



**EUROPEAN COUNCIL
THE PRESIDENT**



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Invitation letter by President Herman Van Rompuy to the European Council

It is my pleasure to invite you to the meeting of the European Council on 22 and 23 November 2012 in Brussels. We must strike a deal on the future Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). We committed to this on several occasions already.

The aim of this meeting is clear: it is about ensuring that the Union has the necessary means to function in the years to come, taking into account unavoidable fiscal constraints. It is about sending a concrete signal on our determination to do everything that is needed to lift Europe out of the crisis. Let there be no mistake: the absence of an agreement would be harmful for all of us. This is why I have made arrangements so that our meeting can be prolonged, if necessary.

Last week, I submitted the draft European Council conclusions on the MFF 2014-2020. All delegations expressed concerns. But now we must all enter into deal-making mode. We proposed an MFF with a reduction of 80 billion euro compared to the Commission proposal. I know this creates its own difficulties. However, everyone must understand that, with less money, we cannot do the same as before. Political choices had to be made.

In particular, we proposed to apply the necessary cuts almost proportionately across the board, adhering to the balance of the Commission proposal. I listened to your European Affairs Ministers carefully on Monday evening. Furthermore, on Thursday José Manuel Barroso and I will meet with each of you individually.

P R E S S

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Our meeting will begin on Thursday at 20.00 with the traditional exchange of views with the President of the European Parliament. After the family photo, we will begin our work at 20.30, in order to complete the procedure on the appointment of a member of the ECB Executive Board, as recommended by the Council. After this, we will remain in our meeting room on floor 50, where dinner will be served.

I will then share with you my assessment on the MFF in the light of all my bilaterals. My intention is to issue a revised version of the draft EC conclusions Thursday evening.

I will inform you Thursday evening of how I intend to organise our work on Friday. I look forward to seeing you on Thursday.
