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EU, Latin America and the Caribbean: a partnership for prosperity, democracy, resilience and governance

The European Union is strengthening its political partnership with Latin America and the Caribbean with a new [Joint Communication](#) setting the vision for a stronger and modernised partnership focused on trade, investment and sectoral cooperation. This new partnership aims at harnessing joint efforts to address common challenges and opportunities in changing global and regional realities. High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** commented: *"Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe have social, cultural and economic deep links, a long history of common work for peace and prosperity, and share the same attachment to cooperation and multilateralism. With this communication, we lay the ground for further strengthening our collaboration, for the sake of our peoples and of the whole world"*. Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven **Mimica** said: *"Our commitment remains to continue engaging with countries in the region according to their different levels of development through tailor-made partnerships and innovative forms of cooperation such as transfer of knowledge or triangular cooperation. In this context, we will pay particular attention to countries least developed and in situations of conflict where the potential to raise finance is the lowest. Only when we join forces can we deliver on our ambitious Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development or the Paris Agreement."* Building on the achievements of the last decades, the partnership will concentrate on four priorities: partnering for prosperity, democracy, resilience and global governance. The full [press release](#), the [Joint Communication](#) and a [factsheet](#) are available online. The presentation of the Joint Communication will be broadcasted on [EbS](#). Join the debate on social media through the Hashtag [#commonfuture](#). (For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570 Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Xavier Cifre Quatresols – Tel.: +32 229 73582)

WTO Boeing dispute: EU issues preliminary list of U.S. products considered for countermeasures

The Commission today launched a public consultation on a preliminary list of US product that could be subject to EU countermeasures in a follow-up to the WTO ruling on Boeing. On 11 April 2019, the WTO confirmed that U.S. subsidies to Boeing continue to cause significant harm to Airbus. EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia **Malmström** said: *"European companies must be able to compete on fair and equal terms. The recent WTO ruling on U.S. subsidies for Boeing is important in this respect. We must continue to defend a level-playing field for our industry. But let me be clear, we do not want a tit-for-tat. While we need to be ready with countermeasures in case there is no other way out, I still believe that dialogue is what should prevail between important partners such as the EU and the U.S., including in bringing an end to this long-standing dispute. The EU remains open for discussions with the U.S., provided*

these are without preconditions and aim at a fair outcome."The public consultation aims to gather feedback from stakeholders who may be affected by the planned measures. It will last until 31 May 2019. The preliminary list include a range of items from aircrafts and chemicals to fruit and ketchup. For more information see a full [press release](#) and the [consultation page](#). (For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Kinga Malinowska – Tel: +32 229 51383)

The Juncker Plan supports small and medium businesses in Germany and the Netherlands

The Investment Plan for Europe – [the Juncker Plan](#) – is backing a €100 million European Investment Bank (EIB) loan to German and Dutch small businesses via Funding Circle, a global loan platform. Thanks to this loan, more than 2,000 small businesses in Germany and the Netherlands will get better access to the financing they need to grow and innovate. Vice-President Jyrki **Katainen**, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness said: *"Small businesses play a crucial role in the EU economy. Facilitating access to the finance they need to create jobs, innovate and grow is a key priority of the Investment Plan. Today's agreement with Funding Circle will enable 2,000 small businesses in Germany and the Netherlands to receive such a financing boost: this is another example of how the EU works to give small businesses the means to succeed."* A press release is available [here](#). As of April 2019, the Juncker Plan mobilised almost €393 billion of additional investment, including €33.1 billion in Germany and €10.6 billion in the Netherlands. The Plan is currently supporting 945,000 enterprises across Europe. (For more information: Annika Breidthardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

TRADE: Commission reports on progress in trade talks with Chile and Australia

As part of its transparency commitment, the Commission today published reports summarising the progress made during the latest negotiating rounds with [Australia](#) (25 to 29 March) and [Chile](#) (1 to 5 April). The third round of negotiations with Australia confirmed a shared commitment to achieve an ambitious and comprehensive agreement. The round covered discussions in almost all thematic groups and the negotiators started putting together parts of the text agreeable to both sides. The fourth negotiation round of talks with Australia is scheduled for July 2019. Fruitful discussions also took place during the last, fourth round of negotiations for the modernisation of the trade part of the EU-Chile Association Agreement. The negotiators made substantial progress in a significant number of chapters including on food safety and sanitary rules, technical obstacles in trade, good regulatory practices, customs, rules of origin, trade in commercial services, competition rules and rules supporting trade by smaller companies. EU proposals for sustainable development chapters in the future agreements with [Australia](#) and [New Zealand](#) are now also available online. (For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Kinga Malinowska – Tel:

+32 229 51383)

De nouvelles règles offrent plus de flexibilité pour le domaine de premier niveau .eu

Demain, un nouvel ensemble de règles pour le [domaine de premier niveau .eu](#) entrera en vigueur à travers l'UE. Les nouvelles mesures simplifient le cadre juridique actuel et permettent aux citoyens de l'Union européenne et de l'Espace économique européen (UE / EEE) d'enregistrer un domaine .eu également en dehors de l'UE, quel que soit leur pays de résidence. La propriété du domaine était jusqu'à présent uniquement liée à la résidence dans les pays de l'UE / EEE. Le nouveau règlement apportera la flexibilité juridique nécessaire au domaine pour s'adapter aux changements rapides du marché et moderniser sa structure de gouvernance. Un nouvel organe sera créé afin de réunir des parties prenantes d'origines différentes pour conseiller la Commission sur la mise en œuvre des nouvelles règles, ainsi que la gestion du nom de domaine. Ces mesures permettront au domaine de premier niveau .eu de soutenir la croissance du [marché unique numérique](#) et créeront des services plus innovants, spécifiquement destinés aux citoyens et aux entreprises de l'UE. Plus de détails sont disponibles [ici](#). (Pour plus d'information : Johannes Bahrke – Tél.: +32 229 58615 ; Inga Höglund – Tél.: +32 229 50698)

Commission supports new pilot scheme giving artists opportunities to work across the EU

Today, [i-Portunus](#), a pilot project funded by the European Commission, is launching the first of three calls for proposals which will allow artists to work in another EU country for a period of 15 to 85 days. With a budget of €1 million, this project will support the mobility of around 500 artists to establish or improve collaborations and create new works. The pilot covers two sectors: the performing arts (theatre, dance and circus) and the visual arts and is open to people residing in all countries participating in the Commission's [Creative Europe programme](#). Next year, the Commission will invest another €1.5 million in similar trials. The aim is to prepare for 2021 when mobility for artists and culture professionals is expected to be a permanent action under the new Creative Europe programme. Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Tibor **Navracsics**, said: "*Enabling artists to work across national borders is very important. It gives a boost to their sectors and the EU economy, and it helps them contribute to and fully benefit from Europe's diverse cultural ecosystems. The [i-Portunus](#) project can play a vital part in paving the way for EU support for artist mobility on a much greater scale.*" The first call will be open [until 15 May at 18:00 CET](#). Support for mobility actions for artists has frequently been requested by stakeholders. These actions are strongly supported by the European Parliament and Member States and included in the [New European Agenda for Culture](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: [+32 229 67083](#); Joseph Waldstein – Tel.: [+32 229 56184](#))

Our blue planet: European Union organises Global Beach Clean-up

The European Commission and the International Merchandising Promotions & Services (IMPS), the owners of The Smurfs, are today signing an agreement for the use of Smurf images in the promotion of the 2019 EU's Global Beach Clean-up campaign. The agreement represents a unique public-private partnership for ocean preservation and awareness-raising that will allow the cost-free use of selected Smurf drawings on social media, web use as well as branding of custom-made visibility material to be used during beach clean actions worldwide. The partnership will allow the Commission to reach a young audience, particularly on issues like the EU's world-leading policy on [single use plastics](#). Since 2018, the European Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) have jointly organised an annual global Beach Clean-up campaign. This year, the EU will again spur its delegations across the world and representations in Member States to organise beach clean-up events together with local organisations and schools, around International Coastal Cleanup Day (21 September). The signing ceremony is taking place today at 15:00 in Genval at the headquarters of IMPS. For more information, a press release is available [online](#). (For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Stephan Meder – Tel.: +32 229 13917; Xavier Cifre Quatresols – Tel.: +32 229 73582)

Projections agricoles à court-terme: une reprise de la production céréalière et un record d'exportations d'huile d'olive en 2019

Avec une augmentation de la production et une demande mondiale forte, les exportations d'huile d'olive de l'UE devraient atteindre leurs niveaux record au cours de la campagne 2018/2019, tandis que la production céréalière de l'UE, durement touchée par les conditions climatiques défavorables de l'année dernière, est en train de se redresser. Voici quelques conclusions du dernier rapport sur les perspectives agricoles à court terme publié aujourd'hui par la Commission européenne. En ce qui concerne les marchés de la viande, les prix de la viande de porc augmentent actuellement en raison de l'offre plus restreinte. Le secteur pourrait également tirer parti de l'amélioration des perspectives d'exportation, en particulier vers la Chine. La production de volaille pourrait encore augmenter de 2% en 2019 après une augmentation de 5% en 2018, sous l'effet de conditions internationales favorables et de la hausse des prix. En ce qui concerne le secteur des produits laitiers, les augmentations de production attendues pour 2019 sont plus modérées: 0,7% pour le lait et 0,8% pour le fromage, avec une expansion prévue des exportations de ce dernier de 1%. Le [rapport complet](#) est disponible en ligne. Plus d'information sur le rapport disponible [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Kinga Malinowska – Tel.: +32 229 51383)

eInvoicing: New electronic invoicing standard facilitates public procurement contracts in Europe

By tomorrow, public authorities engaging in public procurement in the EU should comply with the European standard on eInvoicing and be able to receive and process electronic invoices accordingly. The new standard will help to

ensure the timely and automatic processing of companies' eInvoices and payments, make it easier for companies to manage their contracts in any Member State and raise the attractiveness of public procurement businesses. Commissioner Elżbieta **Bieńkowska**, responsible for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, said: *"eInvoicing promotes the digital transformation of public administrations in Europe and of the broader European economy. The new eInvoicing standard supports financial transparency, helps reduce costs and improves efficiency in public procurement transactions. The Commission is supporting the implementation of eInvoicing at national level, so all business across Europe, especially SMEs, can benefit from it."* Based on the [Directive on electronic invoicing in public procurement](#), the eInvoicing standard is part of the [Digital Single Market Strategy](#) and aims to unlock online opportunities in public procurement. The Commission estimates that in the period 2015-2017 alone, the use of eInvoicing by EU businesses resulted in €920 million savings. To help Member States with the implementation of the new standard, the Commission invested over €35 million in grant funding to support the uptake of innovative eInvoicing solutions, such as end-to-end automation, robotics and the use of AI, including through the [Connecting Europe Facility \(CEF\) eInvoicing Building Block](#). The standard will first apply to public administrations at national level, while regional and local authorities have an additional year to do so. The Commission stands ready to continue to help Member States in this process. *(For more information: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Mirna Talko – Tel.: +32 229 87278; Victoria von Hammerstein – Tel.: +32 229 55040)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control of Aptean by Vista Equity and TA Associates

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Aptean Inc. of the US and Yaletown Acquiror S.à.r.l of Luxembourg (together "Aptean") by Vista Equity Partners Management, LLC ("Vista") and TA Associates Management L.P. ("TA Associates"), both of the US. Aptean sells software that enables customers to enhance their internal workflows, notably customer relationship management, customer experience management, enterprise resource planning, supply chain management, compliance solutions and knowledge management. Both Vista and TA Associates are private equity firms. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the companies' very limited combined market position resulting from the proposed transaction. 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.9322](#). *(For more information: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Eurostat: Excédent de 17,9 milliards d'euros du commerce international de biens de la zone euro, déficit de 2,7 mrd d'euros pour l'UE28 (Février 2019)

Selon les premières estimations, les exportations de biens de la zone euro (ZE19) vers le reste du monde se sont établies à 183,4 milliards d'euros en février 2019, en hausse de 4,4% par rapport à février 2018 (175,6 mrd). Les importations depuis le reste du monde ont quant à elles été de 165,4 mrd d'euros, en hausse de 4,0% par rapport à février 2018 (159,0 mrd). En conséquence, la zone euro a enregistré en février 2019 un excédent de 17,9 mrd d'euros de son commerce international de biens avec le reste du monde, contre +16,5 mrd en janvier 2018. Le commerce intra-zone euro s'est établi à 160,3 mrd d'euros en février 2019, soit +3,4% par rapport à janvier 2018. Un communiqué de presse Eurostat est à votre disposition [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Kinga Malinowska – Tel: +32 229 51383)

Eurostat: Le taux d'inflation annuel en baisse à 1,4% dans la zone euro et stable à 1,6% dans l'UE en Mars 2019

Le taux d'inflation annuel de la zone euro s'est établi à 1,4% en mars 2019, contre 1,5% en février 2019. Un an auparavant, il était de 1,4%. Le taux d'inflation annuel de l'Union européenne s'est établi à 1,6% en mars 2019, stable par rapport à février 2019. Un an auparavant, il était de 1,6%. Les taux annuels les plus faibles ont été observés au Portugal (0,8%) et en Grèce (1,0%). Les taux annuels les plus élevés ont quant à eux été enregistrés en Roumanie (4,2%), en Hongrie (3,8%) et aux Pays-Bas (2,9%). Par rapport à février 2019, l'inflation annuelle a baissé dans six États membres, est restée stable dans deux et a augmenté dans dix-neuf autres. En mars 2019 les plus fortes contributions au taux d'inflation annuel de la zone euro proviennent de l'énergie (+0,52 points de pourcentage, pp), suivis des services (+0,51 pp), de l'alimentation, alcool & tabac (+0,34 pp) et des biens industriels hors énergie (+0,04 pp). Un communiqué de presse Eurostat est à votre disposition [en ligne](#). (For more information: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Annikky Lamp – Tel.: +32 229 56151)

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