

## Reaction of the EU Institutions to the UK vote to leave the EU, 24<sup>th</sup> June

### European Council – Donald Tusk, President

“There's no hiding the fact that we wanted a different outcome of yesterday's referendum. I am fully aware of how serious, or even dramatic, this moment is politically. And there's no way of predicting all the political consequences of this event, especially for the UK. It is a historic moment but for sure not a moment for hysterical reactions. I want to reassure everyone that we are prepared also for this negative scenario. As you know the EU is not only a fair-weather project.

Over the past two days I have spoken to all the EU leaders, I mean Prime Ministers and Presidents as well as heads of the EU institutions, about the possibility of a Brexit. Today, on behalf of the twenty seven leaders I can say that we are determined to keep our unity as twenty seven. For all of us, the Union is the framework for our common future. I would also like to reassure you that there will be no legal vacuum. Until the United Kingdom formally leaves the European Union, EU law will continue to apply to and within the UK. And by this I mean rights and obligations.

All the procedures for the withdrawal of the UK from the EU are clear and set out in the Treaties. In order to discuss the details of further proceedings, I have offered the leaders an informal meeting of the twenty seven in the margins of the European Council summit. And I will also propose to the leaders that we start a wider reflection on the future of our Union.

Finally, it's true that the past years have been the most difficult ones in the history of our Union. But I always remember what my father used to tell me: What doesn't kill you, makes you stronger.”

➤ [Tusk press statement](#)

### European Parliament – Martin Schulz MEP

Early on the 24th President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz tweeted;

*“For 40 yrs #UK relation with #EU was ambiguous. Now it's clear. Will of voters must be respected. Now need speedy & clear exit negotiation”.* Following a meeting of political presidents of the European Parliament at breakfast time he confirmed that *“The Conference of Presidents of #EP has decided to convene extraordinary plenary session on Tuesday to debate outcome of British referendum”*

Later in the morning President Schulz made a public statement to the press where he underlined that the Parliament would play active role in Article 50 process. The position of the EP is quite clear: are very sad about the decision of UK voters, but it is a sovereign expression of the will of British voters to leave. This is a difficult moment for both sides. We have now a formal procedure to assess and the necessary next steps. He took note of Cameron's announcement to step down but only in October. That will create a debate about the content of the declaration of Cameron at the European Council next week and the timing of triggering Art 50. He underlined that the EP is prepared to contribute to a constructive process. He repeated that stability is needed on both sides and underlined that the February settlement is now null and void following UK vote. The priority for the 27 member States will be how to protect Eurozone and EU in next coming months.

➤ [M Schulz press point](#)

**Press conference and Q&A with Commission President Juncker following the meeting of the European Council, EP, rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU, and Commission Presidents.**

President Tusk, President Schulz and Prime Minister Rutte met this morning in Brussels upon the invitation of European Commission President Juncker. They discussed the outcome of the United Kingdom referendum and made the following joint statement. President Juncker presented it to the press corp ;

"In a free and democratic process, the British people have expressed their wish to leave the European Union. We regret this decision but respect it.

This is an unprecedented situation but we are united in our response. We will stand strong and uphold the EU's core values of promoting peace and the well-being of its peoples. The Union of 27 Member States will continue. The Union is the framework of our common political future. We are bound together by history, geography and common interests and will develop our cooperation on this basis. Together we will address our common challenge to generate growth, increase prosperity and ensure a safe and secure environment for our citizens. The institutions will play their full role in this endeavour.

We now expect the United Kingdom government to give effect to this decision of the British people as soon as possible, however painful that process may be. Any delay would unnecessarily prolong uncertainty. We have rules to deal with this in an orderly way. Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union sets out the procedure to be followed if a Member State decides to leave the European Union. We stand ready to launch negotiations swiftly with the United Kingdom regarding the terms and conditions of its withdrawal from the European Union. Until this process of negotiations is over, the United Kingdom remains a member of the European Union, with all the rights and obligations that derive from this. According to the Treaties which the United Kingdom has ratified, EU law continues to apply to the full to and in the United Kingdom until it is no longer a Member.

As agreed, the "[New Settlement for the United Kingdom within the European Union](#)", reached at the European Council on 18-19 February 2016, will now not take effect and ceases to exist. There will be no renegotiation.

As regards the United Kingdom, we hope to have it as a close partner of the European Union also in the future. We expect the United Kingdom to formulate its proposals in this respect. Any agreement, which will be concluded with the United Kingdom as a third country, will have to reflect the interests of both sides and be balanced in terms of rights and obligations."

Q: Le Monde: what do you expect of the Franco-German axis in the coming days?

A: As we call it, I expect clear positions. The uncertainty process in which we are will not last too long.

Q: K. Adler (BBC): despite strong words, is the fact of BREXIT the beginning of the end of the EU?

A: Juncker did not respond and left the room!

- [Joint statement](#)
- [Commission Q&A](#)

### **European Central Bank (approx. 11:00)**

European Central Bank is closely monitoring financial markets

ECB continues to fulfil its responsibilities to ensure price stability and financial stability in the euro area

Following the outcome of the UK referendum, the European Central Bank (ECB) is closely monitoring financial markets and is in close contact with other central banks.

The ECB stands ready to provide additional liquidity, if needed, in euro and foreign currencies.

The ECB has prepared for this contingency in close contact with the banks that it supervises and considers that the euro area banking system is resilient in terms of capital and liquidity.

The ECB will continue to fulfil its responsibilities to ensure price stability and financial stability in the euro area.

➤ [ECB press release](#)

### **Member State reactions:**

#### **France – President Hollande statement**

“Les Britanniques par référendum ont décidé de quitter l’Union européenne. C’est un choix douloureux et je le regrette profondément pour le Royaume-Uni et pour l’Europe. Mais ce choix est le leur et nous devons le respecter, en en tirant toutes les conséquences.

La Grande-Bretagne ne fera donc plus partie de l’Union européenne et les procédures prévues par les traités seront rapidement appliquées, c’est la règle et c’est la conséquence.

La France pour elle-même et pour la Grande-Bretagne continuera à travailler avec ce grand pays ami, auquel l’Histoire et la géographie nous unissent par tant de liens, sur le plan économique, humain, culturel et je n’oublie pas nos relations étroites en matière de défense qui seront préservées.

Le vote des Britanniques met gravement l’Europe à l’épreuve. Elle doit montrer dans ces circonstances sa solidité et sa force, en apportant les réponses nécessaires pour maîtriser les risques économiques et financiers du départ du Royaume-Uni. Des mesures sont d’ores et déjà prises et j’ai confiance dans leur efficacité.

Mais la décision britannique exige aussi de prendre lucidement conscience des insuffisances du fonctionnement de l’Europe et de la perte de confiance des peuples dans le projet qu’elle porte.

Le danger est immense face aux extrémismes et aux populismes. Il faut toujours moins de temps pour défaire que pour faire, pour détruire que pour construire. La France, pays fondateur de l’Europe, ne l’acceptera pas.

Un sursaut est nécessaire. L’Europe pour aller de l’avant ne peut plus faire comme avant. Les peuples attendent de l’Union européenne qu’elle réaffirme ses valeurs, valeurs de liberté, de tolérance et de paix. L’Europe doit donc être une puissance qui décide souverainement de son destin et qui revendique son modèle.

La France sera donc à l’initiative pour que l’Europe se concentre sur l’essentiel : la sécurité et la défense de notre continent pour protéger nos frontières et pour préserver la paix face aux menaces ; l’investissement pour la croissance et pour l’emploi pour mettre en œuvre des politiques industrielles

dans le domaine des nouvelles technologies et de la transition énergétique ; l'harmonisation fiscale et sociale pour donner à nos économies des règles et à nos concitoyens des garanties ; enfin le renforcement de la zone euro et de sa gouvernance démocratique.

L'Europe, et c'est ma conviction, doit porter des projets et non pas se perdre en procédures. Elle doit être comprise et contrôlée par les citoyens. Elle doit décider vite, là où on l'attend et laisser une fois pour toute aux Etats-nations ce qui relève de leurs seules compétences.

C'est le mandat que j'irai porter au Conseil européen mardi prochain. Je rencontrerai au préalable les responsables politiques des grandes formations de notre pays. J'irai également lundi à Berlin pour que, avec la Chancelière MERKEL et sans doute Matteo RENZI nous puissions également évoquer ce qui doit être fait, notamment pour la préparation de ce Conseil. L'Allemagne parce que de notre unité dépend la cohésion de l'ensemble de l'Union européenne. L'Europe est une grande idée et pas seulement un grand marché. Et c'est sans doute à force de l'avoir oublié qu'elle s'est perdue.

L'Europe doit continuer à être un espoir pour la jeunesse car c'est son horizon. Aujourd'hui, c'est l'Histoire qui frappe à notre porte. Ce qui se joue c'est la dilution de l'Europe au risque du repli ou la réaffirmation de son existence au prix de changements profonds.

Je ferai tout pour que ce soit le changement profond plutôt que le repli. Et la France a une responsabilité particulière parce qu'elle est au cœur de l'Europe, parce qu'elle a voulu l'Europe, parce qu'elle a bâti l'Europe, parce qu'elle est le pas qui peut entraîner les autres et qui est garant de l'avenir de notre continent.

C'est ma conviction de Français et d'Européen et c'est ce qui me déterminera dans la conduite de notre pays dans cette période si décisive mais dont nous savons que l'histoire aujourd'hui nous juge puisque l'histoire est là soyons à la hauteur de la circonstance que nous traversons.

Merci."

<http://www.elysee.fr/declarations/article/declaration-a-la-suite-du-referendum-britannique/>

#### **Elysée tweets:**

- *"La France est le pays qui peut entraîner les autres et être le garant de l'avenir de notre continent"*
- *"La France a une responsabilité particulière parce qu'elle est au cœur de l'Europe, qu'elle l'a voulu et l'a bâti"*
- *"Je ferai tout pour que nous adoptions un changement profond plutôt que le repli"*
- *"J'irai lundi à Berlin pour évoquer avec Mme Merkel ce qui doit être fait en prévision du Conseil européen de mardi"*
- *"L'Union européenne doit être comprise et contrôlée par ses citoyens"*
- *"Le renforcement de la Zone Euro et de sa gouvernance démocratique est une nécessité"*
- *"Un sursaut est nécessaire. L'Europe doit réaffirmer ses valeurs : liberté, solidarité, paix"*
- *"Le vote britannique met l'Union européenne en difficultés. Il faut prendre conscience de ses insuffisances"*
- *"La France continuera de travailler avec ce pays ami, nos relations étroites seront préservées"*
- *"Les Britanniques ont décidé de quitter l'Union européenne. C'est un choix douloureux que je respecte"*

#### **Chancellor Merkel**

In Berlin, the German chancellor, Angela Merkel, expressed "great regret" at Britain's decision, but said the EU should not draw "quick and simple conclusions" that might create new and deeper divisions. The union's foundation was "the idea of peace", she said.

### Germany – Foreign Office tweets

- *FM #Steinmeier invites Foreign Ministers of EU founding members for consultation to Berlin on Saturday morning. #UKReferendum*
- *FM #Steinmeier: The early morning news from #GreatBritain are truly sobering. It looks like a sad day for #Europe+the #UnitedKingdom. #UK*

### Spain

Madrid has already proposed sharing sovereignty over Gibraltar, after Britain voted to leave the European Union, saying it would allow the overseas territory to maintain access to the EU's single market.

"Our formula... is British-Spanish co-sovereignty for a determined period of time, which after that time has elapsed, will head towards the restitution of Gibraltar to Spanish sovereignty," Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Garcia-Margallo told Spanish radio.

*(Source: EurActiv)*

### Reported by the BBC

Estonian Prime Minister Taavi Roivas said: "We must... work hard so that we do not lose the unity of the European Union."

Portuguese President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa said "the European project remains valid to defend the values that mark our common identity".

Czech PM Bohuslav Sobotka said: "Despite the disappointment many of us feel... we must realise that this is not the end of the world and it's absolutely not the end of the EU."

But he also echoed the voices of many in calling for change, saying: "Europe must be more operational, flexible, less bureaucratic and much more perceptive to the diversity that its member states represent."

Greek PM Alexis Tsipras said the vote was "either a wake-up call or the beginning of a dangerous path".

He said: "We urgently need a new vision and beginning for a united Europe - for a better Europe, more social and democratic."

Mr Renzi tweeted: "We have to change it to make it more humane and more just, but Europe is our home, it's our future."