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Dear praying friends in Europe –

*“The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord,
Like the rivers of water;
He turns it wherever He wishes.”*

Proverbs 21:1

It is reassuring to know that the hearts of our European leaders are ultimately in the Lord’s hands. We may not always see the evidence of God’s guidance in their lives and decision making but we can be sure that the Lord is watching over them and it is for us to lift them up in prayer as they shoulder their responsibilities and as they face difficult situations, often under great pressure, both because of time constraints and also from proponents of different views on how Europe should be governed. Let’s be mindful of our task as our leaders face theirs.



Ian Jeal

Come to know the 3 Presidents

Who is the President of the European Union? To answer this question, we need to look at the 3 institutions of the EU: Parliament (EP), Council (EC), and Commission (see Canopy 5) to understand that there are 3 presidents, one for each institution. What are their roles?

The President of the EP – currently **Antonio Tajani** – presides over the debates and activities of the EP along with his 14 vice Presidents. The President also represents the parliament internationally. He is responsible for chairing meetings of the Bureau, which is in charge of the day to day running of the parliament, and also of the Conference of Presidents, which is the governing body of the parliament, made up of the Presidents of all the political groups. The President’s signature is required on the EU budget as well as adopted Union acts because in the EU the directly elected Parliament is listed as the primary institution so its President comes before any other European or national protocol. Tajani’s two and a half year mandate ends in May 2019.

The President of the EC, consisting of the EU Heads of state, is its representative on the world stage. The president – currently **Donald Tusk** – attends summits and other world events to represent the consensus view of the EU states. He is also responsible for chairing the meetings of Heads of state, who appoint their president by a clear majority for a term of two and a half years, renewable once. Tusk’s 2nd mandate ends in May 2019. The Council of the EU, where national ministers discuss legislation, is led by the country holding the 6 month rotating Council presidency, currently Bulgaria.

Please also pray for

- the Bulgarian government, who have just taken over the 6 month rotating Council presidency for the first time.
- fresh talks to form a coalition government in Germany, that there would be more certainty for G and the rest of Europe.

European Commission President – currently **Jean-Claude Juncker** – is leader of the Cabinet of Commissioners. They are accountable to the European Parliament, which is directly elected by EU citizens. The President allocates portfolios to the commissioners, who are nominated by their member states and ratified by parliament. It is the President of Commission who proposes legislation in consultation with the other Commissioners and their civil service. But both Council and Parliament can request Commission to draft a proposal for legislation. All legislation needs to be adopted or rejected by Parliament and Council. Once adopted, the President of Commission and its civil service are responsible to ensure that it is acted upon. The President of Commission also represents the EU abroad. The President is nominated by the European Council and formally elected by the European Parliament for a term of 5 years which may be renewable. Juncker will not be seeking a 2nd mandate in November 2019.

Prayer:

- for the current 3 presidents, that they would all be open to Godly wisdom and counsel, as Tusk appears willing to be;
- for the next presidents who will all be elected in 2019, the same year as the next European election;
- for favour for all 3 presidents to bridge the many gaps within the Union (Poland, Britain, Spain)..