

Daily News 26 / 09 / 2019

EU@UNGA74 on Thursday

To wrap up a week of confirmed commitment to multilateralism, High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** will attend the launch of the Alliance for Multilateralism hosted by France and Germany (11:30 local time, 17:30 CET) and a ministerial meeting of the Group of Friends of Mediation (09:30 local time, 15:30 CET). She will also attend the Ad-hoc Liaison Committee ministerial meeting (15:00 local time, 21:00 CET), a ministerial meeting organised by Jordan and Sweden on the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (12:00 local time, 18:00 CET), a ministerial meeting with the Gulf Cooperation Council (09:15 local time, 15:15 CET), a ministerial meeting on Libya (18:30 local time, 00:30 CET) and a high-level meeting on the Central African Republic (16:15 local time, 22:15 CET). Commissioner Neven **Mimica** will continue showcasing the EU's commitment to sustainable development at a [high-level dialogue on financing for development](#) (10:00 local time, 16:00 CET), while Commissioner Dimitris **Avramopoulos** will participate at a high-level event on accountability for atrocity crimes committed by Daesh organised by the Netherlands and Iraq (08:30 local time, 14:30 CET). Commissioner Julian **King** will arrive in New York to attend the [Global Hope event](#) (18:30 local time, 00:30 CET). Audio-visual coverage of the events and bilateral meetings will be available on [EBS](#). *(For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Xavier Cifre Quatresols – Tel.: +32 229 73582)*

EU4Human Rights: the EU stands up for human rights in New York

As President of the European Council Donald Tusk delivers his speech this afternoon on behalf of the European Union during the general debate of the UN General Assembly, a series of EU high-level events and bilateral meetings will continue, including two of the biggest flagship events. High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini**, together with the High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet and EU Special Representative for Human Rights Eamon Gilmore, will host the [2nd high-level side event on the Good Human Rights Stories initiative](#), bringing together ministers and high level officials from international human rights organisations (10:00 local time, 16:00 CET). This year's edition focuses on building quality lives through economic, social and cultural rights in the world. In the afternoon, High Representative/Vice-President **Mogherini** will join Commissioner Neven **Mimica** and the UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed at the [EU-UN Spotlight initiative event](#). Two years after its launch, the Spotlight Initiative's activities are spanning the entire globe – thanks to the EU's and UN's engagement, and the support of partner governments and civil society at all levels. 13 countries have already started implementing Spotlight programmes, and around 2/3 of the European Union's initial seed funding of €500 million have already been allocated. For more information about the EU-UN Spotlight initiative, check the [press release](#) and [MEMO](#). *(For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Christina Wunder – Tel.: +32 229 92256;*

Xavier Cifre Quatresols – Tel.: +32 229 73582)

EU charts new ground in global connectivity – looks to boost strategic ties with Asia

Tomorrow, the European Commission will launch its *Europa Connectivity Forum* – an innovative multi-stakeholder international conference aimed at fostering dialogue and strengthening ties between governments, financial institutions, and private sector actors in Europe and beyond. Building on the already close cooperation between the EU and its Asia-Pacific partners, [this first edition of the Forum](#) will be held under the theme [EU-Asia Connectivity: Building Bridges for a Sustainable Future](#), one year after the adoption of the [EU strategy to connect the two continents](#). The President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude **Juncker**, said: “What we do politically must respond to the expectations and worries of our citizens. Increased connectivity is part of this response, because it benefits our people and our economies. Because it creates stability and prosperity for all.” He added: “Our European approach to connectivity is at the heart of our partnership with Asia, and we have a clear message: the European Union wants to engage more and to reinforce the connections between Europe and Asia in a mutually-beneficial way.” At the invitation of President Juncker, Shinzō Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, will be the Forum’s special guest and will deliver a keynote speech at the opening plenary. President Juncker and Prime Minister Abe will conclude a Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity and Quality Infrastructure between the European Union and Japan – the first such Partnership of its kind - underlining further the strategic importance of the [EU-Japan partnership](#) that both parties have been committed to strengthen over the last years. [EBS](#) will have [live coverage](#) of President Juncker and Prime Minister Abe’s keynote speeches, and the whole Forum – [featuring](#) high-level political leaders and dignitaries, Presidents of European and international financial institutions, and leading business and finance executives – will be live streamed on the [Forum’s website](#). For more information, read the [full press release](#), visit the dedicated [website](#), and consult the [programme](#), [strategy](#), and [factsheet](#). (For more information: Mina Andreeva – Tel.: +32 229 91382; Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Adam Kaznowski – Tel: +32 229 89359)

République Centrafricaine: l’UE mobilise 60 millions d’euros supplémentaires

En marge de l’Assemblée Générale des Nations Unies, Neven **Mimica**, commissaire en charge de la coopération internationale et le développement, rencontre le Président de la République Centrafricaine (RCA), Faustin-Archange Touadéra. À cette occasion, le commissaire a annoncé l’octroi de 60 millions d’euros additionnels pour soutenir la mise en œuvre de l’accord de paix signé en février, portant le soutien total de l’Union européenne à la RCA à 442 millions d’euros pour la période 2014-2020. Le commissaire **Mimica** a déclaré: “Les 60 millions d’euros supplémentaires que l’UE a décidé d’octroyer à la République Centrafricaine visent à soutenir la mise en œuvre de l’accord de paix signé en février dernier. Les actions porteront sur le redéploiement de l’Etat sur tout le territoire, le renforcement de l’accès des populations aux services de base et la préparation des élections en 2020. Le “momentum” créé

par la signature de l'accord de paix en février doit être soutenu, et les populations doivent rapidement voir les dividendes de la paix afin d'empêcher tout retour en arrière." Egalement en marge de la 74^{ème} Assemblée Générale, la haute représentante/vice-présidente Federica **Mogherini** s'exprimera aujourd'hui lors d'une réunion de haut niveau sur la République Centrafricaine, après avoir tenu un discours mercredi lors d'une réunion de haut niveau sur le Mali et le Sahel. Le communiqué de presse est disponible [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tél.: +32 229 65322; Christina Wunder – Tél.: +32 229 92256)

EU providing emergency response following earthquakes and flash floods in Albania

In the aftermath of two devastating earthquakes that hit Albania and ensuing flash floods the [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#) has been activated by the Albanian authorities. In an immediate response, the European Union has already helped mobilise first aid supplies and relief items, such as tents, power generators and water pumps to the affected areas. Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** said: *"The European Union stands in solidarity with Albania at this difficult time and substantial EU support is already on its way. European experts, life-saving assets and material will soon be making a difference in the crucial early days of the response. I warmly thank Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Slovenia and Norway for their offers of assistance through our Civil Protection Mechanism. Our thoughts are with all those in the affected areas and the first responders working on the ground. We stand ready to provide further assistance."* The European Union's 24/7 Emergency Response Coordination Centre is in constant contact with the Albanian authorities to closely monitor the situation and channel further EU assistance on request. It will also deploy an EU Civil Protection Team of several experts to facilitate the coordination of the in-coming assistance. [Photos](#) of the Emergency Centre are available, a [factsheet](#) on the EU's Emergency Centre. (For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz de Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140)

Education and training in the EU: supporting teachers is critical to build the European Education Area

Coinciding with the [second European Education Summit](#), the European Commission published today the [2019 Education and Training Monitor](#) analysing how education and training is evolving in the EU and its Member States. The 2019 Monitor shows further progress towards important EU education and training targets, but also highlights the need to better support teachers and make the teaching profession more attractive. Tibor **Navracsics**, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, said: *"To build a resilient, cohesive and fair Europe, we need to invest in education. Above all, this means investing in teachers – giving them the tools and recognition they deserve. The success of any education reform depends on teachers – that is why better*

responding to their needs is key to building a true European Education Area by 2025. I am proud of what we have achieved with Member States over the past years, but more work lies ahead. The Education and Training Monitor has a vital role to play in driving further reform of our education systems, helping us ensure that everyone can make the most of their talents.” The Commission supports Member States to improve their education systems through policy cooperation, benchmarking and funding programmes such as [Erasmus+](#). The Monitor, the EU’s annual flagship publication on education, is an integral part of this work. By presenting a wealth of policies and fostering dialogue, it helps Member States benchmark and improve their education systems. A [press release](#) and 28 country-specific factsheets in all EU languages and a general factsheet are available [online](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Joseph Waldstein – Tel.: +32 229 56184)

Commission experts support the development of 13 Bulgarian research and innovation centres

Commission experts from the [Joint Research Centre](#) will provide support and guidance to 13 Bulgarian research and innovation centres to help them bring their innovative ideas to the market, facilitate the transfer and dissemination of knowledge and strengthen both their ties with businesses and their participation in European and international cooperation projects. The experts will also help the 13 centres improve their legal, managerial and operational frameworks, deal with state aid issues and identify financing opportunities, including through EU funds. The 13 centres include four “centres of excellence” i.e. fundamental research institutions and nine “centres of competence”, focused on applied research activities with potential for industrial uptake. It concerns sectors such as mechatronics, digital technologies, creative and gaming industries and biotechnology and other areas in line with the priorities of Bulgaria’s [smart specialisation strategy](#), its industrial and innovation strategy based on local competitive strengths. A full press release is available [here](#). (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tél.: +32 229 58615, Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

State aid: Commission approves €6.2 million aid for Erfurt-Weimar Airport in Germany

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, additional operating aid of around €6.2 million to Erfurt-Weimar airport. The small regional airport is 100% publicly owned and located in the Land of Thuringia. In [June 2018](#), the Commission approved, under EU State aid rules, initial operating aid of €10.7 million to the airport. Germany notified to the Commission its plans to extend the operating aid to the airport and to grant additional €6.2 million up to 2024 to the airport operator. This follows the [prolongation of the rules on operating aid for small airports under the Aviation Guidelines until 2024](#) and the recent insolvency of airline Germania, which caused a significant drop in passengers at the Erfurt-Weimar airport. The operating aid aims to keep the airport running in the medium-term, until it is expected to cover its costs as of 2024. The Commission found that the

measure is in line with EU State aid rules, in particular the [Aviation Guidelines](#), as it will contribute to improving connections of citizens and facilitating regional development in the region of Thuringia, without unduly distorting competition in the Single Market. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number SA.54496 once confidentiality issues have been resolved. *(For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Jourová to reveal winners of the first ever EU Product Safety Award


Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality Vera **Jourová** will host the first edition of the [EU Product Safety Award](#) ceremony tonight in Brussels. Four SMEs and four large companies from several EU Member States will be rewarded for their efforts to enhance children's safety. This first edition of the award honours companies that are excelling in the safety of childcare products, going above and beyond EU requirements for greater consumer safety. The award aims both to encourage more companies to make product safety a priority, and to give recognition to the companies who put product safety at the heart of what they do. A full press release with the names of the winners will be available [online](#) tonight. *(For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Sara Soumillion – Tel.: +32 229-67094; Athina Reuter – Tel.: + 32 229 82390)*

Commissioner Thyssen attends 2019 Employment and Social Development Conference

Tomorrow, 27 September, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne **Thyssen**, will attend the conference during which the 2019 Employment and Social Developments Review will be presented. The Conference will take place in Brussels and is organised jointly by the European Commission and the European Economic and Social Council. Commissioner **Thyssen** will open the conference, of which this year's theme is 'Sustainable Growth for All: Choices for the Future of Social Europe', with a keynote speech that will be made available [here](#). The Conference will bring together around 200 participants from EU and international organisations, Member States, social partners, academia and civil society. Following a presentation of the main highlights of the [2019 ESDE review](#), the opening panel will discuss broad policy choices for sustainable growth and a just, socially fair transition to a climate-neutral economy. In addition, the conference will feature three thematic panel sessions on 1) economic sustainability: enabling sustainable and inclusive growth, 2) social sustainability: investing in people, essential services and housing, and 3) environmental sustainability: mitigating social impacts of climate action. The full programme is available [here](#). *(For more information: Christian*

Wigand: +32 229 62253; Sara Soumillion – Tél.: +32 229 67094)

Le commissaire Navracsics participe à la cérémonie de remise du prix “L’Europe des festivals, des festivals pour l’Europe”

Tibor **Navracsics**, commissaire chargé de l’éducation, de la culture, de la jeunesse et des sports, prendra, ce soir, la parole lors de la cérémonie de remise du [label européen pour les festivals](#) “L’Europe des festivals, des festivals pour l’Europe” à BOZAR à Bruxelles. Le commissaire **Navracsics** profitera de l’occasion pour souligner son soutien aux festivals d’art, qui permettent non seulement au public de découvrir le riche patrimoine culturel de l’Europe, mais également de promouvoir la créativité et la diversité de l’Europe. La cérémonie rendra hommage aux 24 festivals d’arts européens les plus remarquables choisis par un jury international parmi 715 festivals de 39 pays participant au programme [Europe créative](#), en particulier les cinq festivals qui recevront l’édition 2019-2020 ‘Europe for Festivals, Festivals for Prix  de l’Europe. Dirigé par [l’Association européenne des festivals](#), “L’Europe des festivals, des festivals pour l’Europe” est soutenu par le Parlement européen et mis en œuvre par la Commission afin de récompenser les festivals culturels pour leur contribution à la vie culturelle européenne et leur rôle dans la résolution des problèmes de société. (Pour plus d’informations: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tél.: +32 229 67083; Joseph Waldstein – Tél.: +32 229 56184)

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

[Education and training in the EU: supporting teachers is critical to build the European Education Area](#)

Coinciding with the [second European Education Summit](#), the European Commission published today the 2019 Education and Training Monitor analysing how education and training is evolving in the EU and its Member States. The 2019 Monitor shows further progress towards important EU education and training targets, but also highlights the need to better support teachers and make the teaching profession more attractive.

Tibor **Navracsics**, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, said: *“To build a resilient, cohesive and fair Europe, we need to invest in education. Above all, this means investing in teachers – giving them the tools and recognition they deserve. The success of any education reform depends on teachers – that is why better responding to their needs is key to building a true European Education Area by 2025. I am proud of what we have*

achieved with Member States over the past years, but more work lies ahead. The Education and Training Monitor has a vital role to play in driving further reform of our education systems, helping us ensure that everyone can make the most of their talents."

The Commission supports Member States to improve their education systems through policy cooperation, benchmarking and funding programmes such as [Erasmus+](#). The Monitor, the EU's annual flagship publication on education, is an integral part of this work. By presenting a wealth of policies and fostering dialogue, it helps Member States benchmark and improve their education systems.

This year's edition of the Monitor, the eighth, focuses on teachers. It includes and analyses the findings of an extensive survey of teachers run by the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](#). This latest Teachers and Learning International Survey highlighted teachers' need for training to better tackle pressing issues such as the use of Information and Communication Technologies, teaching students with special needs and teaching in multicultural classrooms. To help address this, the Monitor recommends ensuring an appropriate number of teachers in the system, in all subjects, and across rural and urban areas. At the same time, it highlights that greater policy efforts are needed to attract the best candidates to teaching, while ensuring they are properly trained and motivated to stay in the profession.

When it comes to investment in education, the Monitor's most recent data show that public expenditure on education in the EU has remained broadly stable at EU level, while Member States still invest less in education than they did before the economic crisis of 2007-2008.

The latest edition of the Monitor reveals that Member States have now almost reached their target for reducing early school leaving. Yet, while the share of pupils dropping out has declined from 14.2% in 2009 to 10.6% in 2018, progress has slowed since 2016. The percentage of young people holding a tertiary education diploma rose from 32.3% in 2009 to 40.7% in 2018. The Monitor also shows that higher educational attainment corresponds to higher employment rates among recent graduates and more significant participation in adult learning.

The share of children enrolled in early childhood education rose from 90.8% in 2009 to 95.4% in 2017. While participation in education has been growing in Europe, one in five 15-year-old pupils still cannot solve simple reading, maths and science tasks, while too many children remain at risk of educational poverty.

Background

This year's edition of the Education and Training Monitor marks ten years since the start of the EU cooperation framework [Education and Training 2020](#), which was agreed upon by all Member States in 2009. It measures progress on the Education and Training 2020 targets in each Member State and informs the treatment of education issues in the annual European Semester process.

Furthermore, it helps identify where EU funding for education, training and skills should be targeted in the EU's next long-term budget.

The Monitor analyses the main challenges for European education systems and presents policies that can make them more responsive to societal and labour market needs. The report comprises a cross-country comparison, 28 in-depth country reports, and a [dedicated webpage](#) with additional data and information.

Education is high on the EU's political agenda. Working with Member States, the Commission has laid the foundations of a [European Education Area](#), which is about enhancing learning, cooperation and excellence. At the same time, an array of EU programmes, namely the [Erasmus+ programme](#), the [European Structural and Investment Funds, including the Youth Employment Initiative](#), as well as [Horizon 2020](#), and the [European Institute of Innovation and Technology](#) help stimulate investment and support policy priorities in education. To underpin the bigger ambition in this area, the Commission has proposed to significantly boost funding for young people and learning in the EU's next long-term budget (2021 – 2027).

For more information

The Education and Training [Monitor website](#) (including EU and country-specific factsheets and infographics)

[European Education Summit website](#)

[European Education Area website](#)

[EU charts new ground in global connectivity – looks to boost strategic ties with Asia](#)

On Friday 27 September 2019, the European Commission will launch its **Europa Connectivity Forum** – an innovative multi-stakeholder international conference aimed at fostering dialogue and strengthening ties between governments, financial institutions, and private sector actors in Europe and beyond. Building on the already close cooperation between the EU and its Asia-Pacific partners, this first edition of the Forum will be held under the theme [EU-Asia Connectivity: Building Bridges for a Sustainable Future](#).

The President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude **Juncker**, who will deliver a [keynote speech](#) in the opening plenary session, said: *“What we do politically must respond to the expectations and worries of our citizens. Increased connectivity is part of this response, because it benefits our*

people and our economies. Because it creates stability and prosperity for all.” He added: “Our European approach to connectivity is at the heart of our partnership with Asia, and we have a clear message: the European Union wants to engage more and to reinforce the connections between Europe and Asia in a mutually-beneficial way.”

The EU and Japan: taking the lead on sustainable connectivity

At the invitation of President Juncker, **Shinzō Abe**, Prime Minister of Japan, will be the Forum’s special guest and will deliver a keynote speech at the opening plenary. President Juncker and Prime Minister Abe will conclude a **Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity and Quality Infrastructure between the European Union and Japan**, underlining further the strategic importance of the EU-Japan partnership that both parties have been committed to strengthen over the last years.

This new Partnership is the first of its kind, highlighting connectivity as a key priority in the European Union’s work as a global actor. It confirms Europe’s ambition to work together with like-minded partners in promoting connectivity that is sustainable across the board – fiscally, economically, socially and environmentally.

Generating global debate on the European approach to connectivity

The Europa Connectivity Forum is politically underpinned by the Joint Communication ‘[Connecting Europe and Asia – Building Blocks for an EU Strategy](#)’, launched by the European Commission and the High Representative in September 2018. In the Strategy, the EU sets out its approach to connectivity, which has been at the very heart of successful European integration.

The Forum, which will be [live streamed](#), will highlight the **major opportunities of stronger connectivity**, as well as explore the many challenges. These range from multilateral governance aspects and the vast financing needs – making it essential to partner up with the private sector and mobilise private investments – to the importance of developing mutually agreed, interoperable standards and norms to underpin 21st century transport, energy, digital and human connectivity.

In order to generate widespread debate, panellists from Europe and beyond will discuss the geopolitics, the economics, the standards and norms, and the finance of connectivity. To kick-start the debate, Parag Khanna, author of *Connectography: Mapping the Future of Global Civilization* and *The Future is Asian: Commerce, Conflict, and Culture in the 21st Century*, will deliver remarks on connectivity as a global trend.

High-level political leaders and dignitaries, including the President Emeritus of the European Council, the Prime Ministers of Finland and Croatia, and Ministers from, *inter alia*, the Republic of North Macedonia, Kazakhstan, Afghanistan, and the Republic of Korea will take part in the Forum. In addition, the **Presidents of European and international financial institutions**, including Werner Hoyer, President of the European Investment

Bank, Suma Chakrabarti, President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and Takehiko Nakao, President of the Asian Development Bank, as well as **leading business and finance executives from Europe and Asia**, will also participate. More information on confirmed speakers can be found [here](#).

For More Information

[Europa Connectivity Forum: EU-Asia Connectivity – Building Bridges for a Sustainable Future website](#)

[Joint Communication: Connecting Europe and Asia – building blocks for an EU Strategy](#)

Human traffickers' ring busted in France and Bulgaria

□The Hague, 25 September 2019

✘**An international criminal network involved in the trafficking of 167 people for labour exploitation was taken down by the national authorities of France and Bulgaria in several joint action days. One French and three Bulgarian suspects were arrested and heard in France, and numerous searches were carried out in Bulgaria. Eurojust, the EU's Judicial Cooperation Unit, supported the simultaneous operations through real-time coordination of the national judicial and law enforcement authorities, and by setting up a joint investigation team (JIT). The JIT allowed the authorities to safely and rapidly exchange vital information on the national investigations, and agree on and implement a common strategy.**

In February 2019, the Specialised Jurisdiction (JIRS) of Lyon undertook an investigation into an organised crime group (OCG) and its leaders, involved in trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation, as well as in money laundering. At the same time, a parallel investigation into the same criminal gang was initiated by the Bulgarian Specialised Prosecutor's Office. Due to the transnational dimension of the case, the Public Prosecutor of Lyon immediately referred the case to Eurojust to coordinate and advance the national investigations, leading to the successful joint action days.

The members of the criminal network, which is composed of Bulgarian and French nationals, used a Bulgarian recruitment agency to attract underprivileged Bulgarians to perform allegedly well-paid jobs as seasonal workers in French vineyards. The aspiring workers were also promised free accommodation and transport, the costs of which were unknowingly deducted from their salaries, along with other high charges. The victims of the gang ended up receiving only two thirds of their income, which was not even

sufficient to finance their transport back to Bulgaria. The human traffickers are also suspected of using properties in France to launder their ill-gotten gains.

The operation mobilized more than 80 French investigators, as well as several Bulgarian police officers, with the support of Europol providing analytical and operational support.

Photo: © Shutterstock

[Article – Plenary highlights: Brexit, ECB President, Amazon fires](#)



MEPs [reaffirmed their support](#) for a Brexit based on the existing withdrawal agreement, However, they said they were open to a possible extension of the Article 50 negotiation period, if requested by the UK.

On Tuesday, [Christine Lagarde received the Parliament's support](#) to become the next president of the European Central Bank. If Lagarde gets the final nomination by the Council, she will become the first woman to hold the post when succeeding Mario Draghi on 1 November 2019.

Ahead of the UN Climate Action summit in New York, MEPs [urged](#) the EU to step up measures to tackle global warming. They also [discussed](#) forest fires in the Amazon.

On Wednesday, [MEPs voted in favour of granting additional funds](#) to EU research and education programmes. The EU's research funding programme Horizon2020 will receive a top-up of €80 million and the mobility programme Erasmus+ will receive a €20 million boost.

Members also urged the European Commission to do its utmost to convince the European Patent office not to grant [patents on plants](#) and seeds obtained from conventional breeding, such as crossing.