# Europe and Africa agree on €2bn research funding to tackle AIDS, Ebola and other infectious diseases

**Tuesday 2 December, 2014**

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A new partnership of EU and African countries launched today in Cape Town, South Africa will aim to develop new and better medicines for infectious diseases like AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, hookworms and Ebola. Building on the success of an earlier programme, the second European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership programme (EDCTP2) will work with a budget of €2 billion over the next ten years to develop new and better medicines for the poverty-related diseases that affect sub-Saharan Africa in particular. Carlos Moedas, European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, said: "Infectious diseases like AIDS, Ebola or malaria are a major global threat, but they hit poor communities hardest. The latest Ebola outbreak reminds us that more research is needed to find new medicines and vaccines that will help save millions of lives. Today, Europe and Africa are stepping up their efforts to fight the spread of infectious diseases together." A press release is available online. *(for more information: Lucia Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Mirna Bratoz – Tel.: +32 229 87278)*

Transport Council

European Union Transport Ministers will meet in Brussels on Wednesday 3 December 2014 under the Italian Presidency of the EU. Commissioner Violeta Bulc, responsible for Transport and Mobility, will represent the European Commission. The main agenda items for Transport Ministers are: Single European Sky 2+, 4th Railway Package and the Danube Minister Meeting. A fact sheet is available online. *(for more information: Jakub Adamowicz – Tel.: +32 229 50595; Joshua Salsby – Tel.: +32 229 72459)*

OTHER NEWS

Eurostat – Industrial producer prices down by 0.4% in euro area

In October 2014, compared with September 2014, industrial producer prices fell by 0.4% in the euro area (EA18) and by 0.5% in the EU28, according to estimates from Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union. In September prices rose by 0.2% in in the euro area and by 0.1% in the EU28.In October 2014, compared with October 2013, industrial producer prices decreased by 1.3% in the euro area and by 1.5% in the EU28. ." A press release is available online. *(for more information: Lucia Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182)*

Eurostat – Situation of people with disabilities in the EU: Fewer than 1 in 2 disabled adults were in employment in the EU28 in 2011

Around 44 million people aged 15 to 64 in the European Union (EU28) have reported a disability, often preventing them from taking part fully in society and the economy. Whether in the labour market, in the education system or for social inclusion indicators, the situation of disabled persons in the EU28 is less favourable than that of non-disabled people. ." A press release is available online. *(for more information: Tove Ernst - Tel.: +32 229 86164)*

European Commission to reduce payments to Greece under the CAP

The European Commission has today reduced the reimbursement of CAP payments to Greece because of continued administrative problems in the management of the so-called Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS). "It is the first time that the Commission has used this new budget management option, but it is very important that our budget rules are respected", according to EU Commissioner for Agriculture & Rural Development Phil Hogan. Greece has made considerable progress in recent years in addressing the shortcomings for this very important element for managing CAP Direct Payments. However, several Commission audits carried out in the last 3 years have shown that the Greek LPIS is still not in compliance with the EU rules. As a consequence, the maximum eligible area recorded in the LPIS is overstated, which has led to irregular payments being made to beneficiaries under the single payment scheme. Despite the action plan set up by the Greek authorities and the efforts made to remedy the situation, an audit carried out beginning of November 2014 confirmed that the objectives of the action plan were still not met and could not be achieved in the immediate future, i.e. for the payments relating to claim year 2014. The Commission has therefore taken the precautionary measure for the first time of reducing the reimbursement of payments to Greece. The amount of the reduction corresponds to the amount considered at risk for the fund (which is estimated at around 17 EUR million). (*for more*

*information: Daniel Rosario, Tel: +32 229 56185; Justyna Milanowska, Tel: +32 22994246*)

Cape Verde: EU helps volcano eruption response

The EU Civil Protection Mechanism has been activated upon the request of Cape Verde due to the volcano eruption on the island of Fogo. Portugal offered in-kind assistance through the Mechanism. A navy vessel with specialized telecommunications equipment, a helicopter and relief items such as beds, blankets and disposable respiratory protection masks is on its way. The European Commission is supporting the transport costs. In addition, two civil protection experts are being deployed through the Mechanism to support The United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination mission to Cape Verde. The European Commission's Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) is in close contact with the Cape Verde authorities and participants in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. Lava flows and eruptions have intensified in recent days. The national authorities have ordered the evacuation of several hundreds of residents. *(for more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Irina Novakova – Tel.: +32 229 57517)*

STATEMENTS

Statement by Commissioner Karmenu Vella on the occasion of the European Business Awards for the Environment 2014-2015

European Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Karmenu Vella announced the winners of the European Business Awards for the Environment 2014-15 last night. The awards recognise companies that combine competitiveness with respect for the environment. Commissioner Vella congratulated the participants: "Growing numbers of businesses realise that protecting the environment is vital for maintaining Europe's competitiveness. The Commission's European Business Awards for the Environment recognise the best of these pioneers, singling out leaders and companies at the forefront of eco-innovation. My warm congratulations to all these winners." *(for more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: +32 229 56172; Iris Petsa – Tel.: +32 229 93321)*

Speech by Violeta Bulc - Investment Plan for Europe: what are the investment needs for transport?

EU Commissioner for Transport, Violeta Bulc delivered a speech at the Committee on Transport at Tourism at the European Parliament: "The investment needs in transport are huge: according to studies conducted on the 9 European corridors, more than 75 billion euros of investment is needed every year, just on the Corridors which are part of the TEN-T network. Firstly, investments needs are particularly high for the cleaner modes of transport — rail and inland waterways — where missing links and bottlenecks must be solved, notably at the borders, in order to have a unified and more efficient transport system. The necessary infrastructure for cleaner power for transport — such as the installation of fast electric charging points along the motorways or in city centers, the deployment of LNG infrastructure in ports — must be rolled out at European level to break the chicken-and-egg vicious circle. Secondly, investment needs in urban mobility are massive since they are generating most of the traffic and most of the emissions. The infrastructure and the fleets for new collective transport systems, to make our cities smarter, need to be put in place. Thirdly, important investments are needed to adapt the European transport system to the 21st Century. Intelligent Transport Systems should be deployed at European level to make the best use of the existing and future infrastructure, and to develop a transport system which is at the service of the users — citizens and companies." The full speech is available online. *(for more information: Jakub Adamowicz – Tel.: +32 229 50595; Joshua Salsby – Tel.: +32 229 72459)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Gu?nther H. Oettinger receives the Minister-President of the German Land Baden-Wu?rttemberg

Commissioner Gu?nther H. Oettinger receives today Winfried Kretschmann, Minister-President of the German Land Baden-Wu?rttemberg to discuss the digitalisation of the region and of Europe. A press point will be held after the meeting at 18.45 at the VIP-corner in the Berlaymont building. (*for more information: Mina Andreeva +32 229 91382; Marie Frenay +32 229 64532)*

EU-US Energy Council to discuss energy and climate policies on 3 December in Brussels

The 6th EU-US Energy Council will take place in Brussels in the afternoon of Wednesday 3 December 2014. The EU side will be represented by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini, together with Energy Union Vice-President S?efc?ovic?, Commissioner Arias Can?ete as well as the Italian Presidency of the Council. US Secretary of State John Kerry and Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz will lead the US delegation. The main issues on the agenda are: energy security and

diversification, Ukraine, energy research and technology as well as energy and climate policies on the road to the UN climate conference in Paris next year. The Energy Council will be followed by a bilateral meeting between Vice-President S?efc?ovic? and US Energy Secretary Moniz and a joint press point at the EEAS press room at 17:20 CET. As space will be limited, accreditation will be given on a "first- come, first-served basis". Please confirm interest to Alceo.SMERILLI@ec.europa.eu. The joint press point will be available via Europe by Satellite. A press advisory is available online. *(for more information: Catherine Ray – Tel.: +32 229 69921; Eamonn Prendergast – Tel.: +32 229 98851; Anna-Kaisa Itkonen - Tel.: +32 229 56186; Nicole Bockstaller – Tel.: +32 229 52589)*

## Company Contact:

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