

Remarks by President Charles Michel ahead of the G7 summit, 11-13 June 2021



Le G7 doit être capable de se mobiliser pour aborder les plus grands défis auxquels nous sommes confrontés. D'abord soutenir et promouvoir un ordre international fondé sur des règles, démontrer que les sociétés libérales démocratiques sont les mieux armées pour relever les défis, faire reculer les différentes menaces, vaincre la pandémie, soutenir un projet de prospérité économique et progresser tous ensemble dans la lutte contre le changement climatique. Le paradoxe avec cette pandémie est le suivant. D'une part, le monde a été mis au ralenti par cette pandémie. Par contre, la coopération internationale s'est considérablement renforcée et intensifiée. Et ce sera encore le cas dans les prochains jours avec cette réunion du G7, mais également avec d'autres sommets internationaux qui auront lieu, y compris à Bruxelles.

I would like to focus on four areas where G7 cooperation is particularly needed: first, global health; second, foreign policy; third, climate change; and fourth, corporatisation.

First, global health. We must make sure that the world is being vaccinated as quickly as possible. The EU is at the forefront of ensuring global equitable access to vaccines, especially to developing countries. And the G7 as a whole are major producers of vaccines. The EU is the largest exporter of COVID-19 vaccines to the world. So far, we have exported more than 270 million doses and we are a top contributor to the Covax facility, with over 2.8 billion euros. We will donate at least 100 million doses by the end of the year. We must also strengthen manufacturing capacities around the world. So we will invest one billion euros to boost vaccine production in Africa. We are also ready to work in Latin America to develop projects in this part of the world.

The question of intellectual property rights will likely be raised in this context. A patent waiver might sound good, but it's no silver bullet. The TRIPS agreement already offers flexibility, and we want to focus on concrete proposals such as promoting voluntary licencing and knowledge transfers and patent pooling on mutually agreed terms. G7 leaders will also discuss how best to prepare for future pandemics, building on the Rome Declaration. And this idea of a treaty is now supported by more than 60 countries. The World Health Assembly has just decided two weeks ago to start examining such a treaty. It has taken the unprecedented decision to convene a special World Health Assembly in November to legally decide on the launch of formal negotiations.

Second important topic, foreign policy. The G7, together with four guest countries, Australia, India, South Africa and South Korea, will reaffirm our belief in open societies, multilateralism and democratic values. These values

underpin the actions we take, the policies we develop, and the partnerships we build. In this context, Russia will be one of the main topics. G7 partners share similar views on Russia's disruptive activities. The EU condemns illegal, provocative and disruptive Russian activities against the EU, its member states and beyond. I stressed this to President Putin in a phone call this week. On the conflict in eastern Ukraine, I will repeat that we do not see Russia as a mediator, but as a party to the conflict. We do not and will not recognise Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea.

At last month's European Council, EU leaders took rapid action against the authorities in Belarus for the forced landing of a flight. This was an attack on democracy, the media and freedom of speech, but also civilian aviation safety. And this robust action has set the tone for the international response to this incident. We once again call on the Belarus authorities to immediately release Roman Protasevich and Sofia Sapega and all political prisoners. At the summit we will, of course, also discuss our complex relationship with China. The EU's approach is clear: China is a partner, a competitor and a potential systemic rival. We must strike the right balance for our best interests between engagement and standing firmly by our values. We have to work with China to address global challenges, like climate change, or regional issues, like Afghanistan or the Iran nuclear deal. And economic relations with China are important for economic recovery. At the same time, we will defend ourselves against practises that pose security risks, distort the level playing field, or are incompatible with our values. We will continue to stand up to defend human rights and the rule of law in Xinjiang, Hong Kong and elsewhere.

La promotion de nos valeurs fondamentales, la défense des droits humains, c'est ce que nous voulons faire aussi quand nous sommes engagés, par exemple, dans la Corne de l'Afrique et spécialement en Éthiopie. Nous dénonçons des violations extrêmement graves des droits humains et nous faisons appel à la mobilisation pour donner les accès humanitaires. Nous soutenons la demande pour des enquêtes internationales afin de qualifier les éléments graves de violations auxquels nous sommes confrontés sur le terrain, et de donner les conséquences que méritent ces événements.

Un mot maintenant sur la question du financement du développement, et spécialement les relations avec le continent africain. Nous appelons à la mise en place d'une nouvelle alliance avec le continent africain, une forme de plan Marshall avec l'Afrique. C'est le sens d'un appel que nous avons soutenu pour mobiliser à la fois le débat en lien avec les remises et les restructurations de dette, premier point pour générer des capacités de financement. Deuxième élément, pour poursuivre le débat sur les droits de tirage spéciaux dans le cadre du Fonds Monétaire International, nous avons été plusieurs à exprimer l'objectif de 100 milliards qui doivent pouvoir être réalloués vers le continent africain. Mais il faut également être engagés pour renforcer la gouvernance et veiller à ce que la mobilisation des ressources domestiques soit plus forte au service de projets de développement économique, et de projets de cohésion sociale dans le continent africain.

Quelques mots rapidement sur l'engagement climatique. Vous savez que c'est au cœur des priorités de l'Union européenne. Vous savez aussi que nous avons été

constants, tenaces, déterminés pour tenir en haut de l'agenda international ce sujet : la neutralité climat à l'horizon 2050. Et le renforcement de nos objectifs à l'horizon 2030, eu égard à cet engagement climatique, est aussi un levier pour plus d'innovation, pour plus de prospérité et pour garantir le respect pour notre planète. La biodiversité est un sujet pour lequel nous sommes également engagés. Nous aurons aussi l'occasion d'aborder cette importante question.

En conclusion, vous l'avez compris, il y a trois points clés à nos yeux pour ce sommet. Le premier, c'est l'affirmation de nos valeurs démocratiques, de l'État de droit. C'est l'affirmation de l'ambition des États démocratiques d'agir et pas simplement de réagir, d'agir pour promouvoir nos valeurs. Le deuxième élément, c'est travailler ensemble sur le terrain de la prospérité, de la fiscalité internationale. L'impôt des sociétés et les progrès qui sont réalisés après la réunion des ministres des Finances du G7, la question du "level playing field", la question d'un prix du carbone, sont autant de thèmes qui devront être débattus. Et le troisième point, c'est travailler avec nos partenaires de façon intelligente, de façon positive et constructive, pour garantir de la stabilité, pour réduire les risques de conflits, pour mieux prévenir les menaces. Et lorsque nous sommes confrontés à des conflits, pour tenter de trouver des solutions durables et les plus inclusives possible.

Voilà les quelques éléments qui forment le cadre de nos travaux dans le cas de cette première réunion du G7 à laquelle nous allons participer de manière physique. Je vous remercie.

[Visit the meeting page](#)

ESAs publish amended technical standards on the mapping of ECAIs

The Joint Committee of the three European Supervisory Authorities (EBA, EIOPA and ESMA – ESAs) published today two amended Implementing Technical Standards (ITS) on the mapping of credit assessments of External Credit Assessment Institutions (ECAIs).

The amendments reflect:

- the recognition of two new credit rating agencies (CRAs);
- the outcome of a monitoring exercise on the adequacy of existing mappings; and
- the deregistration of a number of CRAs.

The ITS are part of the EU Single Rulebook for banking and insurance aimed at creating a safe and sound regulatory framework consistently applicable across

the European Union (EU).

Since the adoption in 2019 of the ITS on the mapping of credit assessments of ECAIs, two additional CRAs have been recognised and a number of CRAs have been de-registered. The ITS have therefore, been amended to reflect the allocation of appropriate risk weights to the newly established ECAIs, and to remove the reference to the de-registered ECAIs. Furthermore, the amendments reflect the outcome of a monitoring exercise on the adequacy of the existing mappings, based on the additional quantitative and qualitative information collected after the original Implementing Regulation entered into force. In particular, the ESAs propose to change the Credit Quality Step (CQS) allocation for two ECAIs, and to introduce new credit rating scales for nine ECAIs.

The ESAs also published individual draft mapping reports illustrating how the methodology was applied to produce the amended mappings, in line with the mandate from the Capital Requirements Regulation (CRR).

[Go to the ITS](#)

Legal Basis and background

The proposed revised draft ITSs have been developed according to Article 136 (1) and (3) of Regulation 575/2013 (CRR) and of Article 109 (a) of Directive 2009/138/EC (Solvency II Directive), which state that revised draft ITS shall be submitted by the ESAs, where necessary.

The ITS, developed by the ESAs and adopted by the European Commission on 7 and 11 October 2016, aim at ensuring that only credit ratings issued by External Credit Assessment Institutions (ECAIs) – those credit rating agencies (CRAs) registered under Regulation (EC) No 1060/2009 or central banks issuing credit ratings exempt from the application of the same regulation – can be used for calculating capital requirements of financial institutions and insurance undertakings. To this aim, the three ESAs have specified an approach that establishes the correspondence -or mapping- between credit assessments and the credit quality steps defined in the EU prudential regulation for banking (Capital Requirements Regulation – CRR) and EU insurance regulation (Solvency II Directive).

[EASO publishes a COI report: Syria – Situation of returnees from abroad](#)

Today, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) published a Country of Origin Information (COI) report titled "[Syria: Situation of returnees from abroad](#)".

This report is part of a series of Syria COI reports produced in 2021. The

reports provide information relevant for international protection status determination for Syrian applicants, and in particular for use in updating EASO's country guidance development on Syria.



In both January and February 2021, Syrians lodged more than 10 000 applications for international protection in the EU+.^[1] While these were the highest numbers since 2016, they included close to 5 000 repeated applications (in the same reporting country) in both months, which was considerably higher than earlier. Over the last six months (September 2020 – February 2021), total applications by Syrians almost doubled compared to the previous six-month period. Syrian applications pending at first instance have increased by 38 % over the last six months, to over 50 400 at the end of February 2021. Over this period, the EU+ recognition rate for Syrians was 86 % (relatively stable compared to the preceding six months).

The report, [EASO COI Report: Syria – Situation of returnees from abroad](#), focuses on a number of topics relating to the issue of return of Syrians from Europe and Syria's neighbouring countries (Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan) to government-held Syria, including the consequences of having exited Syria illegally and having applied for asylum abroad, the return procedures for Syrian citizens who live outside Syria, potential obstacles to return, and possible treatment upon return in government-held Syria. The report provides information primarily on recent trends, with updated information on 2020 and 2021 where available.

The report was drafted by the Country of Origin Information (COI) Unit of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs^[2], in accordance with the [EASO COI Report Methodology](#), and was reviewed by Denmark, Danish Immigration Service (DIS), Hungary, National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing Documentation Centre and the EASO COI Sector.

Any further information may be obtained from the European Asylum Support Office on the following email address: press@easo.europa.eu

Notes

[1] This overview is based on EASO Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data. Data for February 2021 were missing for two EU+ countries and January data for one country.

[2] In Dutch known as Afdeling Ambtsberichten (AB).

Keeping the UEFA EURO 2020 championship safe



An operational centre set up at Europol to support public safety during the tournament

Between 10 June and 12 July 2021, Europol will host an operational centre to support safety and security during the UEFA EURO 2020 football championship. Coordinated by the Dutch Police, the International Police Cooperation Centre (IPCC) of the National Football Contact Points will host about 40 liaison officers from 22 participating and hosting countries. This special operational set-up is created to enable swift cooperation and provide the necessary operational support for a safe and secure championship.

The IPCC will serve as a central information hub for national law enforcement authorities. To that end, Europol has created a special Task Force EURO 2020 to enable keeping officers on the ground 24/7 to easily exchange information and swiftly receive leads on ongoing investigations. The operational activities will focus on public safety and criminal threats, which may threaten security during the tournament. Enforcement authorities will target threats such as cybercrime, terrorism, match-fixing, trafficking counterfeit goods including fake COVID-19 certificates, and other intellectual property crimes.

Europol's Executive Director, Catherine De Bolle, said: 'The UEFA EURO 2020 championship is a unique tournament both for football and for law enforcement. With 24 national teams playing in 11 cities across Europe, teaming up is paramount for the safety of the tournament. Europol will enable this cooperation by hosting the dedicated operational centre. Backed by Europol's capabilities, officers on the ground will be better prepared to ensure a smooth and safe championship.'

The IPCC's chief of staff, Max Daniel, said: 'Combining information about public order issues, supporters, places of stay and travel movements by road, air and rail results in an up-to-date and integrated picture. Being able to easily share that information between countries has proven to be very valuable in the past. Police intelligence officers of all participating countries are doing their utmost to ensure that this unique UEFA EURO 2020 championship will be as safe as possible.'

IPCC UEFA EURO 2020 Participants (total number):

EU Member States: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands.

Non-EU Countries: Azerbaijan, North Macedonia, Russian Federation, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

Organisations: INTERPOL and UEFA

[Operation Jumita: 1.6 tonnes of cocaine and € 16.5 million confiscated in largest cash seizure from a criminal organisation in Spain](#)



The Spanish Guardia Civil, with the support of Europol and its [European Economic and Financial Crime Centre](#) (EFECC), dismantled a criminal network that trafficked cocaine from South America to the Port of Algeciras in Spain. The network was capable of controlling the maritime traffic of containers coming from South America.

The network consisted of different employees who worked in various areas at the Port of Algeciras. These employees included a worker from a port container terminal, two workers from the Border Inspection Post, four from Auxiliary Maritime Services (SAM), and several stevedores, freight forwarders, consignees and carriers.

As a result of the operation:

- 29 people have been arrested;
- More than 1 600 kg of cocaine has been seized;
- More than € 16.5 million has been seized.

The Guardia Civil initiated the investigation in August 2020. On 29 April this year, intelligence was received suggesting the criminal network intended to introduce a large consignment of cocaine hidden among frozen mackerel and directed towards the Port of Algeciras.

A Spaniard, who was on the run from Spanish justice, was arrested in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The arrest was carried out under a European Arrest Warrant (EAW) issued by the judicial authority and executed with the support of Dutch police officers. This individual had been on the run since 2017 due to his involvement in another drug introduction operation.

Due to the criminal network's international connections, the case was supported by the EFECC at Europol, supporting the economic investigation against the network and the alleged links of corruption with analytical and operational support. Two analysts were seconded to Spain to carry out the real-time cross-checking of data during the action day.