



Delegation for relations with the United States

D-US_PV(2018)04_25

MINUTES

of the meeting of 25 April 2018, 13.30-14.30
Brussels

The meeting opened at 13.30 on Tuesday, 25 April 2018, with Jeppe Kofod (Vice-Chair) presiding.

1. Adoption of draft agenda

The draft agenda was adopted in the form shown in these minutes.

2. Adoption of minutes of meeting of 15 March 2018

The minutes were approved.

3. Communications by the Chair

None.

4. Exchange of views with Mark N. Strand, President of the Congressional Institute, Washington DC on the current political climate in the US and the future of the transatlantic relationship

Mr Strand outlined the prospects of both parties for the mid-term elections in November 2018.

Positive elements for Republicans:

Mr Strand noted that the US economy was doing very well, and people, including Trump voters who had been struggling economically, were beginning to feel the benefits of the recent tax reform, both in terms of wages going up and in terms of the optimism of the business sector.

The Democrats had no strong national leader and their main figureheads, like Sen. B. Sanders, Sen. E. Warren, Rep. N. Pelosi and Sen. J. Biden were ageing. They also had difficulties in setting the news agenda. The recent special elections had shown that Democrats did well when they fielded candidates from the middle who could capture Republican voters (e.g. in

Pennsylvania and Virginia), whereas their current recruitment and primaries drive seemed to be fielding candidates from the more liberal faction of the party.

Despite the seemingly tiny Republican majority of 2 in the Senate, there were many more Democrats than Republicans (26 to 9) in the 35 senators up for re-election (33 plus 2 special elections), making it very difficult for the Democrats to reclaim the Senate. This meant that, even with a Democratic House, legislation would not pass and presidential appointments would continue. Mr Strand noted that in the current generic polls, Republicans only trailed Democrats by 5% rather than 13% a few months ago.

Positive elements for Democrats:

Historically, the ruling party had almost always faced a negative wave in the mid-terms. In addition, the President had low approval ratings of around 42%.

A large number (40+) of experienced and relatively moderate Republicans were retiring or not seeking re-election, which was creating more competitive races. The Democratic fundraising was currently higher than that Republicans at that moment.

Positive elements for Europeans:

Mr Strand argued that the US security role, globally and in NATO, had not diminished, as shown by the \$94 billion extra defence funding for 2018 alone, and by the strikes on chemical plants in Syria together with France and the UK. The US was not abandoning Europe, only urging it to spend more and showing the way. In addition the US had not disengaged from around the world, it had just focussed on issues like Cuba and Venezuela, which were closer to home. Given US checks and balances, Congress had reasserted its role in foreign policy, and on issues like trade and Russia, was closer to European positions. President Trump had not tried to interfere with Congress' legislative role.

While Congress had trouble understanding some parts of the EU, Mr Strand opined that they definitely understood the positions of elected politicians like MEPs and the Parliament should invest more in these friendships and outreach, also by making the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue even more specialised, by bringing the right people around the table. Cybersecurity and digital legislation e.g. on privacy were two common and positive areas worth exploring further in the TLD.

Negative elements for Europeans:

No politician in the US, whether Republican or Democrat, could gain anything by being soft on Iran, because of the history, the strong public opinion and the emerging threats to Israel via Syria. The President had been quite consistent on this and the only argument that may have had a small chance of working was that no deal is worse than the bad deal. This was what President Macron had tried to convey together with the idea of including the JCPOA in a broader new deal addressing US concerns, but Mr Strand seemed sceptical about President Trump backing down.

Mr Trump's stance on trade deficits and tariffs had been consistent for over 30 years, and while it did not echo Republican free trade philosophy, it did find support among Democrat voters and politicians.

In conclusion, Mr Strand said that the Democrats may well reclaim the House, but by a small margin. This would lead to more pressure on the Trump administration with more hearings on issues like the Russia inquiry, but it would also mean that legislation would be blocked which would not be popular. The prospect of impeachment was also quite unpopular, and may not increase Democrat presidential chances in 2020.

5. Any other business

None.

6. Date and place of next meeting.

The next meeting of the delegation, scheduled for 30 May 2018, would take place jointly with the Delegation for Relations with Iran.

The meeting closed at 14.30.

**ПРИСЪСТВЕН ЛИСТ/LISTA DE ASISTENCIA/PREZENČNÍ LISTINA/DELTAGERLISTE/
ANWESENHEITSLISTE/KOHALOLIJATE NIMEKIRI/KATAΣΤΑΣΗ ΠΑΡΟΝΤΩΝ/RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/
LISTE DE PRÉSENCE/POPIS NAZOČNIH/ELENCO DI PRESENZA/APMEKLĒJUMU REĢISTRŠ/DALYVIŲ SAŖAŠAS/
JELENLÉTI ÍV/REGĪSTRU TA' ATTENDENZA/PRESENTIELIJST/LISTA OBECNOŠCI/LISTA DE PRESENÇAS/
LISTĂ DE PREZENȚĂ/PREZENČNÁ LISTINA/SEZNAM NAVZOČIH/LĀSNĀOLOLISTA/DELTAGARLISTA**

<p>Бюро/Мesa/Předsednictvo/Formandskabet/Vorstand/Juhatus/Προεδρείο/Bureau/Predsjetništvo/Ufficio di presidenza/Prezidijs/ Biuras/Elnökség/Prezydium/Birou/Predsedníctvo/Predsedstvo/Puheenjohtajisto/Presidiet (*)</p>
<p>Jeppje Kofod (V-C), Marietje Schaake (V-C)</p>
<p>Членове/Diputados/Poslanci/Medlemmer/Mitglieder/Parlamendiliikmed/Μέλη/Members/Députés/Zastupnici/Deputati/Deputāti/Nariai/ Képviselek/Membri/Leden/Posłowie/Deputados/Deputați/Jäsenet/Ledamöter</p>
<p>Daniel Dalton, Paolo De Castro, Eugen Freund, Jens Geier, Neena Gill, Ana Gomes, Emma McClarkin, Giulia Moi, Alfred Sant, Helmut Scholz</p>
<p>Заместници/Suplentes/Náhradníci/Stedfortrædere/Stellvertreter/Asendusliikmed/Αναπληρωτές/Substitutes/Suppléants/Zamjenici/ Supplenti/Aizstājēji/Pavadojantysnariai/Póttagok/Sostituti/Plaatsvervangers/Zastępcy/Membros suplentes/Supleantī/Náhradníci/ Namestniki/Varajäsenet/Suppleanter</p>
<p>Elmar Brok, Giorgos Grammatikakis, Seán Kelly</p>

<p>200 (2)</p>
<p>206 (3)</p>
<p>53 (8) (Точка от дневния ред/Punto del orden del día/Bod pořadu jednání (OJ)/Punkt på dagsordenen/Tagesordnungspunkt/ Päevakorra punkt/Ημερήσια Διάταξη Σημείο/Agenda item/Point OJ/Τοčka dnevnoĝ reda/Punto all'ordine del giorno/Darba kārtības punkts/Darbotvarkēs punktas/Napirendi pont/Punt Agenda/Agendapunt/Punkt porządku dziennego/Ponto OD/Punct de pe ordinea de zi/Bod programu schôdze/Τοčka UL/Esityslistan kohta/Föredragningslista punkt)</p>

Наблюдатели/Observadores/Pozorovatelé/Observatører/Beobachter/Vaatlejad/Παρατηρητές/Observers/Observateurs/Promatrači/Osservatori/Novērotāji/Stebėtojai/Megfigyelők/Osservatori/Waarnemers/Obserwatorzy/Observadores/Observatori/Pozorovatelia/Opazovalci/Tarkkailijat/Observatörer

По покана на председателя/Por invitación del presidente/Na pozvání předsedy/Efter indbydelse fra formanden/Auf Einladung des Vorsitzenden/Εσιμεθε kutsel/Με πρόσκληση του Προέδρου/At the invitation of the Chair(wo)man/Sur l'invitation du président/Na poziv predsjednika/Su invito del presidente/Pēc priekšsēdētāja uzaicinājuma/Pirmininkui pakvietus/Az elnök meghívására/Fuq stedina taç-'Chairman'/Op uitnodiging van de voorzitter/Na zaproszenie Przewodniczącego/A convite do Presidente/La invitația președintelui/Na pozwanie predsedu/Na povabilo predsednika/Puheenjohtajan kutsusta/På ordförandens inbjudan
Mark N. Strand, President of the Congressional Institute, Washington DC

Съвет/Consejo/Rada/Rådet/Rat/Nöukogu/Συμβούλιο/Council/Conseil/Vijeće/Consiglio/Padome/Taryba/Tanács/Kunsill/Raad/Conselho/Consiliu/Svet/Neuvosto/Rådet (*)
Комисия/Comisión/Komise/Kommissionen/Kommission/Euroopa Komisjon/Επιτροπή/Commission/Komisija/Commissione/Bizottság/Kummissjoni/Commissie/Komisja/Comissão/Comisie/Komisja/Komissio/Kommissionen (*)
Европейска служба за външна дейност/Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior/Evropská služba pro vnější činnost/EU-Udenrigstjenesten/Europäischer Auswärtiger Dienst/Euroopa välisteenistus/Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Εξωτερικής Δράσης/European External Action service/Service européen pour l'action extérieure/Evropska služba za vanjsko djelovanje/Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna/Eiropas Ārējās darbības dienests/Europos išorės veiksmy tarnyba/Európai Külügyi Szolgálat/Servizz Ewropew għall-Azzjoni Esterna/Europese dienst voor extern optreden/Europejska Służba Działañ Zewnętrznych/Serviço Europeu para a Acção Externa/Serviciul european pentru acțiune externă/Európska služba pre vonkajšiu činnost/Evropska služba za zunanje delovanje/Euroopan ulkosuhdehallinto/Europeiska avdelningen för yttre åtgärd (*)
Michal Pavuk
Други институции/Otras instituciones/Ostatní orgány a instituce/Andre institutioner/Andere Organe/Muud institutsioonid/Άλλα θεσμικά όργανα/Other institutions/Autres institutions/Druge institucije/Altre istituzioni/Citas iestādes/Kitos institucijos/Más intézmények/Istituzjonijiet oħra/Andere instellingen/Inne instytucje/Outras Instituições/Alte instituții/Iné inštitúcie/Muut toimielimet/Andra institutioner/organ

Други учасници/Otros participantes/Ostatní účastníci/Endvidere deltog/Andere Teilnehmer/Muud osalejad/Επίσης Παρόντες/Other participants/Autres participants/Drugi sudionici/Altri partecipanti/Citi klātesošie/Kiti dalyviai/Más résztvevők/Partecipanti ohra/Andere aanwezigen/Inni uczestnicy/Outros participantes/Alți participanți/Ini účastnici/Drugi udeleženci/Muut osallistajat/Övriga deltagare

Секретариат на политическите групи/Secretaría de los Grupos políticos/Sekretariát politických skupin/Gruppernes sekretariat/Sekretariat der Fraktionen/Fraktsioonide sekretariaat/Γραμματεία των Πολιτικών Ομάδων/Secretariats of political groups/Secrétariat des groupes politiques/Tajništva klubova zastupnika/Segreteria gruppi politici/Politisko grupu sekretariāts/Frakciju sekretariai/Képviseletcsoportok titkársága/Sekretarjat gruppi politici/Fractiesecretariaten/Sekretariat Grup Politycznych/Secr. dos grupos políticos/Secretariate grupuri politice/Sekretariát politických skupin/Sekretariat političnih skupin/Poliittisten ryhmien sihteeriöt/Gruppernas sekretariat

PPE	Astrid Dentler, Jonas Kraft, Julianna Huszar-Dekany, Benjamin Oppermann
S&D	Dorota Myszkowska
ECR	Luc Rohtus, Richard Hazlewood
ALDE	
Verts/ALE	Martin Koehler
GUE/NGL	Karin Schuttpehl
EFDD	Michela Maisti
ENF	Agnes Kada
NI	

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Генерална дирекция/Dirección General/Generální ředitelství/Generaldirektorat/Generaldirektion/Peadirektoraat/Γενική Διεύθυνση/ Directorate-General/Direction générale/Glavna uprava/Direzione generale/Generāldirektorāts/Generalinis direktoratas/Főigazgatóság/ Direttorat Generali/Direktoraten-generaal/Dyrekcja Generalna/Direcção-Geral/Direcții Generale/Generálne riaditeľstvo/Generalni direktorat/Pääosasto/Generaldirektorat	
DG PRES DG IPOL DG EXPO DG EPRS DG COMM DG PERS DG INLO DG TRAD DG LINC DG FINS DG ITEC DG SAFE	Nora Kovacheva
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Adam Isaacs, Alexandros Karides	
Сътрудник/Asistente/Asistent/Assistent/Assistenz/Βοηθός/Assistant/Assistente/Palīgs/Padējējas/Asszisztens/Asyistent/Pomočnik/ Avustaja/Assistenten	
Gabriel Turlui	

- * (P) = Председател/Presidente/Předseda/Formand/Vorsitzender/Esimees/Πρόεδρος/Chair(wo)man/Président/Predsjednik/Priekšsēdētājs/
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 Varapuheenjohtaja/Vice ordförande
- (M) = Член/Miembro/Člen/Medlem./Mitglied/Parlamendiliige/Μέλος/Member/Membre/Član/Membro/Deputāts/Narys/Képviselő/
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 Tjänsteman