



Brussels, 20 July 2018

TRUMP CALLS EU “A FOE” BEFORE MEETING WITH PUTIN

After attending the NATO summit in Brussels and meeting Theresa May in the UK, US President Donald Trump travelled to Helsinki for a meeting with Russia’s Vladimir Putin. The summit, “deeply productive” according to Trump, was received with lukewarm reactions in the EU. Notably, German foreign minister Heiko Maas, said “we can no longer completely rely on the White House”. Trump had previously stated the EU is a “foe”, referring to recent trade tensions. Only European Council President Donald Tusk could settle the dispute: “America and the EU are best friends. Whoever says we are foes is spreading fake news”.

EU BEGINS SCREENING MACEDONIA, ALBANIA FOR MID-2019 ACCESSION TALKS

After the European Council delayed until June 2019 the decision to allow membership talks with Macedonia and Albania, the Commission began examining the readiness of the Balkan neighbours. “This shows our very strong engagement to accompany you in your reform efforts and to turn your EU integration perspective into reality,” Commissioner Hahn told the two countries. The screening, which will notably focus on reforms to tackle organised crime and corruption, should enable Macedonia and Albania to become familiar with EU legal norms to assess their preparedness to comply with them as soon as possible.

COMMISSION IMPOSES TEMPORARY SAFEGUARD MEASURES ON STEEL PRODUCTS IMPORTS

The European Commission announced temporary safeguard measures on imports of several steel products. These measures, which are part of the three-pronged response to import duties applied by the US, concern 23 steel product categories and will take the form of a Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ), which will not impact traditional imports of steel products. The measures can now remain in place for a maximum of 200 days, starting from 19 July, when they came into force. The Commission invites stakeholders’ comments, before reaching its conclusion on whether to impose definitive safeguard measures.

EU SIGNS ITS BIGGEST EVER TRADE AGREEMENT WITH JAPAN

The EU and Japan concluded the biggest ever trade agreement negotiated by the EU. The EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) will create an open trade area covering over 600 million people by removing 99 percent of tariffs on Japanese imports by the European Union and 94 percent of tariffs on European imports by Japan. It will also strengthen cooperation in a range of areas, including sustainable development, financial services and consumer protection. The agreement is now awaiting ratification by the European Parliament and the Japanese Diet, following which it could enter into force in 2019.

EU AND CHINA COMMIT TO DEEPEN STRATEGIC GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

At the 20th summit between the EU and China, leaders agreed to reinforce their strategic partnership and commitment to the rules-based global order, including trade, fighting climate change and foreign and security cooperation. Notably, good progress was reported on the ongoing bilateral Investment Agreement negotiations to promote and protect each other’s growing investments. Both parties also

committed to step up their cooperation for the implementation of the 2015 Paris Agreement. According to European Commission President Juncker “in today's world that partnership is more important than ever before”.

COMING UP NEXT WEEK

- **No important events**

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