



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

**PV(2007)1812 final**

Brussels, 19 December 2007

**MINUTES**

**of the 1812th meeting of the Commission**

**held in Strasbourg**

**(Winston Churchill)**

**on Tuesday 11 December 2007**

**(afternoon)**

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**PV(2007)1812 final**

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**Single sitting: Tuesday 11 December 2007 (afternoon)**

The sitting opened at 13.13 hours with Mr BARROSO, President, in the chair. The discussion of item 11 (in part) was chaired by Mr BARROT.

Present:

Mr BARROSO	President	Items 1 to 11 (in part)
Ms WALLSTRÖM	Vice-President	Items 1 to 11 (in part)
Mr VERHEUGEN	Vice-President	Items 1 to 10
Mr BARROT	Vice-President	
Mr KALLAS	Vice-President	Items 1 to 10
Ms REDING		
Mr ALMUNIA		
Ms HÜBNER		Items 1 to 10
Mr BORG		
Ms GRYBAUSKAITĖ		Items 1 to 9
Mr POTOČNIK		Items 1 to 11 (in part)
Mr FIGEL'		
Mr KYPRIANOU		
Mr REHN		
Mr MICHEL		
Mr KOVÁCS		
Ms KROES		Items 1 to 11 (in part)
Ms FISCHER BOEL		
Ms FERRERO-WALDNER		Items 1 to 10
Mr McCREEVY		Items 1 to 10 (in part)
Mr ŠPIDLA		
Mr PIEBALGS		
Ms KUNEVA		
Mr ORBAN		

Absent:

Mr FRATTINI

Vice-President

Mr DIMAS

Mr MANDELSON

The following sat in to represent absent Members of the Commission:

Mr BETTANINI	A member of Mr FRATTINI's staff	
Mr SCHELLEKENS	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr DIMAS	Items 1 to 10

The following also sat in:

Mr VALE DE ALMEIDA	Chef de cabinet to the PRESIDENT	Items 1 to 11 (in part)
Mr PETITE	Director-General, Legal Service	
Mr CARVOUNIS	Deputy Director-General, Communication DG	
Mr LAITENBERGER	Commission Spokesman	Items 1 to 11 (in part)
Mr GASPAR	Acting Director-General, Bureau of European Policy Advisers	Items 1 to 11 (in part)
Mr CABRAL	Adviser hors classe in the PRESIDENT 's Office	Items 1 to 11 (in part)
Ms MARTINHO	Chief adviser in the PRESIDENT's office	Items 7 to 11
Mr MARQUES DE ALMEIDA	A member of the PRESIDENT's staff	Items 10
Ms SIPALA	A member of Ms WALLSTRÖM's staff	Item 10
Mr MORDUE	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr VERHEUGEN	Items 7 to 9
Ms ARNOULD	A member of Mr MICHEL's staff	Item 11(in part)
Mr KERTENS	A member of Mr McCREEVY's staff	Item 11
Mr SERVOZ	Secretariat-General	Items 7 to 9
Mr DE KOSTER	Secretariat-General	Items 7 to 9

Secretary: Ms DAY, Secretary-General, assisted by Mr AYET PUIGARNAU, Director in the Secretariat-General.

**1. AGENDAS**

**(OJ(2007)1812/3; SEC(2007)1639/2)**

The Commission took note of that day's agenda and of the tentative agendas for forthcoming meetings.

**2. WEEKLY MEETING OF CHEFS DE CABINET**

**(SEC(2007)1812)**

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Monday 10 December.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND SPECIAL MINUTES OF 1725<sup>TH</sup> MEETING  
(5 DECEMBER 2007)**

**(PV(2007)1811; PV(2007)1811, PART II)**

The Commission approved the minutes of its 1811th meeting.



#### **4. MONITORING THE APPLICATION OF COMMUNITY LAW**

##### **4.1. STATE AID – HORIZONTAL DOSSIER**

- i) Commission Regulation amending Regulation (EC) 794/2004 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 659/1999 laying down detailed rules for the application of Article 93 of the EC Treaty – Transmission of notification forms and of subsequent correspondence, interest rates applicable to the recovery of illegal aid and notification forms**

(SEC(2007)1670; SEC(2007)1669)

The Commission

- adopted in principle the Regulation amending Regulation (EC) 794/2004 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 659/1999 laying down detailed rules for the application of Article 93 of the EC Treaty, in the document distributed as SEC(2007)1670;
- empowered Ms KROES to formally adopt the Regulation in all the official languages, to inform the Member States and interested parties by means of publication in the Official Journal of the European Union, and to inform the EFTA Supervisory Authority.

- ii) Commission communication on the revision of the method of calculation of the reference and discount rates**

(SEC(2007)1647/2; SEC(2007)1669)

The Commission

- approved in principle the communication on the revision of the method of calculation of the reference and discount rates, distributed as SEC(2007)1647/2;

- empowered Ms KROES to formally approve the communication in all the official languages, to inform the Member States and interested parties by means of publication in the Official Journal of the European Union, and to inform the EFTA Supervisory Authority.

**iii) Commission Regulation on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty to *de minimis* aid in the agricultural production sector (SEC(2007)1671; SEC(2007)1669)**

The Commission

- adopted in principle the Regulation on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty to *de minimis aid* in the agricultural production sector, distributed as SEC(2007)1671;
- empowered Ms FISCHER BOEL to formally adopt the Regulation in all the official languages and to have it published in the Official Journal of the European Union.

**4.2. STATE AID – INDIVIDUAL CASES – RECAPITULATIVE LIST  
(SEC(2007)1697; SEC(2007)1669)**

The Commission adopted the decisions in the recapitulative list SEC(2007)1697.

**4.3. INFRINGEMENTS - REPORT A2/2007 – RECAPITULATIVE LIST  
(SEC(2007)1566 AND /2)**

The Commission adopted the decisions in the recapitulative list in SEC(2007)1566/2.

**4.4. INFRINGEMENTS – URGENT CASES – RECAPITULATIVE LIST  
(SEC(2007)1535; SEC(2007)1534)**

The Commission adopted the decisions in the recapitulative list in SEC(2007)1535.

## **5. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS**

### **5.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED**

*(SEC(2007)1640 ET SEQ.)*

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 3 and 7 December 2007.

### **5.2. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES**

*(SEC(2007)1641 AND /2)*

The Commission took note of the sensitive written procedures for which the time limit expires between 10 and 14 December and of the "finalisation" written procedure initiated following the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet on 10 December 2007.

It took note in particular of the proposal to be adopted by written procedure (E/2876/2007) concerning the denunciation of the protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution of the partnership agreement in the fisheries sector between the European Community and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania. Although this proposal needed to be adopted for legal reasons and for the sake of sound financial management, the Commission was also aware of the political situation in Mauritania, its participation in the Barcelona process, and the need to support the process of democratisation in progress in that country.

Recognising that while the revenue losses resulting from the renegotiation of the fishing opportunities laid down by the protocol were justified in law, they would have a negative impact on the development of this sector, the Commission would seek, in the forthcoming negotiations with Mauritania, a way of granting substantial aid to the fisheries sector in the country.

**5.3. EMPOWERMENT**

*(SEC(2007)1642 ET SEQ.)*

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 3 and 7 December 2007.

**5.4. DELEGATION AND SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS**

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation procedure between 3 and 7 December 2007, as archived on "Greffé 2000" (Registry).

**6. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS**

*(SEC(2007)1643/2)*

**ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

*(PERS(2007)123)*

**6.1. DG REGIONAL POLICY – EXTERNAL PUBLICATION OF A  
VACANCY NOTICE FOR AN AD14 FUNCTION OF DIRECTOR (EU-12)**

*(PERS(2007)122)*

On a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms HÜBNER, the Commission decided to authorise the publication, under Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations, the vacancy notice in PERS(2007)122 for the function of Director, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden in the Regional Policy Directorate-General.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**6.2. DG COMMUNICATION – AMENDMENT OF THE ORGANISATION CHART AND TRANSFER OF AD15 OFFICIAL**

The Commission, on a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms WALLSTRÖM, decided:

- to create a function of Chief Adviser in the Communication Directorate-General;
- to transfer to this function, in the interest of the service, under Article 7 of the Staff Regulations, Mr Jan Høst SCHMIDT, currently Director, Structural Reforms and Lisbon Strategy: Economic Evaluation, in the Economic and Financial Affairs Directorate-General.
- to dispense with this function after the departure of the holder of the post.

These decisions would take effect from 1 January 2008.

**6.3. DG EXTERNAL RELATIONS – PROMOTION OF AN A\*11 OFFICIAL (C(2007)6297)**

The Commission took note of the information in point 3 of PERS(2007)123 and, on a proposal from Mr KALLAS, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms FERRERO-WALDNER, adopted the decision in the document distributed as C(2007)6297 on the promotion to grade A\*12 of Mr Jean-Pierre PIERARD, who died in an air crash on 9 August 2007 while on mission.

This decision would take effect on 1 March 2006.

**6.4. REPORT ON GENDER BALANCE IN INITIAL RECRUITMENTS AND APPOINTMENTS OF OFFICIALS TO MANAGEMENT POSTS (1 JANUARY – 31 OCTOBER 2007) (SEC(2007)1674)**

The Commission took note of the report and of the conclusions in the document distributed as SEC(2007)1674.

**6.5. ETHICS RULES AND STANDARDS FOR STAFF OF THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS**

*(SEC(2007)1675 AND /2)*

The Commission took note of the information from the PRESIDENT in SEC(2007)1675.

**7. STRATEGIC REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS ON THE RENEWED LISBON STRATEGY FOR GROWTH AND JOBS: LAUNCHING THE NEW CYCLE (2008-2010)**

**(COM(2007)803 TO /14)**

**8. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS - PROPOSAL FOR A COMMUNITY LISBON PROGRAMME (2008 - 2010)**

**(COM(2007)804 AND /2)**

**9. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS - MEMBER STATES AND REGIONS DELIVERING THE LISBON STRATEGY FOR GROWTH AND JOBS THROUGH EU COHESION POLICY, 2007-2013**

**(COM(2007)798 TO /3)**

The Commission considered the three documents tabled by the PRESIDENT, Mr VERHEUGEN, and by Ms HÜBNER and Mr ŠPIDLA respectively.

The PRESIDENT first pointed out that these documents constituted the bases from which the European Council next spring would relaunch the Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs for the period up to 2010. The papers before the Commission had been discussed on 4 December by the group of Commissioners responsible for the Lisbon Strategy; the main political messages they conveyed were an accurate reflection of the outcome of those discussions.

The first point he noted was that the Lisbon strategy was producing positive results, something he thought important to highlight in the communication efforts that would be needed. He stated that a genuine joint agenda with the Member States had been worked out since 2005, supported by a real partnership and new working methods. He felt that the Commission was entitled to be satisfied with the results secured to date, but added that much remained to be done, in particular as regards implementation, and for one thing that tougher reforms would still be necessary. Emphasising the importance of ensuring the stability of the framework put in place, the PRESIDENT concluded that attention should focus on the implementation aspects rather than on the instruments, which were already operating satisfactorily. In this spirit, he mentioned the line taken by the Commission, which was to preserve the integrated guidelines for growth and jobs as they were and to adapt only the texts of the recommendations in order to foster better implementation.

He then drew attention to the need to maintain the Lisbon strategy as a top political priority during the next cycle, and not to let it slide into a routine process. The Lisbon strategy had been identified at the recent informal meeting of Heads of State or Government as a fundamental element of Europe's response to the challenges of globalisation. From this the PRESIDENT concluded that it was important to get the European Council to take the strategy further, to strengthen partnership and to take decisions within the four priority areas.

In the context of the link between the Lisbon strategy and globalisation, he also mentioned the Commission proposal to use the strategic dialogues with the main trading partners. He considered that the aspects which were of strategic interest for Europe, such as standards, market access (and more particularly the need to remove

any obstacles) and intellectual property, must be addressed in a more systematic fashion.

The PRESIDENT noted that, for the first time, the package going to the spring European Council also contained a document on the manner in which the Structural Funds had been used to help achieve the objectives of the Lisbon strategy.

He emphasised the importance for the Commission to be extremely rigorous and watchful as regards implementation of the actions identified within the time allowed. He suggested that for this the group of Commissioners responsible for the Lisbon strategy should examine regularly the progress of implementation.

Finally the PRESIDENT asked the Members of the Commission to do everything within their power to present the initiatives to the media in as favourable a light as possible, more particularly in the national context and to the parties of civil society most directly concerned.

Mr VERHEUGEN then presented the Community Lisbon programme for 2008-2010, explaining how this new programme could help to translate the guidelines in the report on the Lisbon strategy into specific measures at Community level.

Mr VERHEUGEN agreed with the PRESIDENT that the Commission could feel pleased with the progress made by the Lisbon Strategy on some very important macroeconomic aspects, such as combating unemployment, productivity, women's employment and the elderly. He also confirmed that the partnership approach proposed by the Commission was the right choice and a guarantee of major successes in the long term.

He then quickly reviewed the main points of the new programme, highlighting the improvement in the targeting of objectives, the greater care in the choice of measures – which must focus strictly on jobs and growth – the strengthening of the external dimension, and the refinement of certain aspects of governance.

Ms HÜBNER presented the communication she was tabling, jointly with Mr ŠPIDLA, on the contribution of the EU cohesion policy to the implementation of



the Lisbon strategy. With the support of some statistics, she pointed out that cohesion policy had in fact proved to be one of the best vectors for helping to attain the objectives of the Lisbon strategy. She recalled the efforts the present Commission had made to bring this about and reviewed the key points of the communication. Without going into the detail of the various lines developed, Ms HÜBNER highlighted the importance of the innovation dimension and of the planned follow-up mechanisms, which would help in assessing the level of performance of the national reform programmes.

Mr ŠPIDLA added some brief remarks to Ms HÜBNER's presentation. He emphasised the relevance of the working methods use to discern the social dimension of the Lisbon strategy. He drew attention to the pivotal role of the concept of flexicurity as a basic element for structuring the reform of the labour market. In more general terms, Mr ŠPIDLA felt that recent economic developments confirmed that the strategy of growth and employment adopted by the Commission was the right one and had to continue. Beyond these aspects, the present international situation seemed to call for ever closer coordination of the Member States' economic policies.

The Commission then held an exchange of views, focusing in particular on the contribution of research and technological development to achieving the Lisbon strategy. It referred to the criteria for interpreting the figures communicated and examined the specific features of the research and technological development sector that could underlie the data in question. The Barcelona objectives for the overall effort in favour of research and development – 3% of GDP in 2010 with 2/3 from the private sector – were mentioned and the situation of Europe was compared with that of its main partners. In this connection note was taken of the impetus that could be provided by the joint technology platforms advocated by the Commission, and the prospects for the volume of 2008 budget appropriations that would be earmarked for research and technological development.

The Commission also considered the following aspects:

- the appropriateness of the selective approach taken regarding the priority objectives, given the absolute need to seek tangible results;
- the importance of supporting the reform efforts that the Lisbon strategy required of Member States, in particular to improve productivity, as symptoms of fatigue were beginning to appear;
- the relevance of the partnership model contained in the Lisbon strategy, which was sure to meet public expectations and support the efforts to facilitate ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon;
- the vital importance of the external dimension of the Lisbon strategy, more precisely the need to press Europe's priorities as regards growth and jobs in negotiations on international agreements between the Union and third countries;
- the importance of the principles and rules of competition, and prevention of any protectionist tendencies;
- the need to promote a change of mentalities and processes to provide adequate backing for entrepreneurship and to achieve the knowledge-based society;
- the need to take account of other specific aspects such as long-term viability of social security and public health systems.

The PRESIDENT concluded this exchange of views with a reference to the Commission's very broad support for the three documents on the table. On the strategic report in particular, he noted that there was agreement on the balance achieved, on the relevance of the guidelines it contained and on the proposals for concrete action.

He stressed how important it was for each of the Commissioners to assume ownership of the actions relating to their portfolio. He also highlighted the communication efforts required on the full package approved, ensuring that the messages conveyed accurately reflected the conclusions of the strategic report on the Lisbon strategy.

Finally the PRESIDENT thanked the Commission Members for the support they had given in the preparation of this set of documents, and also their departments, especially the team from the Secretariat-General, for the high standard of the coordination work. In this connection, the PRESIDENT singled out for praise Mr Michel SERVOZ, Director in the Secretariat-General, who had been outstandingly painstaking and effective in the preparation of the dossier.

In conclusion, the Commission approved, subject to a final linguistic check, the strategic report on the implementation of the renewed Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs and the Community Lisbon programme 2008-2010, set out in COM(2007)803/10, /3, /6, /11, /12, /4, /13, /14 and /5, and COM(2007)804/2 respectively, for transmission to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, and to the national parliaments.

The Commission also approved, subject to a final linguistic check, the communication in COM(2007)798/3, for transmission to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, and to the national parliaments.

## **10. OTHER BUSINESS**

### ***10.1. SIGNING OF THE LISBON TREATY (LISBON, 13 DECEMBER 2007) (SEC(2007)1698)***

The PRESIDENT reminded the meeting of the priority given by the Commission seminar in September to making a success of the transition to the new Treaty and the undertaking to monitor further developments in the situation closely.

He also stressed the part the Commission had to play in ensuring the success of the ratification stage which would start immediately after the signing of the

Treaty in Lisbon on 13 December and reported that the Commission would be invited, at the beginning of next year, to look again more closely at the various ways it could support the process in the 27 Member States.

For the time being he wanted to concentrate on three main aspects: the question of advance application of certain provisions of the Treaty, the preparations for its entry into force and, finally, the guidelines for the communication efforts during the ratification period.

On the first point, the PRESIDENT felt that, in keeping with past practice, the Commission should refrain from anticipating the entry into force of the Treaty. While it was certainly advisable to take into account any requests from Parliament or the Council concerning proposals which would, under the new Treaty, fall under the codecision procedure, he urged Members of the Commission to ensure that their departments exercised the utmost caution in this regard.

The PRESIDENT also pointed to the need for careful preparation and cooperation with the other institutions ahead of the entry into force of the Treaty at the beginning of 2009, while noting that the work that had already been done in 2004 and 2005 constituted a useful starting point. He stressed the importance of coordination here and the role of his own cabinet and that of Ms WALLSTRÖM, assisted by the Secretariat-General and the Legal Service, and asked the Commission Members personally to ensure that everything was done to comply with this requirement.

On the subject of communication, the PRESIDENT recalled that the June European Council had highlighted the importance of communicating with the public throughout the ratification process and that the Commission had undertaken to make the Treaty of Lisbon one of its communication priorities. This was a difficult task which had to be performed in a unique political context; the right balance had to be struck and the different political realities of the Member States taken into account, working in close partnership with the countries themselves. He recommended using joint communication plans

which would be developed with each Member State while still remaining true to the spirit of the Lisbon Treaty and the tried and tested twin-track approach.

Finally, he referred to the Member States' different views on the timetable for producing a consolidated version of the Treaty and recommended that the Commission respect these points of view and refrain from commenting on the unofficial versions which were starting to circulate. He asked the Commission Members to be particularly careful in their public statements and to do everything possible to coordinate their programmes of visits to the Member States amongst themselves and with the Commission's representations on the spot.

The PRESIDENT then referred specifically to the need to focus attention on the debate preceding the referendum to be held as part of the ratification process in Ireland. Some pointers were already emerging from the opinion polls: a feeling among the public of being ill-informed and a regrettable tendency for the debate on the Treaty itself to become embroiled with other European issues that were not directly related to it, and for the referendum to be used, when the time came, to express an opinion on the performance of the national government.

Given how difficult it was for outsiders to sketch out an appropriate form of communication, he recommended relying on the expertise of Mr McCREEVY, the representation in Dublin and the Irish Government itself in this matter to find the best way of supporting the ratification process. He also pointed to the need for carefully timed visits to Ireland by Commission Members.

The PRESIDENT concluded by saying that the ramifications and potential implications of this referendum would be felt in Ireland and beyond and he urged Commission Members to prepare themselves thoroughly for the questions they would undoubtedly be asked in this connection.

Ms WALLSTRÖM began by underlining the crucial importance of the proclamation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in Strasbourg on 12 December and the signing of the Treaty in Lisbon the next day.

She, too, considered the question of the preparations for the entry into force of the Treaty, stressing the importance of a cautious, united approach that would enable the Commission to implement the new Treaty effectively in the various policy areas from the beginning of 2009. She advocated close cooperation and the introduction of an early warning system to alert all Commission Members whenever an institutional question arose in any particular area.

As regards advance application of the Treaty, Ms WALLSTRÖM stressed the importance of an in-depth examination of the optimal timetable for proposals, particularly in the field of justice, freedom and security, where the changes introduced by the Treaty would have a significant impact, and the need for constructive informal cooperation with Parliament, if the interest of the legislative proposals so demanded.

On the matter of communication, she spoke of the balance that had to be struck between the Commission's duty to inform the general public and the responsibility for ensuring successful ratification, which rested with the Member States. She, too, stressed the importance of careful and cautious communication, which took account of the potential repercussions in the different Member States.

Ms WALLSTRÖM highlighted the merits of the communication model chosen, which was decentralised and differentiated and relied on national communication plans drawn up by the representations in close cooperation with the national governments. The campaigns should try to explain the rationale of the Treaty and the changes it would introduce, particularly the specific amendments that would have an impact on ordinary people.

On the question of the consolidated Treaty, she stressed the importance of people having access to a readable text, but noted that there was as yet no consensus among the Member States on this issue. She therefore felt that the consolidated version would not be produced before the Treaty entered into force. This meant that all the communication about the Treaty would have to be even more clear, factual and accessible, not least in terms of the language it used.

Ms WALLSTRÖM concluded by referring to the work that had already been started and by announcing that a range of communication tools would be distributed in January.

The discussion that followed focused on the following points:

***Advance application of the Treaty***

- the need for a common approach to the question of advance application of provisions of the new Treaty, in particular in terms of codecision, given the possible knock-on effect and the potential implications for certain major dossiers if there were delays in adopting important legislative proposals, for example in the area of agriculture;

***Preparations***

- the important internal preparations that needed to be made particularly to set up the European external action service and as regards institutional aspects;

***Communication***

- the importance of active, dynamic communication showing the EU's contribution to meeting the major challenges we currently face, such as climate change, energy supply, migration and agricultural questions, and the tangible day-to-day benefits of the European Union in terms of democracy, peace, security, freedom of expression, prosperity;

- the advisability, therefore, of focusing communication efforts on Europe, not just the Treaty;
- the question of whether the communication strategy should take a defensive or an attacking stance, and on the role of the Commission and its Members in this connection;
- the merits of decentralised communication, attuned to the national situation and developed in close cooperation with the Member States; the central role of the Commission representations in this respect, but also the ultimate responsibility of the Member States for informing the public about the changes brought about by the Treaty;
- the question of whether a consolidated Treaty ought to be produced at this stage, in the interests of readability for the public;
- the need to use modern media such as the Internet in order to run an effective communication campaign, the Treaty's detractors being already active there themselves;
- the importance of carefully planned and coordinated visits by Commission Members, particularly to the Member State required to ratify the Treaty by referendum;
- the need for prominent involvement by Commission Members in their respective national debates and for careful and coordinated handling of particular dossiers – such as renewable energy – which are particularly sensitive in certain Member States;

***Ratification methods and the process as a whole***

- the decision by the Danish Government to opt for a parliamentary ratification procedure for the Treaty and the prospects of speedy ratification as a result; on the other hand the fact that Denmark would hold a referendum in 2008 on the exemptions from the Maastricht Treaty;



- the risk of national and local issues clouding the issue of the Treaty of Lisbon for those citizens consulted by referendum, and the danger of a high rate of abstention identified by the opinion polls;
- the active campaigning by proponents of the "no" vote that had already started inside and outside the country concerned and the negative campaigns being run in certain Member States by some mass-circulation newspapers;
- the need for information about the exact timetable for the ratification process in all of the Member States and doubts about the feasibility of completing the process in a single year (2008);

*Other aspects*

- internally, the need to consider introducing a system to assess the state of the ratification process at regular intervals and coordinate policies, and the need to plan a seminar on the legal aspects of the Treaty.

The PRESIDENT wound up the discussion by emphasising the need for communication during the ratification period to be both proactive and cautious and to clearly demonstrate the EU's tangible achievements. In his view, the practical implementation of the Commission's work programme for 2008, particularly in the areas of climate change and energy, would be an important aspect of this. He also wanted to impress on Commission Members the importance of not provoking inappropriate debates, particularly in the Member State in which ratification would be put to the popular vote. The important thing was to highlight European added value in general.

The PRESIDENT welcomed this exchange of views and reminded the meeting that the Commission would have another chance to consider these issues in January 2008.

The Commission took note of the information note from the PRESIDENT and Ms WALLSTRÖM in SEC(2007)1698.

**10.2. RESULTS OF THE EUROBAROMETER SURVEY IN AUTUMN 2007  
(SEC(2007)1699)**

The Commission took note of the information note from Ms WALLSTRÖM in SEC(2007)1699.

**11. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS  
(SEC(2007)1644)**

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group held on Friday 7 December 2007 (SEC(2007)1644).

It paid particular attention to the following:

**11.1. LEGISLATIVE MATTERS**

**i) Preparations for Council meeting (Agriculture and Fisheries)  
(Brussels, 17 to 19 December 2007)  
(point 1.2 of the IRG record)**

- TAC and quotas for 2008 applicable in Community waters and, for Community vessels, in waters where catch limitations are required

The Commission authorised Mr BORG, with a view to the Council meeting (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 17, 18 and 19 December, to accept a Presidency compromise that would help to secure agreement by qualified majority of the Member States in accordance with the line set out in SI(2007)1133/2.

- TAC and quotas for 2008 applicable in the Black Sea

The Commission authorised Mr BORG, with a view to the Council meeting (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 17, 18 and 19 December, to accept a Presidency compromise that would help to secure agreement by qualified

majority of the Member States in accordance with the line set out in SI(2007)1134.

**ii) Preparations for Council meeting (Environment) (Brussels, 20 December 2007)**  
**(point 1.3 of the IRG record)**

- Inclusion of aviation activities in the scheme for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading within the Community (Directive) – LIESE report – 2006/0304 (COD)

The Commission authorised Mr DIMAS, with a view to the Council meeting (Environment) on 20 December, to accept a Presidency compromise that would help to secure agreement by qualified majority of the Member States in accordance with the line set out in SI(2007)1136/3.

**iii) Preparation for Parliament's December part-session**  
**(point 1.4 of the IRG record)**

In accordance with the rules in force, the Commission authorised the Commission Members responsible, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and Ms WALLSTRÖM and any other Members associated, to take a position on Parliament's amendments to its proposals.

It paid particular attention to the following:

- Framework for Community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive) – LIENEMANN report – 2005/0211 (COD)

Further to the authorisation already granted to Mr DIMAS by the Commission at its 1811th meeting (5 December 2007), the Commission approved the compromise text in SP(2007)6165/3.

## ***11.2. RELATIONS WITH THE COUNCIL***

### **iv) Programming of Council business**

(SI(2007)1139)

The Commission took note of the information in SI(2007)1139 on the Council meetings between 6 and 19 December 2007.

### **v) Results of Council meeting (General Affairs and External Relations)**

**– External Relations session (Brussels, 10-11 December 2007)**

(SI(2007)1171)

#### **Enlargement and the Western Balkans**

Mr REHN reported on some of the results of the Council meeting (General affairs and external relations), held in Brussels on 10 and 11 December.

He began with the debate on the outlook for the enlargement process, the first discussion on the subject since the last French presidential elections. Mr REHN set out the positions taken and the reactions they had prompted, giving an indication of the potential consequences for the next stages in the negotiation process.

He then reported on the Council's discussion, in the presence of the European Mediator in the international troika, Mr Wolfgang Ischinger, on the outcome and follow-up of the talks sponsored by the international troika on the future status of Kosovo. He outlined how the situation seemed most likely to develop and stressed the need for the Union to remain united and guarantee a controlled and coordinated process.

Lastly Mr REHN mentioned the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, stating that a climate of security had been restored in the country, particularly through the positive effect of operation Althea.

The Commission held a brief exchange of views on the various items of information provided by Mr REHN, examining the implications of the latest

developments in the Western Balkans both for relations between the countries concerned and for general stability in the region.

The Commission took note of this information.

- vi) Results of Council meeting (Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumers) – Health session (Brussels, 5 and 6 December 2007)**  
(SEC(2007)1700; SI(2007)1129/3)

The Commission took note of the information note from Mr KYPRIANOU in SEC(2007)1700.

### ***11.3. RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT***

- vii) Action taken on Parliament's non-legislative resolutions**  
(point 3.6.2 of the IRG record)

The Commission approved documents SP(2007)6302 to /3 on the action taken on the non-legislative resolutions adopted by Parliament at its October II 2007 part-session, for transmission to Parliament.

### ***11.4. OTHER MATTERS***

- viii) Results of second EU/Africa summit (Lisbon, 7 to 9 December 2007)**  
(SEC(2007)1702)

Mr MICHEL presented to the Commission the principal results of the second summit between the EU and Africa, held in Lisbon on 7, 8 and 9 December.

He was pleased to report that the objective sought by the Commission, namely a new partnership between Europe and Africa that represents a step forward in terms of quality, had been endorsed by all the parties. This success was the result of some very lengthy background preparations, begun in December 2005, following the Commission communication proposing a new strategy for Africa. Mr MICHEL therefore drew the attention of the

Commission Members to the major challenge now facing the Commission of translating this political vision into concrete measures.

He reviewed the areas of the partnership and the operational objectives laid down in the joint strategy and in the first action plan. He stressed the efforts that implementation would require and for which the Commission would have to be the principal driving force. For this the Commission would have to demonstrate political coherence, ensuring that the policies most directly concerned were implemented in a concerted fashion. He added that to honour the commitments made would also demand organisational coherence, involving in particular close coordination between Commission departments and Council bodies.

He also mentioned the twin title of the future Head of Delegation of the EU to the African Union, who would also be the special representative of the EU, adding that everything should be done to make this formula a success, as it pointed the way for the future external action service.

Lastly, Mr MICHEL referred to the planned economic partnership agreements, highlighting in succession their real scope, the important benefits for the countries concerned and the isolated difficulties that were still hampering the process for the negotiation of these agreements. He felt that some reactions on this matter could be explained by the tension that existed between the African countries concerned, connected in some instances with their respective positions within the regional subgroups.

The Commission held a brief exchange of views, looking in particular at the important efforts that would be necessary to arrive at the results hoped for. It also considered the interest of strengthening its presence in these countries, and the stepping up of contacts and on-the-spot visits by Commissioners.

The PRESIDENT concluded the exchange of views expressing satisfaction with the success of the summit in general, and with the cohesion the EU had

shown. It was now a case of addressing carefully the main challenges, with the participation of the Commission Members most directly concerned.

The Commission took note of these observations and of the note from Mr MICHEL distributed as SEC(2007)1702.

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The meeting closed at 16.16 hours.