



**PRESS RELEASE**

**Subject: EU President delivers “State of the Union” 2021 address setting out priorities for post-pandemic recovery**

September 15, 2021: In the annual “State of the Union” address, the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, presented her vision of a greener, digital, resilient and healthier Europe and of the EU as a strong global actor.

The European Commission is the executive branch of the EU and helps to shape overall strategy, proposes new laws and policies, monitors implementation and manages the EU budget. This includes trade policy as well as development cooperation and humanitarian aid – policy areas of highest relevance for Pakistan and the region.

The State of the Union address takes stock of the achievements of the past year and presents the priorities for the year ahead. The President also sets out how the Commission, the executive branch of the EU, will address the most pressing challenges the European Union faces and ideas for shaping the future of the EU.

In view of the annual speech, the Ambassador of the European Union to Pakistan, Ms Androulla Kaminara, underlined: “Given the importance of the European Union for Pakistan – as the most important export destination for Pakistani goods, as major development partner, as global driver of policies and standards – this annual speech is highly relevant for Pakistan. President Van der Leyen not only talked about issues relevant within the Union, but also challenges, priorities and action that will impact the world at large.”

During her address, President Von der Leyen highlighted Europe’s efforts to procure vaccines, scale up production, to strengthen international cooperation against the pandemic and to lead Europe out of the economic crisis with [NextGenerationEU](#) – and emerge stronger from the pandemic.

She added that the EU had set ambitious targets for the transformation of the economy – to make it greener, digital and fairer. The commission will focus on

- Continuing the vaccination efforts in Europe and speeding up vaccination globally, as well as strengthening the pandemic preparedness
- Working on closing the climate finance gap, together with our global partners
- Leading the digital transformation that will create jobs and drive competitiveness, while ensuring technical excellence and security of supply
- Ensuring fairer working conditions and better healthcare, and creating more opportunities for Europe’s youth to benefit from the European social market economy
- Stepping up our cooperation on security and defence, and deepening EU’s partnership with closest allies
- Defending European values and freedoms, and protecting the rule of law.
- Taking a new approach to migration, remaining vigilant on the rule of law and building a union where racism and discrimination have no place.

The European Commission is the executive branch of the EU and helps to shape overall strategy, proposes new laws and policies, monitors implementation and manages the EU budget. This includes trade policy as well as development cooperation and humanitarian aid. The overall EU budget for cooperation and external relations amounts to over 129 Billion Euros.

The President decides on the organisation of the European Commission, sets the policy agenda – and is also responsible for implementation of European Law and held accountable by both the European Parliament and Council of Europe.

President Ursula Von Der Leyen is the first woman to hold the position after she was elected last year. Her political career spans 30 years during which time she held a number of key positions including the Federal Minister of Defence and the Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs in Germany.

Over the last 7 years, the European Union has allocated 618 million Euros in development cooperation and more than 611 million Euros in humanitarian aid for Pakistan since 2009.

The complete speech is available at the following link

[https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH\\_21\\_4701](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_21_4701)

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