

Statement by President Juncker at the joint press conference with Donald Tusk, President of the European Council ahead of the G20 summit

Mesdames et messieurs,

Nous sommes – Président Tusk et moi-même, très heureux d'être en Argentine aujourd'hui. L'Argentine pour nous n'est pas – comment dire – un pays neutre, mais un allié. Nous l'aimons d'autant plus que ce pays a dû et su traverser, ramener sur la période d'une décennie et demie, plusieurs crises qui auraient pu être vitales quant à ses chances de survie. L'Argentine, grâce au courage des Argentins, a su surmonter toutes les difficultés et les embûches qu'elle a trouvées sur son chemin.

Il y a dix ans, le G20 s'est réuni pour la toute première fois à Washington puisque nous pensions à l'époque – Européens, Américains, d'autres – qu'il fallait une action concertée pour que nous puissions répondre dans de bonnes conditions à la crise financière mondiale qui avait plongé l'Europe dans une des plus graves crises de l'après-guerre.

A l'époque, on s'est demandé si l'Europe serait à même de relever le défi. Nous constatons aujourd'hui qu'elle a su le faire puisque l'Europe a renoué avec la croissance et avec la création d'emploi. L'Europe a connu 22 trimestres de croissance consécutive et d'affilée, une croissance qui aujourd'hui s'étend aujourd'hui à tous les Etats membres de l'Union européenne. La croissance est de retour et elle est de retour partout en Europe.

Plus que 15 millions d'emplois ont été créés depuis le pire moment de la crise, je veux parler de l'année 2013. 239 millions d'emplois sont réservés aujourd'hui aux Européens. C'est le taux d'emploi le plus élevé que nous ayons connu en Europe et nous nous en félicitons d'autant plus que le chômage continue sa correction vers le bas, et d'autant plus que le chômage des jeunes – bien que trop élevé – connaît des niveaux aujourd'hui non pas supportables, mais qui se comparent favorablement au niveau que nous avons connu au début de la crise d'ajustement.

Nous avons pu mettre fin à la panne d'investissement qui a marqué le début du mandat de la Commission. 360 milliards d'euros d'investissement supplémentaires ont été générés par le plan d'investissement qui à l'époque portait mon nom. Nous avons pu faire cela parce que nous avons mis en place un triangle vertueux: assainissement budgétaire, réformes structurelles, relance des investissements. Cela a été possible parce que le marché intérieur bien qu'incomplet, bien qu'inachevé fonctionne convenablement bien

et parce que l'euro, deuxième monnaie de réserve mondiale, appuie sur un plan monétaire et plus largement économique, les efforts qui sont les nôtres.

We have learned one lesson during the last ten years and this is the principle that no one country, no one region can go it alone. We are, and we will do it during these G20 meetings, of the opinion that there is no alternative to multilateral cooperation. Putting into place this multilateral mechanism having in mind that no one can do on their own was in fact the basic reason which led to the putting into place of the G20. Multilateralism was what the G20 was made for. This case for multilateralism and working together has never been stronger than it is today.

We, as Europeans, do believe in an open and fair economy – that means trade. Trade with the rest of the world is more important than ever for Europe, supporting 36 million jobs across Europe, two thirds more than in 2000. European exports support almost 20 million jobs outside the European Union, including 1 million jobs in the United States alone.

We have launched months ago a new alliance for sustainable investment and jobs with Africa to help boost trade between our two continents and create up to 10 million jobs in Africa in the next five years. Do not underestimate the dimension of our neighbourhood with Africa. Africa is becoming more and more important, and we will always be on the side of our African friends.

Of course we have to develop the rules we have adopted years ago. We are on our way to reform the World Trade Organisation. We are doing this in close cooperation with the United States of America. When it comes to climate change, we will repeat – President Tusk and myself – our commitment to stick to the agreement we have concluded years ago in Paris.

So thank you to the Argentinian government and its President with whom we had a meeting yesterday morning, for the way they are organising in the best conditions possible, this two days' meeting.

Thank you.

Questions and Answers

Q1 Regarding the EU-U.S. discussions on trade and the non-imposition so far of tariffs on cars, do you expect to have direct talks with President Trump? And do you not fear a turn of events in this issue, particularly since the announcement of General Motors to close plants in the U.S.? And a second question: Since you had this very successful meeting in July with President Trump – successful because results are lasting until today which is quite a success with this President –, would you have advice to him and President Xi for their important meeting tomorrow?

President Juncker: Yes, I had a short meeting, an exchange of views with the U.S. President the other day, 11 November, in Paris. I have noted with – not happiness – but with a certain degree of satisfaction that nothing has changed between the U.S. and the European Union since our last meeting at the end of July in Washington. We will find in the course of the day and in the

margins of the meeting an opportunity to reconfirm this mutual commitment that we have concluded back in July. We are discussing these issues with our American friends like a European Union, which is a strong one, which is the biggest internal market of the world. And I have good news for the American President because according to our commitments back in July, the exports of Liquefied Natural Gas from the U.S. to the European Union have increased by 52% and the imports on the European side of soybeans by 100%, which is clearly showing that we are sticking to our commitments. Am I the one who could give advice to the U.S. President and to the Chinese President? Yes. But I will do it when discussing with them.

Q2 These days, you also continue the negotiations on the Italian budget. You are going to meet Prime Minister Conte today. Do you think there is still the possibility to avoid the Excessive Deficit Procedure and what kind of effort do you think is necessary from the Italian side? An important cut on the deficit, and when I say important, I mean more than 0.2? What are you expecting?

President Juncker: I will have a meeting with Giuseppe Conte in the course of the day or tomorrow – I do not know exactly when it will happen. I had a constructive meeting with the Italian Prime Minister last Saturday in Brussels. We made some progress. We are not at war with Italy. I want Italy to be the Italy that Italy always was, inspiring Europe and not turning its back on Europe. The atmosphere is good, we are making progress and we should not dramatize this issue. We are with Italy if Italy is with us.