



New
Direction

the foundation for european reform

THE HERALD

newdirectionfoundation.org follow us @europeanreform



President Barack Obama met with the leaders of the U.K., France, Germany and Italy to discuss "the most urgent issues on the trans-Atlantic agenda," the White House said in a statement. The conversation, about two hours in length, covered the Syrian civil war and the European migrant crisis it has exacerbated, as well as political instability in Libya, Russia's incursion into Ukraine and a trade agreement between the U.S. and European Union.



OBAMA CALLS FOR GREATER EUROPEAN UNITY

BBC.COM

US President Barack Obama has called for greater European unity, describing it as a "necessity" for the world.

Speaking in Germany, he accused Europe of complacency over its own defence and called on Nato allies to spend more on international security.

Mr Obama also appealed to the EU to rise above current divisions which, he said, were weakening the continent.

A migrant crisis and a UK referendum on EU membership in June have raised questions about Europe's unity.

Mr Obama called on EU states to share the burden of mass migration and see off those he accused of "exploiting people's fears".

Speaking in Hannover, Mr Obama said he was to send up to 250 more special forces troops to Syria to support local militias in the fight against so-called Islamic State (IS).

The new deployment will bring to 300 the number of US special forces soldiers in Syria.

He said that in the face of shared security threats, a "strong united" Europe remained a "necessity for all of us."

"It's a necessity for the United States because Europe's security and prosperity is inherently indivisible from our own," he said.

"A strong united Europe is a necessity for the world because an integrated Europe remains vital to our international order."

[READ MORE](#)



TURKEY TO BOOST LEGAL PROTECTION FOR MIGRANTS

FT.COM



Ankara will bolster the legal protection it extends to non-Syrian refugees in a concession that paves the way for the EU to fully implement a deal to send back thousands of asylum seekers currently stranded in Greece. The EU enlisted Turkey's help with the migrant crisis in March under heavy public pressure to find a solution. Since then, migrant flows across the Aegean have fallen by about 80 per cent.

[READ MORE](#)



PRO-BREXIT CAMP DEMANDS TRAVEL BAN ON FRENCH 'ALLY' LE PEN

FRANCE24.COM



Leaders of the campaign for Britain to leave the European Union have shunned French far-right leader Marine Le Pen, going as far as to ask the government to ban her from travelling to the UK to support the cause. Gisela Stuart, co-chairman of the Vote Leave campaign, urged Home Secretary Theresa May to prevent the leader of the National Front party from entering the country in a letter sent on Friday.

[READ MORE](#)





THERESA MAY'S BID FOR BRITAIN TO QUIT HUMAN RIGHTS CONVENTION

TELEGRAPH.CO.UK

Theresa May has called for Britain to leave the European Convention on Human Rights - but remain a member of the EU. The Home Secretary used her first speech of the referendum campaign to argue that the case for remaining part of the treaty is "not clear". On the question of the EU as a whole, she offered cautious backing to staying in - admitting there are "problems" associated with membership and saying the country "could cope" outside.

[READ MORE](#)



SEVERE DISRUPTION EXPECTED AS FRENCH RAIL WORKERS STRIKE

FRANCE24.COM

Train passengers in France have been warned they could face severe disruption to their journeys on Tuesday as rail workers carry out an all-day strike over pay and working conditions. The latest walkout by employees of French state-owned rail company SNCF - the third in two months, will begin at 7pm Monday evening and run until 8am Wednesday morning, though it will be on Tuesday that travellers can expect the biggest delays.

[READ MORE](#)



LUFTHANSA STRIKE TO IMPACT 'TENS OF THOUSANDS'

DW.DE

A German trade union has called for a strike at airports across the country on Wednesday. All intercontinental flights to and from Munich will be canceled; Düsseldorf, Cologne, and Frankfurt airports will also be hit. A Lufthansa official said the upcoming strike shows "that we desperately need rules for labor disputes in the air transport industry," as six airports across Germany prepare for cancellations of both international and domestic flights on Wednesday.

[READ MORE](#)



COMMISSION REFERS GREECE TO COURT

EUROPA.EU

The European Commission decided to refer Greece to the Court of Justice for failure to comply with two Commission decisions, from 2014 and 2012, ordering the recovery of incompatible state aid from LARCO S.A. and United Textiles. LARCO is a Greek state-owned mining company that has been in financial difficulties for several years.. United Textiles, one of Greece's largest textile producers, has been in financial difficulties for several years.

[READ MORE](#)



NEW DIRECTION LAUNCH: NEXT GENERATION TELECOM POLICY AND THE DIGITAL SINGLE MARKET

EUROPEANREFORM.ORG

In the latest New Direction report on the Digital Single Market, renowned Internet policy expert, Roslyn Layton PhD provides policy recommendations for the EU's 2020 Digital economy strategy.

Location: Renaissance Hotel, Rue de Parnasse 19, Brussels.

Wednesday, 27 April 2016, 17:00.

[READ MORE](#)



New
Direction
the foundation for european reform



New Direction

the foundation for european reform

THE AGENDA

newdirectionfoundation.org follow us @europeanreform

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

- 9:00 **Joint committee meeting Committee on Budgets/Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs.** On the agenda: Budgetary capacity for the Eurozone - consequences for the EU budget, complementarities and parliamentary control (exchange of views, rapporteurs **Reimer Böge**, EPP, and **Pervenche Berès**, S&D) (PHS - 3C050)
- 10:45 **Committee on Budgets.** The agenda includes: Access to Finance for SMEs and increasing the diversity of SME funding in a Capital Markets Union (exchange of views, rapporteur for the opinion **Zbigniew Kuzmiuk**, ECR). 15:00 **hearing on new financial instruments and the role of national promotional banks for the benefit of European SMEs** (JAN - 4Q-1).
- 10:45 **Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs.** The agenda includes: Mandatory automatic exchange of information in the field of taxation (adoption of draft report by **Dariusz Rosati**, EPP), Virtual currencies (adoption of draft report by **Jakob von Weizsäcker**, S&D) (PHS - 3C050).
- 9:00 **Committee on Employment and Social Affairs.** The agenda includes: Workers representation on board level in Europe (consideration of amendments, rapporteur **Thomas Händel**, GUE/NGL), Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (consideration of amendments, rapporteur **Helga Stevens**, ECR) (JAN - 4Q2).
- 9:00 **Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety.** The agenda includes: Exchange of views with **Vytenis Andriukaitis**, Commissioner for Health & Food Safety as part of structured dialogue, Emission limits and type-approval for internal combustion engines for non-road mobile machinery (vote on the text, agreed during interinstitutional negotiations, rapporteur **Elisabetta Gardini**, EPP), Discussion with **Violeta Bulc**, Commissioner for Transport, on a possible ICAO Global Market-Based Measure (GMBM) to reduce CO2 emissions from aviation (JAN - 2Q2).
- 9:00 **Committee on Transport and Tourism.** The agenda includes: Exchange of views with EASA Executive Director, **Patrick Ky**, on the follow-up of the MH17 crash, Presentation by the Commission of Staff Working Document on Rail freight noise reduction, Tourism Task Force - presentation of the Tourism for Growth and Jobs Manifesto - exchange of views with stakeholders, Presentation of the study 'Self-piloted cars. The future of the road transport?'. **Public Hearing on Road Transport in the era of new technologies** (PHS - 1A002).
- 9:00 **Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development.** The agenda includes: Technological solutions for sustainable agriculture in the EU (vote on a draft resolution by **Anthea McIntyre**, ECR), Discussion with Cees Veerman, Chairman of the Agricultural Markets Task Force (JAN - 6Q2).
- 9:00 **Committee on Culture and Education.** The agenda includes: Follow-up of the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020) (vote on a draft resolution by **Zdzisław Krasnodebski**, ECR), Implementation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (adoption of draft opinion of **Angel Dzhambazki**, ECR) (ASP - 1G3).
- EP President **Martin Schulz** will meet Speaker of the United Arab Emirates Federal National Council **Amal Al Qubaisi** as well as European Council President **Donald Tusk** and Commission President **Jean-Claude Juncker** today.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

- The Commission has released new figures showing that, in 2015, **more than 2,000 dangerous products triggered EU-wide alerts.** The Rapid Alert system, which since 2003 ensures that information about dangerous non-food products withdrawn from the market and/or recalled anywhere in Europe is quickly circulated between Member States and the European Commission, has revealed that toys and clothing top the list of dangerous products detected in 2015.
- European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, **Neven Mimica** proposed **€414 million of new money to support those countries most**

affected by the current food security crisis caused by El Niño and other factors. This funding comes on top of the €125 million already mobilised in December 2015, bringing the EU's total contribution to €539 million.

- The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of Kuoni Travel Holding Ltd of Switzerland by EQT of the United Kingdom.

WHO WHEN WHERE

- 9:00 the European Commission hosts a conference **"Better accessibility for rail passengers"** (Charlemagne Conference Centre, 170 Rue de la Loi, Brussels).

TODAY CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS



Claudia SCHMIDT
EPP
(53)



Seán KELLY
EPP
(64)