



EUROPEAN COUNCIL  
THE PRESIDENT

Brussels, 17 December 2013

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&form of address

It is my pleasure to invite you to the meeting of the European Council which will take place in Brussels on 19 and 20 December 2013.

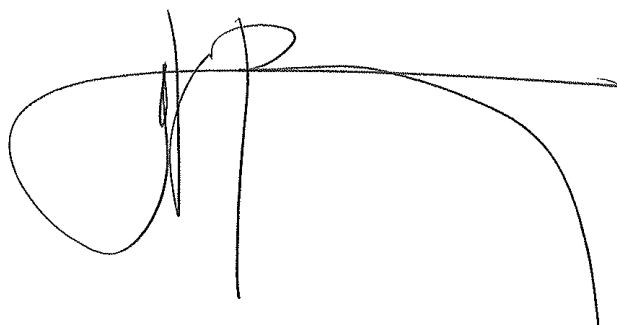
Our meeting on Thursday will start at 15.00, with the traditional exchange of views with the President of the European Parliament and the family photo. Before our first working session, the NATO Secretary-General will share some thoughts with us ahead of the thematic debate that we will have on defence policy. I should indeed like us to have a strategic discussion on one of the major current challenges in the field of defence: what should we be doing, as Union and as EU Member States, to retain and develop the capabilities that are critical for our defence and our security, and how can we encourage more cooperation to reach this goal? After this discussion, we will adopt the corresponding part of the conclusions.

Over dinner, the focus will be on economic and social policy and on the Economic and Monetary Union. In the presence of the President of the European Central Bank, we will analyse the economic situation, as decided at our October European Council. We also agreed to take stock of the completion of the Banking Union and to have an in-depth discussion on the Partnerships for Growth, Jobs and Competitiveness. The conclusions relating to these issues will be adopted at the end of the dinner.

On Friday morning, the President of the European Investment Bank will join us at the start of the session. We will assess progress on implementing the Compact for Growth and Jobs and, in particular, the impact that the capital increase agreed in the Compact has had on the financing of the economy.

We will then discuss the other items on the agenda and adopt the rest of the conclusions. Some of our time will be dedicated to looking into recent developments on the international scene such as Ukraine, the Central African Republic, Iran, Syria and COP19. Finally, President Grybauskaitė and Prime Minister Samaras will briefly speak about their Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

&salutations

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'H' followed by a long horizontal line that curves downwards at the end.

H. VAN ROMPUY