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BREXIT TALKS SHOW LITTLE PROGRESS WHILE PARLIAMENT CALLS FOR ARTICLE 50 EXTENSION

As the October deadline approaches, Brexit talks at the political level are intensifying. This week, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson met with Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker and UK Secretary of State for Exiting the EU Stephen Barclay met EU Chief Negotiator Michel Barnier. Both meetings served to take stock of the ongoing technical talks between the EU and the UK and to discuss the next steps. Separately, the European Parliament adopted, with an overwhelming majority, a resolution calling on EU leaders to grant an Article 50 extension to the UK should it be requested. Technical talks will continue ahead of the 17-18 October European Council summit.

FINNISH PRESIDENCY TO SEEK GUIDANCE FROM EU LEADERS ON LONG-TERM BUDGET

The Finnish Presidency of the Council presented the current state of play on the next Multiannual Financial Framework in a General Affairs Council meeting, noting that several elements including the overall size of the budget as well as new sources of revenue are yet to be agreed. The Presidency announced it will draft a paper to prepare the exchange of views between EU leaders at the 17-18 October European Council summit. Following guidance from EU leaders, the Presidency will present a revised 'Negotiating Box' with figures before the end of the year in order to prepare for the next stages of the negotiation.

DETAILED SCHEDULE FOR HEARINGS OF THE COMMISSIONERS-DESIGNATE ADOPTED

The European Parliament has unveiled its timetable for confirmation hearings for nominees to the next European Commission. Hearings for Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice President for an "Economy that Works for People", Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice President for a "Europe fit for the digital age" and Commissioner for competition, and Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice President for the European Green Deal, will be held on 8 October. The European Parliament will vote on the composition of the College of Commissioners as a whole on 23 October. The new Commission is set to take office on 1 November.

INCREASE IN NUMBER OF INTERCEPTIONS OF FAKE GOODS INTO THE EU, COMMISSION SAYS

The European Commission released new figures showing an increase number of interceptions of fake goods being imported into the EU compared to 2018. Detention figures for seized consignments jumped from 57,433 in 2017 to 69,354 in 2018, though the total number of items detained decreased compared to previous years. Almost 27 million articles that infringed on intellectual property rights were detained in 2018 with a street value of nearly €740 million. China is the main source country for goods infringing intellectual property rights, North Macedonia is the main origin for counterfeit alcoholic beverages, and Turkey is the top source for perfumes and cosmetics.

NEW ECON CHAIR ELECTED AS EP GIVES GREEN LIGHT TO LAGARDE & MERSCH FOR ECB JOBS

In the European Parliament, Italian MEP Irene Tinagli (S&D) was elected Chair of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee (ECON). She replaces Roberto Gualtieri, who recently left the European Parliament to take up the post of Finance Minister in Italy. Separately, the European Parliament granted its support to Christine Lagarde and Yves Mersch to become the next President of the

European Central Bank (ECB) and Vice-Chair of the ECB Supervisory Board respectively. Having been nominated by EU leaders in July, Lagarde is set to take office on 1 November, replacing current ECB President Mario Draghi.

COMING UP NEXT WEEK:

- **22-24 September: Informal meeting of agriculture ministers.** On the agenda: soil carbon sequestration in agriculture.
- **23-26 September: UN General Assembly.** On the agenda: UN Climate Action summit, conflict prevention, peace and security, human rights, migration, digitalisation, counter-terrorism.
- **24 September: Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy).** On the agenda: draft national energy and climate plans, energy efficiency and renewable energy, the energy sector beyond 2020.
- **26-27 September: Competitiveness Council.** On the agenda: long-term EU strategy for sustainable growth, external EU competitiveness, Horizon Europe.

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