

Speech by President Charles Michel at the official dinner of the African Union Summit in Addis Ababa

It is an honour and privilege for me to take the floor as the voice of Europe before you, in Ethiopia, the land of origins and the cradle of the last Nobel Peace Prize. Congratulations again dear Abiy Ahmed.

It is with deep pleasure that I return to this continent, for which I have so much affection.

I am here today to bear witness to a metamorphosis of this continent but also that of Europe.

Your northern neighbour is changing. I am here tonight to speak for 27 European countries. 22 of them never had any colonies.

A new generation of leaders is coming to power. They are not hampered by the burden of nostalgia.

We want to look towards the future, and to our neighbours. We want to tackle climate change and the digital revolution. The two major challenges we are all facing.

Europe wants to speak up on the international stage, where its values inspire its actions.

This changing Europe is looking at Africa with fresh eyes – with respect, optimism and confidence!

Africa is vibrant, full of the energy of youth and it is buzzing with new technology!

A continent of opportunities: that is what Europe sees.

For a long time, Europe remained trapped in an outdated view of this continent.

Africa, too, has at times cultivated a kind of ambiguity in its relationship with Europe.

Our closeness connects us, our partnership is a rich one. Everything draws us towards one another: history, geography, culture and the many exchanges between us.

Europe is your partner for trade, investment, cooperation and development. But this partnership is no longer enough; it needs to be reinvented. We must build a new house to accommodate our many common interests, and we must write a new chapter together.

Mesdames et messieurs,

Pour paraphraser Nelson Mandela, nos choix doivent refléter nos espoirs et non nos peurs. Avec l'Afrique, l'Europe veut parler de capital économique et humain, de commerce, d'emplois, d'investissements, d'infrastructures.

L'Europe tend la main à l'Afrique pour co-écrire les nouvelles pages d'un avenir commun optimiste et positif.

Une Europe forte est bonne pour l'Afrique tout autant qu'une Afrique solide est bonne pour l'Europe.

Notre agenda commun doit être un agenda positif élaboré ensemble. Il ne peut pas être une route à sens unique, car les routes à sens unique conduisent trop souvent à des impasses.

Je le dis avec solennité, l'Europe sera au rendez-vous. C'est une priorité pour mon nouveau mandat comme président du Conseil européen.

Nous sommes à l'aube d'une nouvelle décennie. Nous sommes prêts à échanger, partager et coopérer.

Que vive l'alliance entre l'Europe et l'Afrique.

MIFID II: ESMA ISSUES LATEST DOUBLE VOLUME CAP DATA

Today's updates include DVC data and calculations for the period 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019 as well as updates to already published DVC periods.

The number of new breaches is 66: 55 equities for the 8% cap, applicable to all trading venues, and 11 equities for the 4% cap, that applies to individual trading venues. Trading under the waivers for all new instruments in breach of the DVC thresholds should be suspended from 13 February 2020 to 12 August 2020. The instruments for which caps already existed from previous periods will continue to be suspended.

In addition, ESMA highlights that none of the previously identified breaches of the caps proved to be incorrect thus no previously identified suspensions of trading under the waivers had to be lifted.

As of 7 February 2020, there is a total of 406 instruments suspended.

Please be aware that ESMA does not update DVC files older than 6 months.

Background

MiFID II introduced the DVC to limit the amount of dark trading in equities allowed under the reference price waiver and the negotiated transaction waiver. The DVC is calculated per instrument (ISIN) based on the rolling average of trading in that instrument over the last 12 months.

[Press release – Long-term EU budget: The Union’s ambitions must be matched with sufficient reliable funding](#)



In the meeting in the European Parliament in Brussels on Friday, MEPs reiterated their call for an ambitious multiannual financial framework (MFF) that ensures the continuity of the EU’s main policies, like the cohesion and agricultural policies. They insisted on boosting priority areas like climate action, digitalisation, support for young people (Erasmus+, youth employment) and for SMEs as well as migration and security. The geopolitical role of the EU should also be strengthened.

“I value President Michel’s openness very much; we had a very constructive dialogue on Parliament’s priorities today. A few days after Brexit, the European Union must give a strong signal to its citizens. Our shared ambitions – the European Green Deal, the digital transformation, and a stronger geopolitical Europe – will remain an empty shell if we do not match them with sufficient reliable funding. We expect President Michel to take due account of Parliament’s position in his upcoming proposal, to set the basis for a viable agreement”, said [Johan Van Overtveldt](#) (ECR, BE), Chair of the Committee on Budgets and Head of the Parliament’s MFF negotiating team.

After the [EP plenary debate on 12 February](#), the EU’s long-term budget for

2021-2027 will be on the agenda of a [special meeting of the European Council](#) (member states) starting on 20 February. The MEPs also discussed the state of play of talks between member states with Mr Michel, who prepares and chairs the Council meeting.

The member states have to agree on a common position in order to start negotiating with Parliament and find an agreement in time for the MFF to start in January 2021. The EP [has to give its consent](#) to the next long-term EU budget.

The EP's negotiating team for the next MFF and Own Resources reform:

[Johan Van Overtveldt](#) (ECR, BE), Chair of the Committee on Budgets

[Jan Olbrycht](#) (EPP, PL), MFF co-rapporteur

[Margarida Marques](#) (S&D, PT), MFF co-rapporteur

[José Manuel Fernandes](#) (EPP, PT), Own Resources co-rapporteur

[Valérie Hayer](#) (RENEW, FR), Own Resources co-rapporteur

[Rasmus Andresen](#) (Greens/EFA, DE)

Follow them on Twitter:

https://twitter.com/EP_Budgets/lists/mff-negotiation-team

Background

As the current long-term EU budget runs out on 31 December 2020, the EU needs a new budgetary planning horizon for the next seven years. The EU Commission thus presented plans for the next multiannual financial framework for 2021-2027 in [May 2018](#). The European Parliament adopted its position in [November 2018](#), and re-confirmed it in [October 2019](#). The Council has not been able to agree on a position yet.

[EASO publishes a new COI report: Syria – Situation of women](#)

Today, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) published a Country of Origin Information (COI) report titled "[Syria: Situation of women](#)". This report is part of a series of Syria reports produced in 2019-2020 and covering actors of protection, internal mobility, key socio-economic indicators, and targeting of individuals. The reports provide information relevant for international protection status determination for Syrian asylum seekers, and will be used in the development of a country guidance note on Syria.

Syrians continued to be the top citizenship applying for asylum in the EU+ uninterruptedly since 2013, although the number of applications lodged between January and November 2019 (some 65 600) was lower than in the same period in 2018 (about 69 900). Three in every four Syrian applications (almost 75%) were lodged in four EU+ countries.

Syrian applicants also received more first-instance decisions than any other citizenship group. Since the beginning of 2019, Syrian applicants received some 72 200 decisions. Syria was also the country of origin whose nationals had the most cases pending at first instance in the EU+. At the end of November 2019, there were some 49 000 Syrian applications awaiting a first-instance decision, some 80% of which were pending in just five EU+ countries.

The report, [EASO COI Report: Syria – Situation of women](#), analyses the situation of women in Syria, focusing mainly on the general situation of women in the country while also paying special attention to area-specific features in those parts of Syria under the control of non-state armed groups. The report was drafted by the Country of Origin Information (COI) specialists on Syria from Finland (Finnish Immigration Service), as referred to in the acknowledgments section in accordance with the [EASO COI Report Methodology](#), and was reviewed by COI experts from Belgium and France. Additionally, external expert reviews were carried out by ACCORD.

Additional information to complement this report can be found in the following EASO reports:

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ESMA ISSUES OPINIONS ON POSITION LIMITS UNDER MIFID II

ESMA's opinions agree with the proposed position limits regarding:

- ICE Endex Dutch TTF Gas contracts
- EEX Phelix DE Base Power contracts
- EEX Capesize TC5 Freight contracts
- EEX Spanish Power Base contracts
- MEFFPOWER Baseload contracts

ESMA found that the proposed position limits are consistent with the objectives established in MiFID II and with the methodology developed for setting those limits.

In addition to the five opinions above, ESMA published two opinions on the proposed position limits regarding the OMIP SPEL Base contracts. The first opinion relates to the position limits initially notified by Comissão do

Mercado de Valores Mobiliários (CMVM) which ESMA did not find consistent with the objectives established in MiFID II. In such circumstances, Article 57(5) of MiFID II requires the competent authority concerned to modify the position limits in accordance with ESMA's opinions or provide ESMA with justification why the change is considered to be unnecessary. In December 2019, CMVM accordingly notified ESMA of revised position limits for the OMIP SPEL base contracts. ESMA agreed with those revised position limits in a subsequent opinion which also has been published today.

ESMA will continue to assess the notifications received and issue opinions in order to ensure that the position limits are set in accordance with the MiFID II framework.