

Agenda of the European Commission

15 – 21 June 2015

***Background notes from the Spokespersons' service for journalists.
The European Commission reserves the right to make changes.***

Tuesday 16 June:

- Commission Hosts Annual High-Level Meeting with Religious Leaders
- High-level event on the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan and its impact on the region

Wednesday 17 June:

Commission adopts Action Plan on corporate taxation

Thursday 18 June:

Commission adopts its monthly infringements package

Tuesday 16 June:

Commission Hosts Annual High-Level Meeting with Religious Leaders

The news:

On 16 June, First Vice-President Frans Timmermans hosts the annual high level meeting with religious leaders. On 2 June, the First Vice-President met with philosophical and non-confessional organisations.

The annual meetings established with religious leaders in 2005 and with non-confessional organisations in 2009, take place in the framework of the ongoing dialogue with churches, religions, philosophical and non-confessional organisations based on Article 17 of the Lisbon Treaty.

The meetings allow for an open exchange of views between EU institutions and important parts of European society on a broad range of EU policies. The dialogue was established in the beginning of the 1990s and offers an opportunity to engage in the European policy making process.

Under the Juncker Commission, First Vice President Timmermans is responsible for the dialogue. The topic of both meetings is "Living together and disagreeing well" and will provide an important forum for discussion on community relations, integration and societal cohesion. The outcome of the discussions will feed into the First Annual Fundamental Rights Colloquium to be held in Brussels in October, on the topic "Tolerance and respect: preventing and combating anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim hatred"

The background:

The Treaty of Lisbon explicitly introduces the idea of a dialogue between European institutions and churches, religious associations or communities as well as philosophical and non-confessional organisations (Article 17):

1. The Union respects and does not prejudice the status under national law of churches and religious associations or communities in the Member States.
2. The Union equally respects the status under national law of philosophical and non-confessional organisations.
3. Recognising their identity and their specific contribution, the Union shall maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with these churches and organisations.

The event:

- The high level meeting with religious leaders takes place on 16 June, followed by a press conference with First Vice-President Frans Timmermans, Antonio Tajani, Vice-President of the European Parliament and the meeting participants at 12.00.
- Available on [EbS](#).

The sources:

[Commission website on the Article 17 Dialogue](#)

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Tuesday 16 June:

High-level event on the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan and its impact on the region

The news:

EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos Stylianides, will co-chair in a high-level conference on the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan on 16 June in Geneva, organised by the European Commission together with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

The event will address critical funding needs and give participants the opportunity to announce new pledges of support. The event also aims to raise awareness about the worsening humanitarian crisis in the world's youngest country, and its impact on the region.

Commissioner Stylianides will open the conference together with United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mr. Stephen O'Brien, and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Antonio Guterres. Participants will include representatives of EU Member States, other donor countries, international organisations, and humanitarian organisations operating in South Sudan.

The background:

The UN has declared South Sudan a level 3 emergency – the highest level of humanitarian crisis.

The conflict in the country has displaced more than two million people since December 2013. The economy is on the edge of collapse. The humanitarian needs include food, clean water, health care, sanitation and shelter, while the protection of civilians remains a major concern.

Commissioner Stylianides announced additional humanitarian aid of €50 million during a visit to South Sudan in April, bringing the total of EU humanitarian assistance to the country to over €200 million in 2015.

The situation has deteriorated further over the last month following the resumption of fighting. At the beginning of June, the government of South Sudan expelled without an official explanation a senior United Nations (UN) representative – Mr Toby Lanzer, who had served as the Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in South Sudan, as well as the UN Development Programme Resident Coordinator and the Humanitarian Coordinator since July 2012.

The event:

- The conference will take place at the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations in Geneva on Tuesday 16 June, between 15:00 and 17:15 o'clock.
- The opening session will be open to the press.

The sources:

- [EU Humanitarian aid for South Sudan](#)
- [Commissioner Stylianides' statement on South Sudan's expulsion of UN aid coordinator](#)

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Commission adopts Action Plan on corporate taxation

The news:

The Commission will adopt an Action Plan to make corporate taxation fairer, more efficient and more transparent in the EU. The Action Plan will set out measures to tackle corporate tax avoidance and promote growth-friendly taxation in the Single Market. It will include a strategy to re-launch the Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB), along with other actions to reinforce the link between taxation and economic activity. The fight against corporate tax avoidance is central to the Commission's political priority to ensure a fairer Single Market.

The background:

As indicated in the 2015 Work Programme, the Commission is pursuing an ambitious agenda to combat corporate tax avoidance and ensure that companies are taxed where their profits are generated.

The [Tax Transparency Package](#), presented by the Commission in March 2015, was an important first step in this agenda. It set out measures for greater openness and cooperation between Member States on corporate taxation, notably through the automatic exchange of information on tax rulings.

The Action Plan on 17 June will lay the basis for a fundamental reform of the corporate tax framework in the EU, to prevent tax abuse and foster a more growth-friendly tax environment in the Single Market. It follows an [orientation debate](#) on this topic, held in the College on 27 May.

The event:

- Wednesday 17 June: Press conference by Commissioner Moscovici to present the Action Plan, in the Berlaymont press room.
- This will be followed by an off-the-record technical briefing.
- Press material will be available on the day.

The sources:

- President Juncker's [political guidelines](#)
- The [Commission Work Programme 2015](#)
- The [Tax Transparency Package of March 2015](#)

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Thursday 18 June:

Commission adopts its monthly infringements package

The news:

On Thursday, 18 June 2015 the European Commission will adopt its monthly infringements package. These decisions cover all Member States and most of EU policies and seek to enforce EU law across Europe in the interest of both citizens and businesses.

The background:

Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) gives the Commission the power to take legal action against a Member State that is not respecting its obligations under EU law. There are three successive stages: Letter of formal notice, reasoned opinion and referral to the EU Court of Justice.

If, despite the ruling, a Member State still fails to act, the Commission may open a further infringement case under Article 260 of the TFEU. After only one written warning, Commission may refer a Member State back to the Court and it can propose that the Court imposes financial penalties based on the duration and severity on the infringement and the size of the Member State.

The event:

A comprehensive Fact Sheet on all referrals and reasoned opinions and a specific press release on each referral will be available on the day on [Press Release Database](#).

The sources:

- [Monitoring the application of Union law](#)
- For all decisions please consult the [infringement decisions register](#)
- The [general infringement procedure](#)

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On specific infringements, please contact the Spokesperson in charge.