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[EU releases additional aid as crisis in Democratic Republic of Congo's Kasai worsens](#)

The European Commission has announced additional humanitarian aid of €5 million to help scores of people in urgent need of assistance in the Democratic Republic of Congo's conflict-torn provinces of Kasai.

This funding brings EU humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable people in the Democratic Republic of Congo to almost €28 million since the beginning of the year.

"The European Union is extremely concerned by the current humanitarian crisis in Kasai, causing horrible suffering to so many people. The funding we provide today will help for the very first time in this region our humanitarian partners to respond to the most urgent needs of those affected by the conflict. But ultimately, it is only by laying down arms and restoring peace that all those caught in this conflict will be able to return home and rebuild their lives," said Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides**.

The situation in the Kasai has been increasingly deteriorating over the last months, with now 8 provinces and 2.6 million people affected by conflict.

Over 1.3 million people are currently internally displaced, with some 35 000 new cases reported during May alone. Since the beginning of the year, an average of 8 000 people per day have been displaced.

The EU funding announced today will help meet the most urgent needs of these

internally displaced persons, the majority of whom are women and children. It will help respond to their protection needs, provide lifesaving assistance including water and sanitation, shelter, health and food assistance. It will also enhance humanitarian partners' logistics capacity in a country where access is often problematic due to poor infrastructure and high insecurity. It is estimated that the EU-funded interventions would reach approximately 200,000 beneficiaries.

Background

The DRC is one of the poorest countries in the world. Despite its abundance in natural resources, it is ranked 176th out of 188 in the 2016 [Human Development Index](#). Its complex humanitarian crisis is characterised by violent armed conflicts, but also by malnutrition, epidemic outbreaks and vast numbers of forcibly displaced people.

Some 3.7 million people currently live displaced within the country, which also hosts more than 460 000 refugees with an ongoing influx of people fleeing the conflict in South Sudan.

Since August 2016, a complex emergency quickly developed in the Kasai, causing additional forced displacement, and drastically worsening the food security situation in the affected provinces. According to the World Food Programme, 42% of the population in Kasai are currently not meeting their food needs.

The EU has been providing humanitarian assistance to the Democratic Republic of Congo since 1994. Over the last past 5 years, more than €200 million have been allocated to provide humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable. An amount of €620 million in development funding has also been allocated for the period 2014-2020, focusing mainly on health, environment and sustainable agriculture, infrastructure, as well as governance and the rule of law.

The Commission also operates a dedicated [humanitarian air service called 'ECHO Flight'](#), which guarantees safe and fast transports of humanitarian personnel and supplies to remote locations in DRC.

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Joint Letter of President Juncker and President Tusk to EU Heads of State or Government on the EU's Priorities for the G20

European Commission President Jean-Claude **Juncker** and European Council President Donald Tusk have today sent a [joint letter](#) to EU Heads of State or Government, setting out the EU priorities for the G20 Summit which takes place on 7-8 July in Hamburg, Germany. The two Presidents write, by way of introduction: *"Europe's role in the world and our responsibility at the*

international level in these turbulent times are growing. More than ever the EU has become a global point of reference for all those who value the principles of liberal democracy and human rights, free and fair trade or concrete actions in facing global challenges, such as climate change, poverty, terrorism and illegal migration. A strong and determined Union is the best way to promote our values and interests, to support a rules-based multilateral system, and ultimately to protect and defend citizens. With this in mind we will participate in the G20 Summit in Hamburg later this week". In their letter, the two Presidents set out the EU's goals in 9 different areas: 1. The G20's key role in making the global economy work for all; 2. Bolstering an open and fair rules-based multilateral trading system; 3. Demonstrating that ambitious climate action is good for economic growth and jobs; 4. Tapping the potential of the digital revolution; 5. Advancing the global fight against tax avoidance and evasion; 6. Stepping up efforts to fight terrorism and terrorist financing; 7. Aiming for a more resilient international monetary and financial system; 8. Sharing responsibility for refugees and migrants; 9. Partnering with Africa for investment, growth and jobs. Presidents Juncker and Tusk will hold a joint press conference ahead of the G20 Summit, at 9.15 on Friday 7 July, in the G20 press centre in Hamburg. More information about the EU's participation in the G20 is available in this [brochure](#). (For more information: Margaritis Schinas – Tel.: +32 229 60524; Mina Andreeva – Tel.: +32 229 91382)

Trade and Strategic Partnership agreements on the agenda of the EU-Japan Summit taking place in Brussels tomorrow

On Thursday 6 July, Brussels will play host to the 24th Summit between the European Union and Japan. The European Union will be represented by the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude **Juncker**, and by the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk. Japan will be represented by Prime Minister Shinzō Abe. The Commissioner for Trade, Cecilia **Malmström**, will also participate, along with several Japanese Ministers. The EU-Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement and EU-Japan trade agreement will be the primary agenda points, with negotiations having progressed significantly over the past months and a political agreement between the leaders now within reach. The Summit will also provide an opportunity for the leaders to review and strengthen the EU-Japan relationship, including both bilateral issues, as well as regional and global challenges. Counter-terrorism, security, energy, data protection, climate action, migration and foreign policy priorities are all expected to be discussed. A joint press conference of the three leaders will take place in the Council at 12:10 tomorrow and will be shown live on [EbS](#). A background briefing for journalists ahead of the Summit will take place [at 14:30 this afternoon in the Council press room](#). For more information, see the following: [website of the 24th EU-Japan Summit](#), [website of the EU Delegation to Japan](#), [EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement website](#)). (For more information: Mina Andreeva – Tel.: +32 229 91382; Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Daniel Rosario – Tel.: + 32 229 56185)

Statement by First Vice-President Timmermans Statement by First Vice-President Timmermans on the final award made on 29 June by the Arbitration

Tribunal of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the arbitration between Croatia and Slovenia

Following yesterday's College meeting in Strasbourg, First Vice-President **Timmermans** issued the following statement: *"The Commission held a discussion on the final award made on 29 June by the Arbitration Tribunal of the Permanent Court of Arbitration as regards maritime and land borders between Croatia and Slovenia. This is an issue that has been going on for more than 20 years. The Commission has always been supportive of the peaceful settlement of border disputes between Member States. In this particular process we have also acted as facilitator, leading to the establishment of the arbitration process in 2009. In this particular case, now that there is a decision, the Commission takes good note of the final award and expects both parties to implement it. In the same vein the Commission welcomes that both Prime Ministers of Slovenia and Croatia will meet on 12 July and have agreed that no unilateral steps would be taken before then. The Commission hopes that both Prime Ministers can come to an agreement on how best to implement the award. The Commission of course stands ready to contribute to or facilitate this process. Once we are on our way in this process the College will come back to the issue to discuss the progress and see how the Commission can help bring about a full implementation and just implementation of the award."* The statement is online [here](#) in all EU languages. (For more information: Margaritis Schinas – Tel.: +32 229 60524; Mina Andreeva – Tel.: +32 229 91382)

EU releases additional aid as crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo's Kasai province worsens

The European Commission has announced additional humanitarian aid of €5 million to help scores of people in urgent need of assistance in the Democratic Republic of Congo's conflict-torn provinces of Kasai. This will expand the EU's humanitarian response to eight Congolese provinces affected by conflict. This funding brings EU humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable people in the Democratic Republic of Congo to almost €28 million euros since the beginning of the year. Over 1.3 million people are currently internally displaced, with some 35 000 new cases reported during May alone. Since the beginning of the year, an average of 8 000 people per day have been displaced. Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management **Christos Stylianides** said: *"The European Union is extremely concerned by the current humanitarian crisis in Kasai, causing horrible suffering to so many people. The funding we provide today will help for the very first time in this region our humanitarian partners to respond to the most urgent needs of those affected by the conflict. But ultimately, it is only by laying down arms and restoring peace that all those caught in this conflict will be able to return home and rebuild their lives"*. A full press release will be available [here](#). (For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela –Tel.: +32 229 65322; Christina Wunder – Tel.: +32 229 92256)

EU Response to Drugs: Commission proposes to restrict new synthetic opioid

Today, the European Commission has proposed to subject the new psychoactive substance furanylfentanyl to control measures across the European Union. According to the [risk assessment](#) report provided by the [European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction](#) (EMCDDA), furanylfentanyl is a strong synthetic opioid which can cause severe harm to health. The substance is sold online in small and wholesale amounts as a “research chemical”, typically as a powder and as ready-to-use nasal sprays. So far, furanylfentanyl has been detected in 16 Member States and is associated with 23 deaths, in addition to 11 acute non-fatal intoxications. Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos said: *“The rise in the availability of new psychoactive substances remains a considerable public health challenge in Europe. It is a rapidly evolving and extremely dangerous threat able to cause serious harm and even death. Our response needs to be equally quick and effective and that is why we have recently agreed on a new legislation on new psychoactive substances”*. The Commission’s [proposal](#) will now be discussed by the Member States in the Council, which, in consultation with the European Parliament, will decide whether to adopt the measures. More information on [EU Drug Report 2017](#) is available online. (For more information: Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Tove Ernst – Tel.: +32 229 86764; Katarzyna Kolanko – Tel.: +32 229 63444)

State aid: Commission approves prolongation of Polish bank guarantee scheme

The European Commission has authorised under EU state aid rules a prolongation of the Polish bank guarantee scheme until 30 November 2017. The scheme provides for State guarantees in favour of different types of solvent credit institutions in Poland. It was initially [approved in September 2009](#) and prolonged several times, last time in [December 2016](#). The Commission found the prolongation of the scheme to be in line with its [guidelines on state aid to banks during the crisis](#) because it is well targeted, proportionate and limited in time and scope. The Commission is authorising guarantee schemes on banks’ liabilities for successive periods of up to six months in order to be able to monitor developments and adjust conditions accordingly. More information will be available on the Commission’s [competition](#) website, in the [public case register](#), under the case number SA.48227. (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)

State aid: Commission approves prolongation of Irish credit union resolution scheme

The European Commission has found the prolongation of an Irish scheme for the orderly winding-up of credit unions to be in line with EU state aid rules, and in particular with the [2013 Banking Communication](#) (see also [MEMO](#)). The objective of the scheme is to safeguard financial stability when a credit union becomes unable to meet regulatory requirements. It allows Ireland to provide aid for transferring the assets and liabilities of a failing credit union to an acquirer through a competitive process. This will help to achieve the maximum value for the assets and liabilities, ensuring that the aid is limited to the minimum necessary for an orderly winding-up and that no buyer gains an undue economic advantage through the acquisition of under-priced assets and liabilities. The scheme is valid until 30 November 2017. The Commission initially approved the scheme in December 2011. It was prolonged

several times, the last time in [December 2016](#). More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the reference SA.48337. *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)*

Mergers: Commission clears the creation of a joint venture between Cummins and Eaton Corporation

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the creation of a joint venture between Cummins of the United States, and Eaton Corporation of Ireland. The joint venture will develop and supply automated transmission systems for heavy-duty and medium-duty commercial vehicles.

Cummins is active in the supply and servicing of engines and related products. Eaton is active in the supply of transmission systems for commercial vehicles, among other solutions for the management of electrical, hydraulic and mechanical power. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would not raise competition concerns, because the joint venture has no, or negligible, actual or foreseen activities in the EEA. 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.8495](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)*

Eurostat: Excédent de 58,9 milliards d'euros des échanges courants de l'UE28

Le compte des opérations courantes de la balance des paiements de l'UE28, corrigé des variations saisonnières, a enregistré un excédent de 58,9 milliards d'euros (1,6% du PIB) au premier trimestre 2017, en hausse par rapport à l'excédent de 52,9 mrd (1,4% du PIB) du quatrième trimestre 2016 et à celui de 57,4 mrd (1,5% du PIB) du premier trimestre 2016, selon les estimations d'Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. Un communiqué de presse est disponible [ici](#). *(Pour plus d'informations: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153)*

Eurostat: Le volume des ventes du commerce de détail en hausse de 0,4% dans la zone euro

En mai 2017 par rapport à avril 2017, le volume des ventes du commerce de détail corrigé des variations saisonnières a augmenté de 0,4% dans la zone euro (ZE19) et de 0,2% dans l'UE28, selon les estimations d'Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. En avril, le commerce de détail avait progressé de 0,1% dans la zone euro et de 0,5% dans l'UE28. En mai 2017 par rapport à mai 2016, l'indice des ventes de détail s'est accru de 2,6% tant dans la zone euro que dans l'UE28. Un communiqué de presse Eurostat est disponible [ici](#). *(Pour plus d'informations: Lucia Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Mirna Talko – Tel.: +32 229 87278)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Andriukaitis visits Republic of Moldova on 5 July

European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety Vytenis **Andriukaitis** is on official visit to Chisinau, Moldova on 5 July. Commissioner **Andriukaitis** will have a series of meetings, including with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova Mr Pavel Filip, Minister of Health Ms Ruxanda Glavan and Minister of Economy Mr Octavian Calmic. Meetings with the representatives of European Business Association and Medical University will also take place. Ahead of his visit Commissioner Andriukaitis said: *“My visit to Chisinau will be a good opportunity to send a signal of cooperation between the EU and Moldova also on health matters, and to discuss various topics from my portfolio, including antimicrobial resistance, tobacco control, vaccination, access to medicines, food safety, among others.”* (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: +32 229 87624)

Informal Justice and Home Affairs Council: Ministers to discuss migration, interoperability, e-justice and digital contracts in Tallinn

On Thursday and Friday, Dimitris **Avramopoulos**, Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Věra **Jourová**, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, and Julian **King**, Commissioner for the Security Union, will attend the informal meeting of Justice and Home Affairs Council in Tallinn, Estonia. The meeting will start with a discussion on migration. To steer the debate, the European Commission presented on Tuesday an [Action Plan](#) on the Central Mediterranean Route to support Italy, reduce migratory pressure and increase solidarity among Member States. The Ministers will then discuss the cooperation with Ukraine in the field of internal security. Later that day, they will focus on interoperability of EU information systems, including the [legislative proposals](#) on eu-LISA, the EU Agency responsible for the management of information systems, and exchange of criminal records of third country nationals recently put forward by the Commission. On Friday, the Ministers will exchange views on data retention, e-justice, the mutual recognition of freezing and confiscation orders' [proposal](#) and on the harmonisation of contract rules for online sales of goods in the Digital Single Market. Also on Friday, a meeting with Eastern Partnership Justice and Home Affairs Ministers will take place to discuss cooperation on the fight against organised crime, specifically cybercrime and corruption. A [press release](#) and [factsheet](#) on the Action Plan on the Central Mediterranean Route are available online. (For more information: Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Tove Ernst – Tel.: +32 229 86764; Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253)

Les Commissaires Hahn et Bulc en visite en Turquie

Johannes **Hahn**, Commissaire responsable de la politique européenne de voisinage et des négociations d'élargissement et Violeta **Bulc**, Commissaire en charge des transports, se rendront en visite officielle en [Turquie](#) afin de discuter des relations bilatérales et des défis communs auxquels font face

l'Union européenne et la Turquie. La Commissaire Violeta **Bulc** sera aujourd'hui à Istanbul où elle visitera notamment le troisième pont sur le Bosphore qui constitue un maillon clé de la future ligne ferroviaire entre Halkali et Kapikule. Celle-ci permettra d'améliorer les connexions entre l'Union Européenne et la Turquie et bénéficie à ce titre d'une contribution financière européenne à travers [l'Instrument d'aide de préadhésion](#). Demain à Ankara, elle rencontrera le ministre des Transports, de la Navigation et Communication, M. Ahmet Arslan, afin de donner un nouvel élan au dialogue sectoriel de haut-niveau UE-Turquie en matière de Transport. Elle s'entretiendra également avec le Ministre de l'économie M. Nihat Zeybekçi et le Ministre de l'Intérieur, M. Süleyman Soylu. Le Commissaire Johannes **Hahn** sera également à Ankara demain où il visitera le centre de formation de santé pour les médecins et infirmiers syriens ainsi que le centre de santé dédié aux réfugiés syriens actuellement en construction. Ces centres sont financés par la [Facilité de l'UE en faveur des réfugiés en Turquie](#). Le Commissaire rencontrera également des membres du gouvernement tels que le Premier Ministre, M. Binali Yıldırım, le Ministre pour les affaires européennes, M. Ömer Çelik, le Ministre du développement M. Lutfu Elvan, le Ministre de l'économie M. Nihat Zeybekçi et le Ministre de la santé M. Recep Akdağ. Photos et vidéos seront disponibles sur [EBS](#). (Pour plus de renseignements: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Enrico Brivio – Tel.: +32 229 56172; Alceo Smerilli – Tel.: +32 229 64887; Alexis Perier – Tel.: +32 229 6 91 43)

Commissioner Navracsics in Madrid for hearing at the Spanish Parliament

Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Tibor **Navracsics**, is in Madrid today where he is contributing to the current debate in Spain on education reform. Discussing with a Parliamentary sub-committee, the Commissioner underlined the importance of education as a key driver of economic growth and social cohesion as only good, effective and inclusive education systems can help equip people with relevant skills and enable Member States to stay competitive in the global race. He highlighted how the Commission can help countries develop effective education policies and support them in their implementation with concrete tools and instruments, whilst respecting their sovereignty over their own education systems. Earlier this morning, Commissioner **Navracsics** met Spanish Minister for Education, Culture and Sport, Iñigo Méndez de Vigo, for a working breakfast, and he will visit later today the Spanish Congress and meet Chairwoman María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos. (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50698)

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

[Mr Nikolaos Panagiotopoulos,](#)

Administrative Director of Eurojust

04 July 2017

Mr Nikolaos (Nick) Panagiotopoulos was selected and appointed Administrative Director of Eurojust during the plenary meeting of the College of Eurojust on 30 May 2017. He took up his duties on 1 July 2017.

✘ Mr Panagiotopoulos was born in Greece. He was awarded a Bachelor of Arts, Honours Political Science, Concordia University (1982), a Bachelor of Laws LLB, McGill University (1985), a Master's degree in European Administration and Policy, Panteion University (2002), and a Post-Graduate Certificate in Human Resource Management, after having successfully completed a work-based programme co-organised by the European Commission and the University of Kingston (2014).

Mr Panagiotopoulos' professional experience spans over 30 years, having served in both national and EU administrations in areas of human resources, budgeting and auditing. He chaired the Council Working Group on Staff Regulations during the Greek Presidency in 2003, ensuring that a political compromise was reached on the first major revision of the Staff Regulations in 50 years. This revision was foreseen in the White Paper for the Reform of the European Commission. In 2006, he was appointed Chairperson of the European Commission Task Force for the Simplification of Administrative Procedures, an initiative of then Vice-President, Mr Siim Kallas.

As Head of the Human Resources Unit at Eurojust, Mr Panagiotopoulos was responsible for the reorganisation of the unit and a change of its strategy, focusing on providing staff with professional customer-oriented services. As Administrative Director ad interim, he designed and implemented the first major reorganisation of the Administration, with a view to ensuring efficiencies and synergies, and focusing on supporting the operational activities of Eurojust.

Following his appointment, Mr Panagiotopoulos stated: *'Eurojust serves European citizens by ensuring the judicial dimension in cases of serious cross-border crime. In an age of rising threats from organised crime, including new and increasingly hideous forms of terrorism, cybercrime and illegal immigrant smuggling, Eurojust's role becomes even more significant. I undertake my responsibilities confident that, with the support of the College members representing their national judicial authorities and our highly committed and professional staff, we will be able to successfully face the many challenges ahead and serve justice across borders for a safer Europe.'*

Photo: © Eurojust 2017