

Joint statement by Commissioners Malmström and Hogan, and the Secretary of the Economy of Mexico, Guajardo Villarreal

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After several months of intense negotiations, this afternoon we reached an agreement in principle on trade and investment between the European Union and Mexico, as part of the modernisation of our bilateral legal framework.

This will contribute to making our trade relationship fit to face the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century.

The European Union and Mexico stand together for open, fair and rules-based trade.

Our negotiators will now continue their work to resolve the remaining technical issues and finalise the full legal text so that our citizens and enterprises can start reaping its benefits as soon as possible.

The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) joins the Global Emerging Markets (GEMs) Risk Database Consortium

During the World Bank-IMF Spring Meetings in Washington, DC, on April 20, Werner Hoyer, President of the European Investment Bank (EIB), acting on behalf of the *Global Emerging Markets (GEMs) Risk Database Consortium*, and Joaquim Levy the Managing Director and Chief Financial Officer of the World Bank signed a membership agreement, making the IBRD the nineteenth member of the Consortium. The two institutions were also represented by the Co-Chairs of the Consortium, Alain Godard, EIB's Director General and Chief Risk Officer and Lakshmi Shyam-Sunder, Vice President and World Bank Group Chief Risk Officer. The signed membership agreement marks an important moment in

the nine-year history of GEMs as an initiative of the development community to address a data gap by pooling data into a comprehensive credit risk database.

Mr. Hoyer said: *"GEMs is the jewel of the international development banking community. GEMs has created a unique partnership among International Finance Institutions and I'm convinced that the participation of IBRD, as part of the World Bank Group, will further strengthen our cooperation to achieve the objectives set by the United Nations (UN) in the field of the sustainable development goals (SDGs), by the Paris Agreement on climate change and in our fight against poverty and the root causes of the migration crisis".*

Joaquim Levy added: *"GEMs fulfills a vital role in overcoming informational hurdles. High-quality data must be readily available, accessible and standardized for an adequate assessment of risks to spur cross-border investment in EMDEs. I am very happy that IBRD is joining the consortium."*

Alain Godard one of the co-founders and co-chairs of this consortium stated: *"This agreement is a big step towards the further development of GEMs as a tool for deeper collaboration and exchange between International Finance Institutions. GEMs is instrumental in our joint effort to mobilize private sector in the financing of projects in the emerging and developing partner countries"*.

Lakshmi Shyam-Sunder, co-chair of this consortium who co-founded this with the first contributions of data from the International Finance Corporation (IFC), also a member of the World Bank Group, stated: *"It was great to see the growth and interest in this IFI collaboration over the last nine years with 19 members and even more importantly, the recognition of its value to the broader investment community"*.

GEMs was established in 2009 as a joint effort between the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) of the World Bank Group in 2009 to pool credit performance data of project lending into a comprehensive database, which would allow participants to enhance their credit risk analysis through benchmarking and greater data coverage. As of the end of December 2016 the GEMs database reports around 8,300 counterparts, 1,700 default events and 1,900 resolved contracts making it the world's largest default and loss database for the emerging markets business of IFIs.

Over the years, GEMs has helped strengthen the collaboration of IFIs in supporting common challenges in maximizing finance for development in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement on climate change (COP 21), and the Infrastructure Action Plan. Recent policy initiatives have stressed the need for MDBs to partner, leverage the strength of their balance sheets and to crowd in private sector capital – doing this effectively depends on high-quality information about credit performance as MDBs create markets where commercial solutions alone are not viable.

EIB is managing the GEMs consortium operations through a dedicated team in its Risk Management Directorate. For further information on GEMs, please see

The IDB Group and the EIB Pledge to Expand Partnership and Explore Blended Finance

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), its private sector entity IDB Invest, and the European Investment Bank (EIB) have formally expanded their partnership through a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which was signed in Washington DC by IDB President Luis Alberto Moreno and EIB President Werner Hoyer. This renewed collaboration reflects the partners' commitment to advance development in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) through blended finance, co-financing, and knowledge sharing.

In line with the IDB's strategic focus on pioneering blended and innovative financing schemes to finance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and consistent with the EIB's key role in sustainable finance, the IDB-EIB partnership will prioritize efforts to explore these new financing sources. Specifically, the partners intend to use blended instruments to further leverage the European Union's support to LAC-focused platforms such as the Latin American Investment Facility and the Caribbean Investment Facility.

The partners will also build upon their active history of co-financing projects by funding additional sovereign guaranteed operations in LAC countries including Colombia, Haiti, and Peru and identifying key areas in which to expand their co-financing of non-sovereign guaranteed operations with IDB Invest.

Finally, the IDB and the EIB will continue to tap into each organization's technical expertise by exploring the facilitation of capital market instruments issuance by third parties, such as SDG bonds, and through knowledge sharing efforts. A top priority for the partnership is the development of a staff exchange program to facilitate knowledge sharing on public-private partnerships and other topics of mutual interest.

Caucasian mafia organisation

committing burglaries and retail thefts in France and Greece dismantled thanks to first-ever joint investigation team between the two countries

On 17 April 2018, more than 30 suspects, including the 4 leaders of the organised crime group, composed of Georgian and Armenian nationals, were arrested after simultaneous operations of the French and Greek judicial and law enforcement authorities in Caen and Thessaloniki.

Several coordination meetings held at Eurojust led to the first joint investigation team agreement ever signed between France and Greece on September 2017. Eurojust provided substantial logistical and financial support to the joint investigation team, which culminated in the establishment of a coordination centre at Eurojust's premises in The Hague. The common action day was coordinated by Eurojust with the support of Europol, allowing for real-time exchange of information and cross-checks of the evidence gathered against Europol's databases.

The transnational organised crime group (OCG) is believed to be a predominantly Georgian mafia organisation called 'Vory V zakone', suspected of having committed thousands of burglaries and retail thefts in the Normandy region as well as in Greece. It is estimated that the OCG committed on average 13 shoplifting acts in France and 3 house breakings in Greece a day, causing a severe damage of several millions of euros. The OCG, whose sponsors were located in Greece, was hierarchically structured and governed by rigid rules, including the provision of capital to the 'obshak', a fund used as a common financial deposit for criminal activities.

Background

Eurojust is the European Union's hub for judicial cooperation and coordination between Member States, assisting in the investigation and prosecution of cases involving serious organised cross-border crime. The judicial cooperation tools that Eurojust offers to national authorities include coordination meetings, coordination centres and joint investigation teams.

Joint investigation teams are established between the national authorities of two or more Member States to coordinate and enhance ongoing national investigations through sharing of case-related information and evidence. In 2017, Eurojust supported 200 JITs and provided EUR 1.31 million in funding to JITs.

For more information about Eurojust, see www.eurojust.europa.eu or contact Eurojust's Corporate Communications Unit at media@eurojust.europa.eu.

For all Eurojust press releases, please see www.eurojust.europa.eu ([Press centre](#))

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