

MEMO: INFORMAL MEETING OF MINISTERS AND STATE SECRETARIES FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS (GAC)

24–25 July, Bratislava

As part of the Slovak Presidency of the Council of the EU, Bratislava will host an informal meeting of the EU Member States' ministers and state secretaries responsible for European affairs on 24-25 July. The meeting is to be chaired by **Ivan Korčok, ministre délégué for the Slovak Presidency of the Council of the EU**. The European Commission is to be represented by Frans Timmermans, First Vice-President of the European Commission, and Johannes Hahn, European Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations.

The meeting's agenda will open on Sunday 24 July with a working meeting at which the country holding the Presidency, the European Commission and candidate countries will discuss the issue of **EU enlargement**.

On the next day, two working meetings will take place which will see representatives of the Member States discuss the fulfilment of the EU's strategic priorities. In the first part of the talks, the ministers and state secretaries will exchange views on the **status of the implementation of the EU's Strategic Agenda** (Taking Forward the Strategic Agenda). The second session will involve discussions on the topic of **communicating European issues to citizens** (Communicating Europe Better).

In June 2014, the European Council approved a document called the Strategic Agenda for the Union in Times of Change, which sets out the overarching political priorities for the EU for the next five years. For these priorities to be fulfilled, the two interconnected aspects need to be aligned with each other. The first of them is a constructive **dialogue on progress** – as well as on shortcomings – **in the implementation of this agenda**. The successful implementation of the objectives is conditional on efficacious cooperation between the EU institutions, and between the EU institutions and the Member States. As the document was approved two years ago, the Slovak Presidency views it as timely to reflect now on the state of play as regards the implementation of the priorities and the identification of areas that require increased attention and effort from the Member States.

Along with the achievement of tangible results in the fulfilment of the EU's priorities, equally important is the manner in which we communicate these results at European and national levels. The second working meeting will therefore provide scope for **discussion on ways of improving communication about European themes and their positive effect on citizens' daily lives**.



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