

Daily News 13 / 11 / 2018

COLLEGE MEETING: European Commission reports on progress in Bulgaria and Romania under the Co-operation and Verification Mechanism

The European Commission issued today its latest reports on steps taken by Bulgaria and Romania to meet their commitments on judicial reform and the fight against corruption, and in the case of Bulgaria organised crime, in the context of the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (CVM). The report on Bulgaria looks at the progress made over the past year to meet the final 17 recommendations issued by the Commission in the January 2017 report and positively notes Bulgaria's continued efforts and determination to implement those recommendations. The Commission is confident that **Bulgaria** – if it pursues the current positive trend – will be able to fulfil all the remaining recommendations and thereby the outstanding benchmarks. This will enable the CVM process for Bulgaria to then be concluded before the end of this Commission's mandate – in line with the orientation given by President Jean-Claude **Juncker** when he started his term of office. For **Romania**, the report notes that while the country has taken some steps to implement the final 12 recommendations issued by the Commission in January 2017, recent developments have reversed the course of progress and called into question the positive assessment made back in January 2017. The recommendations are no longer sufficient to meet the orientation given by President Jean-Claude **Juncker** to conclude the CVM process before the end of this Commission's mandate. Therefore, today's report sets out a number of additional recommendations for immediate follow up. The immediate implementation of the additional measures is essential to put the reform process back on track and resume the path towards the conclusion of the CVM as set out in the January 2017 report. Press releases are available online on the reports for [Bulgaria](#) and [Romania](#), and a [Memo](#) provides more information about the CVM process and the benchmarks and recommendations. The CVM Reports are available online [here](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Kasia Kolanko –Tel.: +32 229 6344)

COLLEGE MEETING: Brexit: European Commission intensifies preparedness work and outlines contingency action plan in the event of a no deal scenario with the UK

The European Commission has today published detailed information on its ongoing preparedness and contingency work in the event of a no deal scenario in the Article 50 negotiations with the United Kingdom. First, the Commission has published a [Communication](#), which outlines a limited number of contingency actions in priority areas that could be implemented if no agreement is reached with the United Kingdom. This follows a first preparedness [Communication published on 19 July 2018](#). Secondly, the College of Commissioners has adopted two legislative proposals to amend existing EU law in the area of [visas](#) and [energy efficiency](#) to take account of the UK's withdrawal. These targeted legislative adaptations are necessary,

irrespective of the outcome of the withdrawal negotiations. Thirdly, [a notice](#) has been published providing extensive information on the changes that will occur – in the event of no deal – for persons travelling between the EU and the UK, and vice versa, after 29 March 2019, or for businesses providing services in relation to such travel. It includes information on such things as border checks and customs controls, driving licences and pet passports, amongst others. While the European Commission is working hard for a deal, and continues to put citizens first in the negotiations, the UK's withdrawal will undoubtedly cause disruption – for example in business supply chains – whether or not there is a deal. Contingency measures cannot remedy the full effects of this disruption. In the event of a no deal scenario, these disruptions will be even more significant and the speed of preparations would have to increase significantly. Contingency measures in narrowly defined areas may, exceptionally, be needed in order to protect the interests and the integrity of the EU. For more information, see [here](#). (For more information: Margaritis Schinas – Tel.: +32 229 60524; Mina Andreeva – Tel.: +32 229 91382; Alexander Winterstein – Tel.: +32 229 93265; Daniel Ferrie – Tel.: +32 229 86500)

Protection des consommateurs: la Commission européenne et le Canada signent un accord pour échanger des informations sur les produits dangereux

La Commission européenne et le Canada signent aujourd'hui un accord permettant la mise en place d'un système d'échange d'informations sur les produits dangereux. Ce nouveau système permettra de connecter le [système d'alerte rapide pour les produits dangereux de l'Union européenne](#) et le [système canadien](#), facilitant ainsi le travail des Etats membres lorsqu'il s'agit de retirer les produits dangereux du marché européen et de se tenir au courant de nouveaux risques pour les consommateurs. Věra **Jourová**, commissaire en charge de la justice, des consommateurs et de l'égalité des genres, a dit: "Le commerce en ligne ne connaît pas de frontières. Une meilleure coopération internationale facilitera le travail des autorités en permettant à l'information de circuler rapidement. Les consommateurs européens pourront ainsi acheter des produits en toute sécurité." Cet accord est l'une des nombreuses conséquences de l'Accord économique et commercial global (CETA) de l'Union européenne avec le Canada. La signature de cet accord se déroule dans le cadre de la [Semaine Internationale de la sécurité des produits](#) qui rassemble des experts de tous les pays dans le but d'améliorer la protection des consommateurs. En ouvrant la semaine, la commissaire **Jourová** a annoncé le lancement en 2019 d'un prix pour la sécurité des produits qui récompensera les initiatives des entreprises sur ce sujet. Les entreprises, dont les PME, pourront déposer leur candidature à partir de janvier 2019. La signature de l'accord UE – Canada pourra être suivie [en ligne](#) et sera retransmise sur [EBS](#). Vous trouverez plus d'informations sur le système d'alerte rapide de l'Union européenne [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659)

La Commission félicite le Parlement européen pour l'adoption des dossiers clés du paquet "Une Énergie propre pour tous les Européens"

Le Parlement européen a approuvé aujourd'hui de nouvelles règles sur les énergies renouvelables, l'efficacité énergétique et la gouvernance de l'Union

de l'énergie – une étape importante qui permettra à l'Union européenne et à ses États membres de s'engager pleinement dans la transition vers une économie moderne et une énergie propre, dans le respect de ses engagements sous l'Accord de Paris. Le commissaire européen chargé de l'action pour le climat et de l'énergie, Miguel **Arias Cañete**, a déclaré: *“Quatre propositions sur huit du paquet ‘Une l'énergie propre pour tous les Européens’ ont maintenant reçu l'accord final du Parlement, ce qui montre que l'Union européenne est sur la bonne voie et que nous tiendrons nos engagements pris en début de mandat par la Commission Juncker. Notre engagement ambitieux pour une énergie propre en Europe et la mise en œuvre de l'Accord de Paris se concrétise par des lois telles que celles votées aujourd'hui. J'appelle maintenant les autorités de nos États membres à faire preuve de la même ambition et du même engagement lors de la présentation de leur projets de Plans nationaux intégrés en matière d'énergie et de climat qui doivent être soumis à la Commission d'ici la fin de l'année.”* Une fois pleinement transposés, les trois textes législatifs adoptés aujourd'hui, en combinaison avec nos politiques relatives au climat déjà adoptés, conduiront à des réductions d'émissions plus importantes que prévu pour l'ensemble de l'Union européenne – environ 45% d'ici 2030 par rapport à 1990. Le communiqué de presse complet sera disponible en ligne en [EN](#), [FR](#), [DE](#). (For more information: Anna-Kaisa Itkonen – Tel.: +32 229 56186; Lynn Rietdorf – Tel.: +32 229 74959)

Latvia becomes the 19th EU country to join eHealth cooperation for personalised healthcare

Yesterday Latvia signed the European Declaration [on linking genomic databases across borders](#) that aims to improve understanding and prevention of disease and allow for more personalised treatments, in particular for rare diseases, cancer and brain related diseases. The Declaration is an agreement of cooperation between the countries that want to provide secure and authorised cross-border access to national and regional banks of genetic and other health data, in accordance with all EU data protection rules. The goal is also to keep the EU at the global forefront of personalised medicine, at the same time as fostering scientific output and industrial competitiveness. Latvia is the 19th signatory of the Declaration, which was originally launched on 10 April 2018 during the [Digital Day](#). The other EU Member States that have signed it are Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK. In April 2018, the Commission put forward an [action plan](#) to secure healthcare data while fostering European cooperation. For more information about the European digital health initiative see [here](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Marietta Grammenou- Tel.: +32 229 83583)

Mergers: Commission clears joint venture by E.ON and Clever

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the

proposed creation of a joint venture between E.ON SE of Germany and Clever A/S of Denmark. The joint venture will develop and operate ultra-fast charging (UFC) stations for electric vehicles in Norway, Sweden and Denmark. E.ON is an energy company with activities in energy networks, renewable energies and customer solutions, including electricity and gas retail supply. Clever is an electric mobility service provider, active in charging solutions for companies, public institutions and end customers. The Commission concluded that the proposed merger would raise no competition concerns due to the negligible actual and foreseen activities of the joint venture in the European Economic Area. 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.9049](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Agriculture: EU grants protection to two traditional wines from the Netherlands: Vijlen and Oolde

Two Dutch traditional wine-types – Vijlen and Oolde – have been included this week into the [EU register of protected designations of origin](#) (PDO). This means their respective names can as of now only be used within the EU market by the local producers following traditional specific production methods. “Vijlen” comes from the wine growing area in the south of Netherlands, at the border with Germany and Belgium, while “Oolde” is produced more to the north, in the province of Gelderland. They can both be produced as red, white or rosé, plain or sparkling, using grape varieties well-adapted to the Dutch climate. “Oolde” is also produced as a liquor wine. The specific quality of both wines is strongly influenced by the interaction between the climate, soil, cultivation and vinification methods. More information on [Vijlen](#) and [Oolde](#) are available in the EU official journal. (For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: + 32 229 56185; Clémence Robin – Tel.: +32 229 52509)

Commission's Chief Scientific Advisors present advice on the regulation of gene editing

The European Commission's Scientific Advice Mechanism ([SAM](#)) Group of Chief Scientific Advisors has today published a [statement](#) providing ‘a scientific perspective on the regulatory status of products derived from gene editing, and the implications for the GMO Directive’. The advisors recommend that the GMO Directive should be revised to reflect current knowledge and scientific evidence, and as part of a broad dialogue with relevant stakeholders and the public at large. Carlos **Moedas**, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, said: “Gene-editing is a critical technology with an enormous potential to improve human health and preserve the environment. I therefore welcome the statement from our Chief Scientific Advisors which will contribute to a well-informed debate on the regulatory framework needed to maintain high levels of protection while enabling innovations that contribute to the environment and wellbeing. Their statement also provides a valuable

*input into our reflections on future proofing regulation so that our laws can keep up with our labs.” Vytėnis **Andriukaitis**, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, said: “The EU is a champion of the highest standards of food safety. As a scientist myself, I see great merit in keeping pace with innovations so that society can benefit from new science and technology. To make the best out of such developments, I encourage a broad reflection and discussion on how we, as a society, want to go forward with such issues as gene editing.” The Scientific Advice Mechanism was established in October 2015 to support the Commission with high quality, timely and independent scientific advice for its policy-making activities. More information is available [here](#). (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 12 69; Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182).*

STATEMENTS

European Pillar of Social Rights: Statement by President Juncker, Vice-President Dombrovskis and Commissioner Thyssen one year following its proclamation

About one year ago, on 17 November 2017, the leaders of the European Union solemnly proclaimed the European Pillar of [Social Rights at the Social Summit for fair jobs and growth in Gothenburg](#), Sweden. Celebrating this first anniversary of the Pillar, President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude **Juncker**, Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue, Valdis **Dombrovskis**, and Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne **Thyssen**, said: “The European Pillar of Social Rights is designed to make a positive difference in the everyday life of all Europeans. In the Commission we are using all the tools at our disposal to make the principles of the Pillar a reality. [...] But several of our proposals are still under negotiation between the European Parliament and the Member States. This concerns in particular the [European Labour Authority](#), our initiative on [work-life balance for parents and carers](#), the new [Directive on transparent and predictable working conditions](#), and the [reform of the rules on social security coordination](#). It includes also our [proposal for the next European budget to help the Member States invest in people](#). The European Social Fund Plus alone is to be equipped with more than €100 billion over the period 2021 to 2027. To deliver on our joint promise, we must make swift progress on all these proposals before the European elections in May 2019. Together with the European Parliament, Member States, social partners and civil society, we are committed to safeguard and promote social rights that better support fair and well-functioning labour markets and welfare systems now and in the future.” The full statement can be found [here](#). A factsheet on the Pillar of Social Rights is available [here](#). A factsheet recapping the Commission’s initiatives in the social field is published [here](#). To mark the first anniversary of the Pillar of Social Rights, President **Juncker** and Commissioner **Thyssen** have taken part in a short celebratory event this morning, organised by the European Trade Union Confederation, in the European Parliament in Strasbourg. On Friday 16 November, Commissioner **Thyssen** will participate in a breakfast discussion on the European Pillar of Social Rights, organised by the Permanent Representation of Romania to the EU, which will be [streamed live on Facebook](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand– Tel.: +32 229 62253; Sara

Soumillion – Tel.: + 32 229 67094)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Avramopoulos in Ethiopia to discuss cooperation on migration with African partners [updated 13 November 2018 at 16:44]

Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris **Avramopoulos** is in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia today and tomorrow for bilateral meetings with Ethiopian President Sahle-Work Zewde, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, Foreign Affairs Minister Workneh Gebeyehu and Minister of Peace Muferiat Kamil. Moreover, Commissioner Avramopoulos will open the Valletta Senior Officials Meeting, also taking place in Addis Ababa. The meeting brings together representatives from African and European countries, as well as relevant regional and international organisations, to strengthen EU-Africa cooperation on migration. It is part of the regular follow-up to the 2015 [Valletta Summit on Migration](#), when European and African Leaders met and agreed on a set of operational deliverables outlined in the [Joint Valletta Action Plan](#). A press conference will take place tomorrow at 9:15 CET and will be available on [EBS](#). Commissioner Avramopoulos will also exchange views with African Union Commission Chairperson Moussa Faki, and meet bilaterally Ministers of Foreign Affairs of several African countries who come together in Addis Ababa on the occasion of the extraordinary African Union Summit. (For more information: *Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Markus Lammert – Tel.: +32 229 80423*)

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

[Speech by President Donald Tusk: “November 11, 2018: Poland and Europe. Two Anniversaries, Two Lessons”](#)

Press contacts

[Preben Aamann](#)

European Council President Spokesperson
+32 2 281 51 50
+32 476 85 05 43

I am very moved to have the opportunity to meet with so many circles of people for whom the Freedom Games are the place for an annual meeting which is important not only for those taking part, but also for everyone who believes that freedom in Poland has a future.

This day is especially significant for me because it was exactly 40 years ago, minus one day, that I first had the opportunity to take part in a demonstration on the anniversary of independence – which was illegal at the time – beneath the Jan Sobieski III statue in Gdańsk. 40 years ago.

I remember that day very well because two weeks later, I married my wife. As you can imagine, those events of 11 November ended in what was for me my first personal experience of political repression. But it wasn't the citizens' militia or the security service, just the reaction of my then fiancée when I was late because of the demonstration and I attempted to give politics as an excuse for my lateness to our last date as an engaged couple. If my wife had known at the time that this explanation would pop up so often over the next 40 years, then my personal history might have looked completely different.

That day I wondered – I was a history student back then, and I was passionate about the history of, what else, the 20-year inter-war period and the life of the politician Józef Piłsudski – I wondered whether I was expecting freedom and independence, whether I was expecting the same sort of miraculous conspiracy of events as those which, 60 years earlier – it was then the 60th anniversary – had led to Poland gaining its independence. I wondered whether something that was impossible could once again turn out to be possible, like it had in 1918. Because exactly what had happened then really had been impossible.

First of all, no-one could have dreamed (although some poets and writers did manage to a little) that all at once, at the same time, the three partitioning powers would collapse.

Perhaps no-one could imagine a nation which had shed so much blood, since we too suffered tragic casualties during WWI, which were all the more tragic because Polish soldiers were fighting in the armies of three occupiers – almost half a million victims. So it seemed even more unlikely that we could win, especially on the battlefield, in the great clash that was the war with the Russian Bolsheviks, but also in the uprisings against Germany in defence of and for the establishment of our new borders. To win the conflicts with Russia and Germany at practically the same time seemed utterly improbable.

And there was also a third, you could almost say political, miracle: that after everything, after a brutal war, after a dramatic effort in the days leading to independence, but above all after 123 years of partitions, we managed to stitch those three mismatched pieces together into a single Polish state.

What was necessary to make it happen? Most certainly: shared political goals which were universally acknowledged as our own. Poles at the time had no more differences than they do today – and to be honest, there were a lot of reasons why they should differ more among themselves than they do now. But at that critical point in time there was never any doubt as to what the common denominator of political goals was at a more general level. And that, of course, was independence and the establishment of a Polish state.

There was outstanding leadership. And here we are of course talking about figures like Daszyński, Dmowski, Korfanty and Witos. But also we always really think of that one symbolic figure, who was actually, not just symbolically, the father of Polish independence: Józef Piłsudski.

We also had wise and very active diplomacy. At Versailles, the final verdict on the statehood, the shape of the statehood and the borders of Poland would have been different if it hadn't been for extraordinarily active and thoughtful diplomacy. And here I am not just thinking of Roman Dmowski. I always hold my fellow citizen Antoni Abraham close to my heart, the Kashubian who also went and found his way to Versailles so that he could – as the story goes, but I like such positive stories – loudly bang his fist on the table and tell Lloyd George, 'There is no Poland without Kashubia'.

Yes, at that time we were lucky enough to have people who stood up for Poland, but we also had something that is invaluable in such situations: a willingness to make sacrifices – the war with the Bolsheviks alone cost us 60 000 lives. Good diplomacy and good leadership would come to nothing without sacrifice and determination. And good luck was also important – let us not delude ourselves, we had a great deal of good luck of the geopolitical kind. After all, it has been known since Napoleonic times that, in politics, if someone does not have good luck, it will not lead to any serious problems until later,; let us therefore always seek out people who have good luck, or who at the very least believe that they can be lucky.

Today, on the eve of the milestone 100th anniversary of independence, few remember that we are also celebrating other milestone anniversaries this November, all of which are directly connected to that experience. It is precisely 30 years since the televised debate between Lech Wałęsa and Alfred Miodowicz. A debate which in fact paved the way for the Round Table and which in some sense symbolised the end of the Communist era in Poland. In the decade since the moment when I stood quite helpless at the foot of the Sobieski monument in Gdańsk – there were barely several hundred of us there at that time, and surely – like me – no-one believed that such a miracle would take place in our lifetime – over the course of those ten years we lived through the amazing Polish experience that was the first Solidarity movement.

In fact, in 1988 something happened that was also impossible – and in some sense the circumstances surrounding the events that took place in the late 1980s were similar to those seen in November 1918. The impossible became possible, because Solidarity turned out to be as strong a community of general goals as the Polish people had been way back then, one hundred years ago. We had good leadership. Lech Wałęsa proved himself to be an outstanding political leader, emerging as the true father of Polish freedom. We also benefited from a shrewd (albeit not national this time round) diplomatic service, for weren't Pope John Paul II in the Vatican, Zbigniew Brzeziński in Washington and Jerzy Giedroyc in Paris diplomats who upheld Polish freedom and Polish independence? Here we could mention many names of people who have demonstrated that this legacy of Polish politicians and diplomats from the times of 1918 Versailles also placed them under an obligation, from which they have graduated with flying colours. In addition, we enjoyed good luck

from a geopolitical point of view – what had been such a fundamental source of our independence in 1918 was also bound to accompany us in 1989. Before our very eyes, and with our (albeit modest) participation, the Soviet Union and the entire Communist bloc disintegrated. The Soviet leaders took decisions, one after the other, on the basis of seemingly irrational viewpoints. Just as in 1918, we exploited that geopolitical good luck to the full. It taught us a lesson which to my mind is unquestionable with regard to Poland in 2018 – first, we must remember (as also pointed out by Józef Piłsudski) that independence is as difficult to achieve and secure as it is to maintain. In any case, the lesson of the twenty-year period which ended tragically in September 1939 is the clearest proof of that.

And here I am coming to the crux of the matter – today we are not condemned to passively observing geopolitical events taking place around us and around Poland. We have all the tools and instruments, we have the potential and the historical circumstances to enable us to ensure that the geopolitical good luck with which we have been favoured twice in our history lasts for as long as possible in our times too. The clearest expression of that geopolitical serendipity is, of course, our presence in the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance. However, let us remember the warnings which were relevant then – 100 years ago, 60 years ago, ten years ago – and which will probably remain relevant always. We must do everything in our power to safeguard that good luck as the threats are glaringly obvious at this time. First, the global geopolitical order. I do not have to explain to anyone in this room how real the Thucydides trap has become in human history – but on a truly global scale – when the geopolitical order founded on the domination of a single force begins to change before our very eyes – and it will not come as a surprise to anyone when I say that today's dynamic balance, which may soon turn into a highly dynamic imbalance, is currently held by those two colossal movers on the global scene, China and the USA. Poles apart, it would seem. Today, such a proposition would make no sense. Everything that happens in Washington and Beijing affects our future, both directly and indirectly.

I am saying this because our traditional closest partner, the United States, is behaving differently in the context of this great global challenge. I would like to say that, as far as I recall, today for the first time in history we have an American administration which, to put it delicately, is not very enthusiastically tuned in to a united, strong Europe. And I'm talking here about facts, not about propaganda statements. And I say this as someone who has – let's say – the satisfaction of having fairly frequent direct exchanges with the President of the United States. Maybe he's quite open with me because we are namesakes, and I have no doubt whatsoever that in those matters which – in my view – are the geopolitical foundation of Poland's independence, namely a strong European Union, close integration between Europe and the United States, even closer than today, and the transatlantic community, which is the essence of the global order, I have no doubt that with regard to all of this I have different views from my most influential namesake in the world.

In addition to this we have the situation on our eastern border. Here, too, we have to deal with this peculiar Thucydides trap. Here, too, Russia,

observing the global power shift, reacted aggressively to Ukraine.

We have a situation inside the European Union, a situation which is illustrated most clearly by Brexit – the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union, but also many other negative phenomena – negative from the European point of view, and therefore also from the point of view of Poland's national interest, and the interest of the Polish state. I am talking here about the rise of nationalism and anti-European, not only rhetoric, but also anti-European emotion, in many European capitals. This does not yet apply to today's leaders, but these forces are growing before our very eyes. They are forces which back conflict rather than cooperation, disintegration rather than integration. When I travel around Europe, I sometimes get the impression that in many European capitals there are parties and politicians who are waiting for an Archduke Ferdinand situation to happen. They are waiting for this dream conflict that will change the world order and the European order based on the safeguarding of common principles and values. This was one of the biggest surprises for me when, relatively recently, half a year ago at the G7 summit, precisely in a direct political confrontation with President Trump, we argued over whether an order based on principles and common values was still applicable for the seven most powerful countries in the Western world. And probably for the first time in our modern history, the President of the United States said he was not interested in continuing such thinking or such action. And he deleted, virtually with his own hand, the sentence, which has always appeared in the declarations of the seven most powerful countries in the Western world to the effect that we seek to safeguard a world order based on principles and values. This matter is really very serious, especially when in our country we also have politicians and political forces that seek to change the order which in my, and not only in my opinion, is the basis and foundation of our present and future independence. What I'm referring to is, of course, the future of the European Union.

I wish to clearly emphasise here that I see no coincidence in the fact that in virtually all of Europe, whether openly or more discreetly, those who are enthusiastic about Brexit, those who are more or less enthusiastic about Washington's further steps towards isolationism, those who are flirting with Vladimir Putin with increasing intensity, they are all attempting, also more or less unambiguously, to persuade us that the European Union in general, or in its current shape, has no future. The problem is that today, those who are cheering on nationalisms in Europe, those who are betting on disintegration and conflict, will inevitably lead to an absolutely fundamental threat also to our Polish independence. Today, whoever takes a stand against Poland's strong position in a united Europe is in reality taking a stand against Poland's independence.

I – not because of my function, but rather because of my profound conviction that it may bring one of greatest possible political threats to my homeland again – I want to say today, on the eve of the anniversary of independence, that it depends on us, here in Poland, whether politicians will bring about the break-up of the European Union and take Poland out of the European Union. It depends on us what happens in this lunatic parade – and I am using this

expression intentionally – which began a few years ago in the United Kingdom – I talk about a lunatic parade, because I'm thinking back to Prime Minister Cameron who in his opinion did everything he could to keep the United Kingdom in the European Union, but in actual fact did everything he could to make the United Kingdom leave the European Union. It is slightly reminiscent of the actions of some politicians in 1914, when the First World War began. I'm obviously not comparing these two events, but rather a certain logic of the consequences of the actions of politicians who are incapable of calculating sensibly and incapable of predicting the effects of their actions. And I want to refer directly to what is happening in our country today.

Well, I am ready to believe all those who say today in Poland "We don't want to leave the European Union". I am more afraid of the British scenario – the more they don't want to leave the European Union, the more they leave. But also, we must not be gullible. If I hear the Polish Vice-president of the European Parliament say "if European politicians continue to act with the same political tact, in Poland we will soon be facing the need to hold a referendum on remaining in the European Union". This is the PiS party-nominated Vice-president of the European Parliament; the leader of tomorrow's Independence Parade, in which Polish authorities will also take part. Here is a quote: "Today we are saying that the European Union in its present form is coming to an end. And that's just as well, because it is a bad project." I will not mention what was said about an imaginary community. I wish to tell you that there can be no vagueness or jokes in this regard; these are not anecdotes, they are not lessons or lectures on ancient history. History is happening in front of our eyes and – also in front of our eyes – a dramatic event could occur, all the more so because in a few months' time we will be electing the parliament in Europe. It cannot be ruled out that two political currents might occupy very powerful positions in that parliament: one, increasingly brown-shirted, unambiguously anti-European, looking more and more clearly towards nationalism, working against the European Union as such. The other current belongs to those who want to integrate the European Union as much as possible. There might be no space for Poland in either of those scenarios if the dominant policy direction in Warsaw at present emphasises national resentment and scenarios that are negative for the European Union. This is not a question of the coming decades, but of the coming months. Within the next few months another chapter will be written – it will be either an optimistic or a grim chapter in the history of European integration. And believe me, these words, these events, will also directly concern our independence. There is also another issue – that is the issue of a certain internal dynamics here in Poland; it is a question of the essence of independence – why we want to be independent, why we need an independent state. We do, so that we can be free. There is no independence without rights and freedoms. We have an independent homeland so that free Poles can enjoy their rights and freedoms. If we really want Poland to be independent for the next 100 years or more, we must all establish a community of political goals, like we did in 1918 and in 1980. For me this community is a strong Poland in a united Europe, it is the constitutional order, the rule of law, civic freedoms, free and independent courts and media. It is also a good idea to remember to vaccinate your children.

Any history of any nation needs its heroes. I have already mentioned their names, but I wish to repeat clearly – as this will probably be very important today, the day before the independence anniversary. After all, it was Józef Piłsudski who said that a nation which does not respect its past does not deserve a good future. So let us emphasise this once again as clearly as possible: the hero and father of our independence is Józef Piłsudski, and the hero and father of our freedom is Lech Wałęsa – end of story.

And this fact cannot be changed by any arbitrary historical policy. I am convinced, and our history confirms, that the real, necessary, sacred myths of our independence and freedom are stronger than any propaganda used by political authorities of any kind.

As a final remark, I would like to share with you something about which I am deeply convinced, as I have been following it with bated breath and great emotion over many months. Please remember – as you are here in Łódź today, and you have come here in much greater numbers than anyone could have expected. But also remember this in the months to come, that it makes sense to act, that the year 1918 – the lessons we have drawn from it – the lessons of 1980 and 1988, have proven clearly that when we act, when we refrain from complaining, when we believe in our own strength, we can move mountains and we can make the impossible possible, because indeed every situation can be reversed – these could be words of hope, but they could also be words of warning, of course. And that is why – even though today our spirits may not be very high, which is understandable, as ‘November is a dangerous time for Poles’ – it is all the more important that we should, while celebrating the heroes of our independence today and tomorrow, think about what will happen in the spring – as May means ‘blissful paradise’ for Poles.

But then, maybe today is the moment, as you are sitting here today, to set up an informal committee which will organise a great public event of historic scale on 3 May next year. This will be a very special moment, and it may well determine – if you are really numerous, more numerous than today in Łódź – whether a free and independent Poland, a free and united Europe will be not just a lesson in history, but also a lesson for the future. Anyway, I believe that all this bickering we are witnessing today over who will or will not take part in the march does not really make much sense. In this regard, I remain very faithful to another of my youth’s heroes, Jacek Kuroń. I still remember those words of his: ‘Do not burn the committees but set up your own’. So let us just leave this march alone and let us try, by not excluding anyone, by showing what Polish solidarity is really about, let us try to prove next May that the spring can be yours, ours, Poland’s. And, you know, there is no point in waiting for a prince on a white horse. Remember what happened with General Anders – instead of a general on a white horse, we got a lady senator in business class. That is how this dream ended.

Therefore, above all, rely on yourselves. Whenever Polish people have relied on themselves, on their community, their solidarity, they have won. Besides – listen, my friends – Józef Piłsudski, when he was defeating the Bolsheviks, when he was, in fact, defending the community of the West, the community of freedom, not just our fatherland, against the political barbarity from the East (in a political, not just a geographical sense), was in a much more

difficult position than we are in today. When Lech Wałęsa was defeating the Bolsheviks in a symbolic sense, when he brought out from within us the essence of what constitutes Europe, freedom, and also the nation, he was in a much more difficult position than we are in today. So listen, if they were able to defeat the actual Bolsheviks, then why would you not manage to defeat the present-day Bolsheviks?

Remember, without our, your, Polish people's rights and freedoms, there is no independence. Defend those rights, defend that freedom and defend Poland's independence. This is your responsibility. Thank you.

(Delivered in Polish)

[Download as pdf](#)

[Institutional affairs](#) [Foreign affairs & international relations](#) [Brexit](#)

Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the "elections" planned in the so-called "Luhansk People's Republic" and "Donetsk People's Republic" for 11 November 2018

The European Union reiterates its full support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.

The European Union recalls that the implementation of the Minsk agreements by all sides remains key to reaching a sustainable political solution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine, and underlines the responsibility of the Russian Federation in this regard. The EU welcomes Ukraine's decision to prolong the Law on Special Status for parts of eastern Ukraine until the end of 2019.

Recalling our statement of 5 November 2014, the EU considers the "elections" planned for 11 November 2018 in the non-government controlled territories of the so-called "Luhansk People's Republic" and "Donetsk People's Republic" as illegal and illegitimate and will not recognise them. The EU condemns these "elections", as they are in breach of international law, undermine the

commitments taken under the Minsk agreements and violate Ukraine's sovereignty and law. The Minsk agreements exclusively provide for local elections to be held within the framework of the Ukrainian legislation and under the OSCE standards and observation. These reasons render these so-called "elections" null and void.

We expect the Russian Federation to make full use of its considerable influence over the separatists it backs. The provisions of the Minsk agreements should be implemented fully and without further delay, starting with a comprehensive ceasefire and the withdrawal of heavy weapons, so as to create the necessary conditions for the political transition through local elections they foresee.

The EU supports the efforts of France and Germany in the Normandy format, as well as the Trilateral Contact Group and the OSCE for facilitating the implementation of the Minsk agreements.

[Download as pdf](#)

[Foreign affairs & international relations](#)

Joint EU-U.S. statement following the EU-U.S. Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial Meeting

On 9 November 2018, the EU-U.S. Ministerial Meeting on Justice and Home Affairs took place in Washington DC. The United States of America hosted the meeting and was represented by the U.S. Acting Attorney General Matthew G. Whitaker and Secretary for Homeland Security, Kirstjen Nielsen.

The European Union was represented by the Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos, as well as by the Austrian Federal Minister for the Interior Herbert Kickl, the Austrian Federal Minister for Constitutional Affairs, Reforms, Deregulation and Justice Josef Moser, the Romanian Minister of the Interior Carmen Daniela Dan and the Romanian Secretary of State for Justice Sebastian Costea on behalf of the current and incoming Presidencies of the Council of the European Union.

The United States and the European Union reaffirmed their commitment to jointly address common challenges in the areas of justice and home affairs and praised the excellent level of exchanges and operational cooperation, for the benefit of the security of citizens on both sides of the Atlantic.

The United States and the European Union underlined the importance of

effective information sharing for their shared efforts to combat terrorism, focusing on battlefield information, Passenger Name Records (PNR) and aviation security. Participants emphasised the importance of PNR information sharing as a tool for the prevention of terrorist travel and agreed to prepare for a joint evaluation in 2019, in compliance with the provisions of the EU-US PNR Agreement. The United States and the European Union recognised the need to enhance their efforts to address the challenge of terrorists' use of the internet to direct and inspire attacks, while respecting individual rights, including freedom of speech. Both sides shared information on their respective initiatives, including efforts to better engage and partner with service providers.

The United States and the European Union recognised that electoral systems in democratic states face unprecedented challenges that require innovative and comprehensive solutions, as well as cooperation and best practice exchanges between like-minded countries. On that topic, participants briefed each other on current actions to build more resilient electoral systems. In order to promote exchanges between relevant experts from both sides on current challenges to elections, including such challenges as disinformation campaigns and other forms of online and offline interference, the United States and the European Union agreed to set up a regular dialogue on these matters, the details of which should be developed at the next Senior Officials meeting in 2019.

The United States and the European Union reiterated the priority they attach to fighting cybercrime and enhancing cybersecurity. They recognised the need to maintain a global, open, stable and secure cyberspace for the promotion of economic and social development and, in this context, stressed the valuable contribution of joint work conducted by U.S. and EU law enforcement agencies to combat, deter and prevent cybercrime and called for the expansion of such cooperation, as appropriate. Participants also acknowledged the challenge in obtaining timely and lawful access to encrypted data, in accordance with individual rights and civil liberties, by those investigating and solving criminal offenses and exchanged views on their respective practices to counter such challenges. Participants took note of the dialogue that took place in Brussels between the cybersecurity experts at DHS and the EU and agreed to continue to collaborate to strengthen the cybersecurity posture on both sides of the Atlantic.

The United States and the European Union agreed on the importance for both law enforcement and judicial authorities of swift cross-border direct access to electronic evidence, as demonstrated by recent legislation approved or under examination in the United States and the EU. Participants further recognised the benefit of exploring, and agreed to discuss, the possibility of an EU-US agreement to facilitate access to electronic evidence.

The United States and the European Union exchanged information on developments in the area of migration and border management, with a particular focus on efforts to prevent and combat migrant smuggling and trafficking of human beings. The United States and the European Union agreed on the importance of advancing towards reciprocal visa free travel under their respective legal frameworks and, following the most recent tripartite

meeting on visa reciprocity, welcomed the progress of the five concerned Member States towards meeting the statutory requirements of the Visa Waiver Program, in order to be considered for designation in the programme.

The United States and the European Union underscored their shared concerns about the major international drug-control threats posed by illicit synthetic opioids, including fentanyl and its derivatives. Both sides took note of the U.S.-EU Political Dialogue on Drugs held on October 18, 2018.

Reiterating the progress made and the need to face global challenges together, the European Union and the United States remain committed to reinforce their partnership and meet again in the first half of 2019 in Bucharest, Romania.

Joint EU-U.S. statement following the EU-U.S. Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial Meeting

Washington DC, 9 November 2018

On 9 November 2018, the EU-U.S. Ministerial Meeting on Justice and Home Affairs took place in Washington DC. The United States of America hosted the meeting and was represented by the U.S. Acting Attorney General Matthew G. Whitaker and Secretary for Homeland Security, Kirstjen Nielsen.

The European Union was represented by the Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos, as well as by the Austrian Federal Minister for the Interior Herbert Kickl, the Austrian Federal Minister for Constitutional Affairs, Reforms, Deregulation and Justice Josef Moser, the Romanian Minister of the Interior Carmen Daniela Dan and the Romanian Secretary of State for Justice Sebastian Costea on behalf of the current and incoming Presidencies of the Council of the European Union.

The United States and the European Union reaffirmed their commitment to jointly address common challenges in the areas of justice and home affairs and praised the excellent level of exchanges and operational cooperation, for the benefit of the security of citizens on both sides of the Atlantic.

The United States and the European Union underlined the importance of effective information sharing for their shared efforts to combat terrorism, focusing on battlefield information, Passenger Name Records (PNR) and aviation security. Participants emphasised the importance of PNR information sharing as a tool for the prevention of terrorist travel and agreed to prepare for a joint evaluation in 2019, in compliance with the provisions of the EU-US PNR Agreement. The United States and the European Union recognised

the need to enhance their efforts to address the challenge of terrorists' use of the internet to direct and inspire attacks, while respecting individual rights, including freedom of speech. Both sides shared information on their respective initiatives, including efforts to better engage and partner with service providers.

The United States and the European Union recognised that electoral systems in democratic states face unprecedented challenges that require innovative and comprehensive solutions, as well as cooperation and best practice exchanges between like-minded countries. On that topic, participants briefed each other on current actions to build more resilient electoral systems. In order to promote exchanges between relevant experts from both sides on current challenges to elections, including such challenges as disinformation campaigns and other forms of online and offline interference, the United States and the European Union agreed to set up a regular dialogue on these matters, the details of which should be developed at the next Senior Officials meeting in 2019.

The United States and the European Union reiterated the priority they attach to fighting cybercrime and enhancing cybersecurity. They recognised the need to maintain a global, open, stable and secure cyberspace for the promotion of economic and social development and, in this context, stressed the valuable contribution of joint work conducted by U.S. and EU law enforcement agencies to combat, deter and prevent cybercrime and called for the expansion of such cooperation, as appropriate. Participants also acknowledged the challenge in obtaining timely and lawful access to encrypted data, in accordance with individual rights and civil liberties, by those investigating and solving criminal offenses and exchanged views on their respective practices to counter such challenges. Participants took note of the dialogue that took place in Brussels between the cybersecurity experts at DHS and the EU and agreed to continue to collaborate to strengthen the cybersecurity posture on both sides of the Atlantic.

The United States and the European Union agreed on the importance for both law enforcement and judicial authorities of swift cross-border direct access to electronic evidence, as demonstrated by recent legislation approved or under examination in the United States and the EU. Participants further recognised the benefit of exploring, and agreed to discuss, the possibility of an EU-US agreement to facilitate access to electronic evidence.

The United States and the European Union exchanged information on developments in the area of migration and border management, with a particular focus on efforts to prevent and combat migrant smuggling and trafficking of human beings. The United States and the European Union agreed on the importance of advancing towards reciprocal visa free travel under their respective legal frameworks and, following the most recent tripartite meeting on visa reciprocity, welcomed the progress of the five concerned Member States towards meeting the statutory requirements of the Visa Waiver Program, in order to be considered for designation in the programme.

The United States and the European Union underscored their shared concerns about the major international drug-control threats posed by illicit synthetic

opioids , including fentanyl and its derivatives. Both sides took note of the U.S.-EU Political Dialogue on Drugs held on October 18, 2018.

Reiterating the progress made and the need to face global challenges together, the European Union and the United States remain committed to reinforce their partnership and meet again in the first half of 2019 in Bucharest, Romania.

[Download as pdf](#)

[Foreign affairs & international relations](#) [Justice](#) [Home Affairs](#)