

17.05.2017

## Minister Carmelo Abela represents the Maltese Presidency at the EP Plenary Session in Strasbourg

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Minister for Home Affairs and National Security Carmelo Abela represented the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union at the European Parliament's plenary session in Strasbourg.

In that capacity he joined EP President Antonio Tajani for the signing of thirteen European legislative acts, including the Regulation granting Ukraine visa liberalisation. President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko was present for the signing of the act that has formalised the visa-free regime that is due to enter into force on the 11th June 2017. Another act that was signed was the regulation introducing rules for wholesale roaming markets, which brings into force a reduction of roaming surcharges in the EU.

In a Council statement on the preparation for the G7 Summit, which will take place in Italy next week, Minister Abela said that the clear mission of the EU is to secure the G7's commitment to keep the global economy open and multilateral cooperation on track. It is also crucial to give a clear signal that securing balanced and inclusive growth remains a top priority. On climate change, he said that the global community needs to act urgently and move forward with the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Recalling the EU's commitment to ambitious global action in respect of climate change, he said the EU insists on maintaining the global ownership of the Agreement. He also addressed the issue of migration, saying that its management is a global responsibility, requiring collective solutions that are in full respect of obligations under international law. He identified assistance to the most affected countries of transit, resettlement efforts, the exchange of best practice on return and re-admission, as well as increased cooperation in the fight against smuggling and trafficking as the areas on which the EU can work together with its G7 partners.

In the Council's statement on the powers and control of the European Central Bank, Minister Abela said that the Presidency believes that the accountability of the ECB for its monetary policy tasks is commensurate with its independence, and can be inferred from the Treaty. When it comes to the ECB's accountability for its banking supervision tasks, this is specified in the Regulation on the Single Supervisory Mechanism. In this context, the Presidency sees no reason to question whether the ECB adheres to the accountability obligations towards the EU

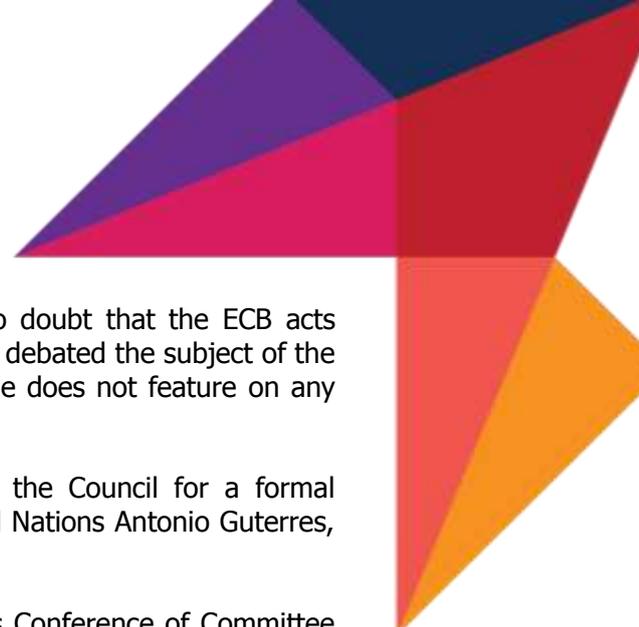
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legislators. Similarly, the Presidency does not have grounds to doubt that the ECB acts within its mandate. Against this background, the Council has not debated the subject of the powers and control of the European Central Bank, and the issue does not feature on any upcoming Council agendas.

In Strasbourg, Minister Abela was also present on behalf of the Council for a formal address given to the plenary by Secretary General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres, and attended an official lunch in his honour.

On Tuesday, 16th May 2017, Minister Abela addressed the EP's Conference of Committee to present a review of the work ongoing under the Maltese Presidency, and to indicate the tasks for the remainder of this semester. There was a positive response on the effectiveness of the Maltese Presidency so far.

"We set a bold and ambitious programme before us and I am happy to note that, in the vast majority of cases, we have already reached our objectives," Minister Abela said.



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