



European Council

The President

036063/EU XXV. GP
Eingelangt am 01/09/14

PRESS

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REMARKS

EUCO 164/14

PRESSE 450

PR PCE 145

Brussels, 30 August 2014

**Opening remarks by President Herman Van Rompuy
at the European Council**

Welcome to this special meeting. I am pleased to see you all back after a short summer. One of the most tragic summers in years. We will come that.

But first, we will decide today on two top EU nominations. We need to elect a European Council President. We need to appoint a High Representative for foreign affairs. This will also allow Jean-Claude Juncker to put forward his team for the Commission. Men and women, they will all start in the fall.

It has been, as I said, an intense summer on the international front.

With escalation in eastern Ukraine, barbarian fanatics in Iraq and Syria, deadly violence around Gaza, and turmoil in Libya – there is much to address. On Ukraine, we will hear President Poroshenko on the situation in his country.

Be it for the world around us or our economy..., the months ahead will require our full attention. Let us start right away.
