



Press Release

Luxembourg, 12 October 2017

2017 “a turning point for Europe”, says President of EU Auditors

The President of the European Court of Auditors, Klaus-Heiner Lehne, has described 2017 as “a turning point for Europe”. Mr Lehne was speaking in Luxembourg at a special event to mark the 40th anniversary of the European Court of Auditors. The other speakers were the President of the European Parliament, Antonio Tajani, the President of Estonia, Kersti Kaljulaid (representing the Council presidency), and the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker. The event took place in the presence of Their Royal Highnesses the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess of Luxembourg.

Mr Lehne welcomed the roadmap for the EU set out by European Commission President, Jean-Claude Juncker. “It is a bold roadmap”, he said, “and that is in my view completely right because we need to be bold. We need to be more confident in our values and confident in our potential.”

Mr Lehne continued, “Debating what sort of Union we want to live in is good, even essential. But perpetual self-doubt only adds confusion and plays directly into the hands of populists”. The event coincides with a meeting of the heads of EU national audit institutions held to exchange views on the future of EU finances. Mr Lehne said 2017 was the year when, “rather than staring into the abyss, the twenty-seven European leaders gathered in Rome and reaffirmed their common future.”

The Heads of Supreme Audit Institutions of the European Union and the European Court of Auditors meet annually to discuss matters of common interest focused around EU policy and financial management issues. This year’s meeting is being hosted by the ECA in Luxembourg on 12-13 October 2017. The main focus of discussion is whether EU and national auditors can contribute to restoring the trust of citizens.

Mr Lehne told guests at the special event, “At the European Court of Auditors, we are determined to play a full part in a reinvigorated European Union.”

“We are determined to ensure that every euro spent at EU level brings clear added value,” concluded Mr Lehne. “We are determined to remain an independent voice that metes out praise when things go well, but also highlights inconvenient truths when things are not working properly.”

Note to Editors

The European Court of Auditors was established by the Treaty of Brussels of 22 July 1975 and started work on 18 October 1977. Its Members held their first meeting on 25 October of the same year. President Lehne's speech is available on the ECA website in English, French and German (check against delivery).

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