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6th European Union–African Union Summit: European and African leaders lay the foundations for a renewed and deeper partnership

For the next two days, Commission President **von der Leyen**, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/ Vice-President of the European Commission, Josep **Borrell**, will attend the 6th European Union–African Union Summit (EU-AU), which gathers leaders from the EU and the AU, their respective Member States and a limited number of observers. The President of the European Council, Charles Michel, will co-chair the proceedings together with President of the Republic of Senegal, Macky Sall, as current Chairperson of the AU. The EU-AU Summits take place traditionally every three years, alternating between Africa and Europe. The current Summit was initially scheduled in 2020, but was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This Summit will present a unique opportunity to lay the foundations for a renewed and deeper AU-EU partnership, with the highest political involvement and based on trust and a clear understanding of mutual interests. The aim is to launch an ambitious Global Gateway Africa-Europe Investment Package, to step up investments in infrastructure, healthcare and education, taking into account global challenges, such as climate change and the current health crisis. The talks will also cover tools and solutions to promote stability and security through a renewed peace and security architecture. Leaders will discuss a wide range of topics such as financing for sustainable and inclusive growth; climate change and energy transition, digital and transport, connectivity and infrastructure; peace, security and governance; private sector support and economic integration; education, culture and vocational training, migration and mobility; agriculture and sustainable development; strengthening of health systems and boosting local vaccine production. A declaration on a joint vision for 2030 is expected to be adopted by the participants tomorrow. President **von der Leyen** will speak at the opening ceremony, also attended by Commissioner **Urpilainen**, today at +/- 14:45 CET and take part in the press conference after the Summit on Friday at +/- 14:00 CET, livestreamed on [EBS](#). President **von der Leyen**'s opening speech will be available [online](#) this afternoon. She will also participate in the Summit roundtable on climate and energy transition, digital and infrastructure. More information in the factsheets on the [Team Europe global response to COVID-19](#); [the Global Gateway strategy](#) and the [Europe Africa Global Gateway Investment plan](#). (For more information: Nabila Massrali – Tel.: +32 229 88093; Ana Pisonero – Tel.: + 32 229 54320)

Pacte vert : l'UE investit plus de 110 millions d'euros dans des projets LIFE en faveur de l'environnement et du climat dans 11 pays

La Commission annonce aujourd'hui un investissement de plus de 110 millions d'euros dans des projets intégrés de protection de l'environnement et du climat au titre du [programme LIFE](#), sélectionnés à la suite d'un appel à propositions couvrant l'année 2020. Ces fonds soutiendront de nouveaux grands projets environnementaux et climatiques dans 11 pays de l'Union : Chypre, le Danemark, l'Estonie, la Finlande, la France, la Lettonie, la Lituanie, les Pays-Bas, la Pologne, la Slovénie et la Tchéquie. Ces projets contribuent à la [relance verte dans le contexte de la pandémie de COVID-19](#) et soutiennent les objectifs de neutralité climatique et de zéro pollution d'ici à 2050, tels qu'énoncés dans le [Pacte vert pour l'Europe](#). Il s'agit d'exemples concrets des actions qui permettront de réaliser les principaux objectifs du pacte vert pour l'Europe dans le cadre de la [stratégie de l'UE en faveur de la biodiversité à l'horizon 2030](#) et du [plan d'action de l'UE en faveur de l'économie circulaire](#). Les projets intégrés permettent aux États membres de recourir à d'autres sources de financement de l'Union, telles que des fonds agricoles, structurels, régionaux et de recherche, ainsi qu'à des fonds nationaux et à des investissements du secteur privé. Dans leur ensemble, ces 11 projets devraient attirer plus de 10 milliards d'euros de fonds complémentaires, multipliant considérablement les ressources allouées aujourd'hui pour faire réellement la différence sur le terrain. De plus amples détails sont disponibles dans notre [communiqué de presse](#) et dans la [liste de ces projets](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Tim McPhie – Tél.: +32 229 58602; Adalbert Jahnz – Tél.: +32 229 53156; Daniela Stoycheva – Tél.: +32 229 53664; Lynn Rietdorf – Tél.: +32 229

Africa-Europe Week: Strengthening cross-continent, people-to-people and business relations between both continents*

In the margins of the [6th European Union - African Union summit](#) on 17 and 18 February 2022, over 10,000 delegates from Europe, Africa and beyond participated in the first [Africa-Europe Week](#), opened by President **von der Leyen**. More than 16,000 delegates participated in the [7th EU-Africa Business Forum \(EABF\)](#), which was hosted in a hybrid format in Brussels and virtually. With over 100 sessions, panel discussions and concerts, this new forum's objective was to strengthen cross-continent people-to-people relations. It provided a space for youth, civil society, cultural actors and the private sector to discuss the aspects of the Africa-Europe partnerships that matter most to them. The results of the discussions and pertinent recommendations, summarised by [youth delegates](#), [civil society organisations](#) and the [EABF](#), will be presented to the 6th EU-AU Summit. During her [keynote speech](#) on the Youth Day of the Africa Europe Week, Commissioner for International Partnerships, Jutta **Urpilainen**, highlighted the importance of youth engagement in political discussions: “*Young people are not only the future, but the present. That's why we're involving them today in the policies that will shape the world of tomorrow. An EU-Africa Partnership is sustainable only with youth at its core. Youth must be involved in shaping it, and leaders must listen.*” The Africa-Europe Week closes today with the concert of [MAISHA](#), a unique Afro-European musical collective that unites 12 talented and acknowledged artists from both continents, a stellar illustration of the people-to-people ties both Africa and Europe share. You can find more detailed information [here](#). (For more information: Ana Pisonero - Tel: +32 229 54320; Gesine Knolle - Tel: +32 229 54323)

REACT-EU: 285 millions d'euros pour soutenir l'emploi, les compétences et l'inclusion sociale en France, en Allemagne et en Roumanie

La Commission a octroyé un montant total de 285 millions d'euros aux programmes opérationnels (PO) du [Fonds social européen \(FSE\)](#) de la France, de l'Allemagne et de la Roumanie au titre du [soutien à la reprise en faveur de la cohésion et des territoires de l'Europe \(REACT-EU\)](#). Les ressources supplémentaires aideront des personnes sans emploi à trouver un nouvel emploi, renforceront les systèmes d'éducation, d'emploi et de soins de santé et contribueront à accélérer la reprise après la crise pandémique. La France reçoit 24 millions d'euros supplémentaires pour le PO FSE de son département d'outre-mer de la Guyane. Les fonds aideront les élèves à risque de décrochage scolaire, par exemple grâce à des programmes de soutien intensif sur mesure et à la formation en alternance dans les entreprises et les écoles professionnelles. Le financement supplémentaire soutiendra également les personnes sans emploi et les personnes les plus éloignées du marché du travail au moyen de mesures d'inclusion sociale, et aidera les travailleurs à acquérir les compétences nécessaires dans un monde du travail en mutation. En Allemagne, le PO du FSE dans le Bade-Wurtemberg reçoit 27 millions d'euros supplémentaires pour soutenir plus de 16 000 personnes particulièrement touchées par la pandémie. Les nouveaux fonds aideront les personnes dans le besoin à accéder aux outils et services numériques et à savoir comment les utiliser. Des initiatives spécifiques soutiendront également l'autonomisation socio-économique des femmes issues de l'immigration. Les personnes sans emploi de longue durée bénéficieront aussi du soutien du service public de l'emploi pour les aider à trouver un nouvel emploi. Les nouveaux fonds soutiendront également la formation professionnelle des travailleurs dans le cadre de dispositifs de chômage partiel, ainsi que des formations sur mesure pour les professionnels de la culture. Pour sa part, la Roumanie reçoit 234 millions d'euros supplémentaires pour son PO « Capital humain ». Les nouveaux fonds contribueront à fournir des cours à 168 000 élèves défavorisés afin de compenser les heures d'école perdues pendant la pandémie. En outre, les nouveaux fonds soutiendront de nouveaux emplois en encourageant l'embauche de personnes qui ont perdu leur emploi pendant la pandémie, et en soutenant 295 nouvelles entreprises sociales pour les personnes appartenant à des groupes vulnérables. Le financement supplémentaire soutiendra également les primes en faveur de 97 000 professionnels de la santé en première ligne de la pandémie. REACT-EU fait partie de [NextGenerationEU](#) et fournit 50,6 milliards d'euros (en prix courants) au cours des années 2021 et 2022 de fonds supplémentaires aux programmes de la politique de cohésion pour la période 2014-2020. (Pour plus d'informations: Stefan de Keersmaecker — Tél.: +32 229 84680 ; Veerle Nuyts — Tél.: +32 229 96302)

NextGenerationEU funding operations off to a good start according to new report

The Commission published today its first [semi-annual report on the NextGenerationEU funding programme](#), covering the period June–December 2021. It details a number of key statistics related

to NextGenerationEU borrowing, such as the total funds the Commission raised for the programme in 2021 (€71 billion in long-term funding) and the total funds it disbursed to Member States under the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) (€64 billion) and to other programmes under the EU budget. Of particular note is the sheer size of demand for NextGenerationEU borrowing. Keen to accelerate Europe's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, investors maintained strong interest in the programme throughout the year, producing orderbooks between 7 and 14 times oversubscribed. This allowed the Commission to close its 2021 NextGenerationEU transactions on very favourable terms, ultimately achieving an average cost of funding as low as 0.14%. Among other achievements, the Commission confirmed that all amounts due to Member States in 2021 were paid rapidly, less than 6 working days after the completion of the necessary legal procedures. Commenting on the report, Commissioner responsible for Budget and Administration, Johannes **Hahn**, said: *"Today's report confirms the ground-breaking success of the NextGenerationEU funding programme. The benefits of this strong performance will be passed on to the Member States receiving RRF grants and loans, a testament to what European solidarity can achieve."* The Commission's semi-annual report on NextGenerationEU funding operations is available [here](#). More information about NextGenerationEU borrowing and lending is available on [our website](#). (For more information: Balazs Ujvari - Tel.: +32 229 54578; Claire Joawn - Tel.: +32 229 56859)

Humanitarian aid: €294.2 million for people in need in East and Southern Africa

The Commission has allocated €294.2 million in humanitarian funding to assist vulnerable populations in East and Southern Africa in 2022. The funding will be allocated to projects in the following countries and regions: Djibouti (€500,000), Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the Great Lakes region (€44 million), Ethiopia (€48 million), Kenya (€13 million), Somalia (€41 million), Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean region (€27 million), South Sudan (€41.7 million), Sudan (€40 million), Uganda (€30 million). An additional €9 million will be allocated to addressing the Burundi refugee situation in the DRC, Rwanda and Tanzania and the continued voluntary repatriation to and reintegration in Burundi. Commissioner for Crisis Management, Janez **Lenarčič**, said: *"The serious challenges faced by vulnerable populations in East and Southern Africa have been exacerbated due to severe weather events, political instability and conflict, and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Food insecurity is growing due to droughts and floods, while limited access to humanitarian workers makes the situation worse. Numerous violations of International Humanitarian Law continue to affect the region. EU assistance will be used not only to help the affected populations meet basic needs but also strengthen disaster prevention and preparedness, and support school children across the region through Education in Emergencies projects."* This funding is in addition to the €21.5 million allocated to the Horn of Africa in December 2021 to help the region fight off what is rapidly becoming its worst drought in decades, already affecting millions of people. The press release is available [online](#). (For more information: Balazs Ujvari - Tel.: +32 229 54578; Daniel Puglisi - Tel.: +32 229 69140)

EU-supported film wins the Golden Bear for Best Film at the 2022 Berlin International Film Festival

The winners of the 72nd edition of the [Berlin International Film Festival](#) were announced yesterday evening, with the big winner of the night being *Alcarràs*, by Carla Simón, which won the Golden Bear for Best Film. This film was supported by the EU's [Creative Europe MEDIA programme](#) for its development. Furthermore, *Everything Will Be Ok*, by Rithy Pan, another EU-supported film, was awarded the Silver Bear for Outstanding Artistic Contribution. Three other films are shortlisted under the Panorama section; the winners will be announced at the Teddy Awards ceremony on 18 February. A total of seven EU-supported films were presented in this year's edition of the festival in several categories, including the official competition, Panorama, Berlinale Generation Feature Films and Berlinale Series. More information is available [here](#). (For more information: Johannes Bahrke - Tel.: +32 229 58615; Marietta Grammenou - Tel.: +32 229 83583)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control of Pharmalot by Ace and Mosadex

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control of Pharmalot Compounding B.V. by Ace Holding B.V. and Mosadex Holding B.V., all of the Netherlands. Pharmalot produces and supplies pharmacy preparations. Ace develops, produces, registers and sells medicines for small patient population or niche indications. Mosadex is active in the sourcing and wholesale of medicines, medical devices and health products. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, given that Pharmalot will have negligible activities 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.10567](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President von der Leyen and six College members at the Munich Security Conference*

From 18 to 20 February, President of the European Commission, Ursula **von der Leyen**, High Representative/Vice-President Josep **Borrell**, Vice-President Margaritis **Schinus**, and Commissioners Johannes **Hahn**, Thierry **Breton**, Ylva **Johansson** and Kadri **Simson** will participate in the 2022 [Munich Security Conference](#). This Conference brings together the world's key decision-makers to discuss common approaches and peaceful solutions to current crises and future security challenges at global and regional level. On Saturday morning, President **von der Leyen** will deliver a speech in the session 'Hand in hand: Transatlantic and European Security'. On Sunday, High Representative/Vice-President **Borrell** will deliver a speech in the session 'Unmute Yourself: European Foreign and Security Policy and the Language of Power'. Today, Vice-President **Schinus** will give an opening speech at the pre-conference event and will participate in the panel discussion 'Innovation at the Real Frontlines'. On Friday, he will open the side event 'Perceptions Matter: Migration and International Security' and participate in the discussion on 'Defending Democracy in the Digital Age'. On Friday, Commissioner **Johansson** will participate in the panel discussions 'Fight against Kleptocracy' and 'Security-proofing National Cryptocurrencies'. Also on Friday, Commissioner **Simson** will deliver opening remarks at the roundtable 'Winds of Change: The Geoeconomics of Climate Change'. High Representative **Borrell** will participate in a meeting of G7 Foreign Ministers in the margins of the Conference, convened by the new G7 chairmanship Germany. College members will also hold bilateral meetings in the margins of the event. More details on the College members' activities are available in the [calendar](#). Audiovisual coverage will be available on [EbS](#). (For more information: Nabila Massrali – Tel.: +32 229 88093; Xavier Cifre Quatresols – Tel.: +32 229 73582)

Semaine Afrique-Europe : l'UE co-organise un événement de haut niveau sur le droit international humanitaire

Dans le cadre de la toute première Semaine Afrique-Europe, la Commission européenne organise conjointement avec Peter Maurer, le président du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge, et l'ambassadeur Fred Ngoga Gateretse, représentant la Commission de l'Union africaine, un panel sur le droit international humanitaire qui se tiendra aujourd'hui à 14 heures et que vous pouvez suivre en [direct](#). Cet événement intervient alors que les attaques contre les civils, les hôpitaux, les écoles et le personnel médical et humanitaire sont en augmentation dans le monde entier. Les conflits actuels sur le continent africain n'y font pas exception. Selon la base de données ACLED, 7 800 incidents violents contre des civils à travers l'Afrique ont eu lieu en 2021, notamment des attaques, des enlèvements et des violences sexuelles. Ces incidents ont fait 14 500 morts. Ces chiffres constituent un record au cours des dix dernières années. Le commissaire chargé de la gestion des crises, Janez **Lenarčič**, a déclaré: « *Le respect du droit international humanitaire revêt une importance capitale pour permettre l'accès à une aide humanitaire vitale pour les civils touchés par les conflits armés, ainsi que pour leur protection. Avec nos partenaires internationaux, le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge et l'Union africaine, nous continuons de défendre le respect du droit international humanitaire au niveau mondial. Sauver des vies civiles ne devrait jamais se faire au détriment de la vie du personnel humanitaire. J'invite instamment toutes les parties aux conflits à s'en rappeler.* » Le droit international humanitaire reste au cœur de l'action extérieure de l'UE, car il s'agit d'une condition préalable à une aide humanitaire efficace dans les conflits armés. En mars dernier, la Commission européenne a adopté une nouvelle politique visant à améliorer le respect du droit international humanitaire, en renforçant la coordination au niveau de l'UE et le cadre de conformité au droit international humanitaire, ainsi qu'en améliorant le suivi des violations du droit. Le respect du droit international humanitaire est également un élément clé pour les perspectives de paix et de développement des pays sortant d'une guerre. (Pour plus d'informations: Balazs Ujvari – Tél.: +32 229 54578; Daniel Puglisi – Tél.: +32 229 69140)

Commissioner Kyriakides in Cyprus to promote the European Health Union, EU Vaccines

Strategy, and Farm to Fork Strategy

Tomorrow, 18 February, Stella **Kyriakides**, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, will be in Nicosia, Cyprus, where she will meet with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ioannis Kasoulides, and Minister of Health, Michalis Hadjipantelas. Discussions with the Minister for Health will focus on the latest COVID-19 situation and the roll-out of the national vaccination campaign in Cyprus, as well as at the European and global levels, in addition to the way forward on the proposals under the European Health Union. The meeting will be followed by a visit to the children's vaccination centre at the Latsia Health Centre. Commissioner **Kyriakides** will also deliver a keynote speech at the event 'From Farm to Fork: food safety', hosted by the Cyprus University of Technology in Limassol to mark the occasion of Cyprus submitting its CAP Strategic Plan. This will take place alongside the Minister of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment, Mr Costas Kadis. On Saturday, 19 February, the Commissioner will participate in a [high-level Conference](#) co-organised by the Glafkos Clerides Institute and the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies, in the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe. (*For more information: Stefan De Keersmaecker – Tel.: +32 229 84680; Darragh Cassidy – Tel.: +32 229 83978*)

[Tentative agendas](#) for forthcoming Commission meetings

Note that these items can be subject to changes.

[Upcoming events](#) of the European Commission

[Eurostat](#) press releases

The Spokesperson's Service has re-opened the Berlaymont press room to a limited number of journalists. For more information, please see [here](#).

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