manages a diversified global portfolio of stocks and bonds as well as real estate, private equity and infrastructure investments. DV4 is a real estate investment fund. QDREIC is a real estate investment and development company, wholly owned by QIA, the sovereign investment fund of the State of Qatar. APG is a depository for an investment fund whose ultimate beneficial owner is Stichting Pensioenfonds ABP ("ABP"), a pension administration organisation specialised in the field of collective pensions in the public sector. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, given the limited horizontal overlaps and the limited vertical relationships between the companies' activities. 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.8786](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – Tel: +32 229 55344)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on official visit to New Zealand and Australia

High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini will on 7 and 8 August travel to Wellington and Sydney for her first visits to New Zealand and Australia in her current role. Both visits will provide an opportunity for the High Representative/Vice-President to take stock of the excellent state of EU-New Zealand and EU-Australia relations respectively, to address ways in which the bilateral relationships can be enhanced, as well as to increase the joint work to tackle global challenges, including through multilateral fora. In New Zealand, Federica Mogherini will meet with Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and Minister of Defence Ron Mark. She will also meet with Minister of Foreign Affairs Winston Peters, with whom she speak to the press. The European Union and New Zealand launched [negotiations for a comprehensive and ambitious trade agreement](#) on 21 June 2018. Federica Mogherini will travel to Sydney one year after the EU and Australia [signed a Framework Agreement to deepen cooperation](#). In Sydney, Federica Mogherini will hold a joint press conference with her Australian counterpart, Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, after their extensive bilateral meeting, and will also meet the Governor-General of Australia, Sir Peter Cosgrove, to take stock of the excellent state of EU-Australia bilateral relations, as well as the joint work to tackle regional and global challenges. High Representative/Vice-President Mogherini will also address the European Australian Business Council, just over one month after the [launch of negotiations](#) for an EU-Australia trade agreement. The visit comes off the back of the High Representative's visits to Singapore and the Republic of Korea, on which topic press material is available [online](#). Coverage of all parts of the visit will be provided by [EBS](#). Visit the websites of the respective EU Delegations for more information on EU relations with [New Zealand](#) and [Australia](#). (*For more information: Maja Kocijančič – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Judith Hebekeuser – Tel.: +32 229 52656*)

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