

## CHRONOLOGY

### January – May 2017

#### January 3

Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico urged EU leaders and politicians to avoid conducting referenda on domestic issues and EU membership like Britain, Italy and other EU states which put the EU and euro at risk.

#### January 5

French border police arrested the former prime minister of Kosovo Ramush Haradinaj on a Serbian warrant issued in 2004, for alleged war crimes in late 1990s.

#### January 9

Members from Alde party of the European Parliament blocked the decision of their party leader to allow the populist MEPs of 5-Star party from joining the pro-EU alliance in the EU Parliament.

#### January 10

Italy became the first western country to re-open its embassy in Libya.

#### January 11

The new coalition government of Iceland asked the parliament to hold a referendum on the EU membership.

Malta, the smallest member state in the EU took the EU presidency.

#### January 12

Sixty Hungarian NGOs funded by George Soros Foundation vowed to defy a Prime Minister ban on their social programmes, educational projects and human rights activities.

#### January 13

Malta's foreign ministry raised alarm on Russian activities in Libya and accused it of supporting pro-Moscow warlords.

**January 17**

Moldovan President Igor Dodon paid a visit to Russia where he threatened to scrap the EU association treaty. He expressed his desire to join the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

**January 18**

Germany unveiled a 33-page plan for Africa to enhance development and aid cooperation with African countries, as part of its migration partnership framework.

**January 21**

Leaders of all populist and far-right parties of European countries gathered in Koblenz, Germany to show their allegiance ahead of national elections this year.

**January 24**

Catalan leaders visited Brussels to meet EU officials and appealed for political support for an independence referendum to be held in September this year.

**January 25**

The European Commission announced a €200 million migrant project for Libya and North Africa to stem irregular migrant flows and increase surveillance in Mediterranean Sea.

**January 27**

Eurozone finance ministers demanded the Greek government to adopt new austerity measures for the future risk.

Belgium, France, Netherlands and the UK signed a deal to enhance the system of commutes identification in an attempt to scuttle terrorist movement across Europe.

**January 28**

Following the US President Trump's order to strip non-US citizens of privacy protection, concerns sparked in the European Commission on the status of EU-US data-sharing Privacy Shield Pact.

**January 30**

Swedish government forwarded plan to rent the harbour area of Karlshamn town to Russian company Gazprom to ease the construction of Nord Stream II, a gas pipeline project to connect Russia to Germany bypassing Ukraine.

In a joint response against US President's anti-Muslim travel ban, the EU leaders have strongly condemned Trump's order, which undermine European values.

**February 1**

Fierce clashes between Ukrainian government forces and Russian-backed rebels left 19 dead in Avdiivka, just north of the rebel's de-facto capital Donetsk.

**February 2**

During his visit to Sarajevo, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg alleged that the alliance had helped resist foreign influence in the Western Balkans.

**February 5**

After the successful EU mediation between the Serb representatives and Kosovor government officials, the local Serbs live in Kosovo, demolished a wall of separation in the ethnic divided city of Mitrovica.

**February 6**

Former President of Catalonia Artur Mas was put on trial for holding a non-binding independence referendum in 2014.

**February 9**

A Russian airstrike targeting militants in Syria accidentally killed three Turkish soldiers.

**February 12**

In a referendum, the Swiss voters approved to ease citizenship process for third-generation immigrants, despite opposition from populists.

**February 14**

Lithuanian Parliament adopted measures that banned all types of violence against children including corporal punishments.

**February 17**

In her opening speech at the Munich Security Conference, German Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen stated that Lithuania deserved protection under NATO.

Around 2000 Belarusians protest against a law aimed at punishing those not in full-time employments.

**February 18**

Dutch anti-Islam MP Geert Wilders began his election campaign with an incendiary tirade against the Moroccan community in the Netherlands. He referred them as 'scum'.

Russia President Vladimir Putin approved measures to recognize passports issued by the self-declared Donetsk and Luhansk Peoples Republics.

**February 19**

Former Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi resigned as head of Italy's ruling Democratic Party.

**February 20**

The Kremlin angrily reacted to reports from Montenegro implying Russian involvement in a coup plot during last year's election.

**February 21**

The President of Azerbaijan appointed his wife, Mehriban Aliyeva, as Vice President.

The President of the European Commission, Jean Claude-Juncker, warned the United Kingdom of a tough road ahead in Brexit negotiations and that the British people should not expect any 'discount or zero cost'.

**February 22**

Talks were called off between rival Cypriot leaders after a reunification memorial in Greek Cypriot schools triggered a war of words.

**February 23**

Bosnia formally submitted a request for revision of a 2007 UN court ruling that exonerated Serbs of direct responsibility for killings.

**February 24**

The German weekly *Der Spiegel* reported that the German foreign intelligence service BND spied journalists of the BBC, the New York Times, Reuters and other media.

**February 26**

On the request of Nigerian President Mahamadou Issoufou, France would send a contingent of counter-terror forces to Niger after a militant ambush near the country's frontier with Mali killed 16 troops.

**February 28**

Criminal proceedings against 330 coup plotters started in Turkey. If convicted, they could face multiple life sentences.

**March 2**

Swedish Defence Minister announced the reintroduction of military conscription from next year due to soldier shortage and increasing security concerns.

**March 3**

Tunisia and Germany reached an agreement on tackling illegal migration. The agreement would accelerate the process of migrants' identification.

**March 4**

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan equated German government behaviour to Nazism for not allowing rallies in German cities in the support of Erdogan.

**March 6**

The European Union approved to open a military command centre to run military training missions abroad.

**March 7**

Hungarian Parliament green-lighted systematic detention of all asylum seekers in container camps. According to Prime Minister Viktor Orban the measure would secure Europe from terror attacks.

**March 8**

The Icelandic Government announced that it would introduce legislation to ensure that employers with a staff of more than 25 give equal pay for work of equal value. They would have to obtain certification in that regard.

**March 9**

Russian President Vladimir Putin urged the visiting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to focus on the present times, for the latter termed contemporary Iran a continuation of Persian attempts at Jewish annihilation.

**March 10**

German Upper House rejected a proposal to declare three North African countries (Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco) 'safe countries of origin' in refugee law.

**March 14**

British Prime Minister Theresa May won the right to launch divorce proceedings with the European Union after both Houses backed her Brexit bill.

**March 15**

The incumbent Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte managed to retain his premiership after the insurgent Dutch Freedom Party failed to mount a successful challenge in the general elections.

**March 17**

A group of Basque separatists ETA decisively withdrew from the movement to create an independent Basque state and handed over their weapons and explosives to the French authorities at the French side of the Pyrenees Mountains.

**March 19**

The German Social Democratic Party nominated Martin Schultz as their candidate to face Angela Merkel in the upcoming elections for the chancellery.

**March 24**

French Presidential candidate Marine Le Pen met Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow. She had vowed to seek closer ties with Russia and recognize the annexation of Crimea if elected.

**March 25**

The UK Independence Party lost its only member of parliament when Douglas Carswell decided to leave the party and sit as an Independent member in the house.

**March 26**

The centre-right and pro-EU political party GERB won 33.2 percent of the vote in the parliamentary election in Bulgaria putting them on course to form a government.

**March 29**

Manuel Valls, the former French Prime Minister endorsed the centrist candidate Emmanuel Macron in presidential elections.

Prime Minister Theresa May formally communicated the UK's intention to withdraw from the European Union by sending a letter to European Council President Donald Tusk.

**March 30**

Albanian Army Chief of Staff met NATO's high official in Tirana to discuss Albanian army's legal framework.

**April 1**

Russian investigators opened a criminal case against unidentified internet users who were accused for inciting anti-government demonstrations in Moscow.

**April 2**

Armenian President Serzh Serksyan's Republican Party won 49.12 percent of popular vote in the parliamentary elections.

**April 3**

Spanish Foreign Minister Alfonso Dastis called for calm after tempers appeared to have flared over talks about the future of Gibraltar in a post-Brexit Europe.

**April 4**

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg urged Germany to spend more on its defence.

**April 5**

The Polish Supreme Administrative Court cleared the way for the right wing government to take control of a wartime museum.

**April 7**

Four people were killed in Stockholm when a truck drove into pedestrians. The police said that it was treating the incident as terrorism.

**April 8**

Basque separatist group ETA gave France details of its arms caches.

**April 9**

Thousands protested in Budapest over a bill that sought to scuttle Central European University founded by George Soros.

**April 10**

British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson pressed Putin to end his support for Assad in Syria.

**April 16**

The Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan claimed victory in constitutional referendum.



**April 18**

British Prime Minister Theresa May called a snap election for June 8 to get a fresh mandate for smooth Brexit negotiations.

In Slovakia, thousands of protesters poured out in the capital city Bratislava to demand the ouster of corrupt interior minister and police officials.

**April 21**

European Commission Vice President Frans Timmermans visited Romania. He praised government's efforts to reduce corruption and reach the objectives of the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (CVM), set up at the time of the country's accession to the EU in 2007.

**April 23**

Voters in France went to the poll in the first round of the presidential election.

**April 25**

Ukraine cut power supply to rebel held territories in the east. Kiev cited outstanding dues as the reason behind electricity suspension.

**April 27**

In Macedonia, a group of protesters broke the police cordon and stormed the parliamentary building. Forty four MPs and policemen were injured in the attack.

**April 28**

In a move that further polarized the country's politics, Albanian ruling Socialist Party used its parliamentary majority to elect a new president.

**May 2**

Denmark barred entry to five Islamic preachers and one Christian evangelical pastor branding them 'hate preachers'.

**May 4**

Russian envoy to the EU, Vladimir Chizhov told journalists in Brussels that Moscow was closely watching the French presidential campaign and listening all candidates' views about relations with Russia.

**May 7**

Emmanuel Macron won the second round to become the new French President with 66.1 percent of votes against the far-right candidate Marine Le Pen.

**May 10**

German Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen promised to rid the armed forces of their Nazi era baggage. She was responding to right wing plots within the army.

**May 11**

French President-elect Emmanuel Macron's party (Republic on the move) said that almost half of its parliamentary candidates for the upcoming polls for the National Assembly would be newcomers.

**May 12**

The European Union restored GSP+ concession to Sri Lanka, which had been suspended seven years ago due to concerns over human rights.

**May 14**

Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said that an independent Scotland would seek the membership of the European Union without adopting the euro.

Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union crushed its rivals in a crucial regional election in the state of North-Rhine Westphalia.

**May 15**

Germany and Italy backed the EU Mission to patrol on Libya-Niger border to halt migrants in Libya.

**May 17**

The European Parliament rebuked Hungary for "serious deterioration" in the rule of law and fundamental rights, which could lead the country losing its voting rights in supranational affairs.

Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny announced his resignation. He would also step down as party chief.

**May 18**

EU's Foreign Affairs Chief Federica Mogherini announced a plan to establish EU military HQ in Brussels and sending three EU training missions in Mali, Somalia and Central African Republic.

**May 19**

French President Emmanuel Macron said that French troops would stay in Mali and continue their collaboration with the government to check Islamist insurgency in the country.

Germany's Bundestag passed tighter rules on asylum seeking which allow deportation and detention of rejected asylum seekers.

**May 23**

A suicide explosion at a musical concert in Manchester killed 22 people and injured another 59.

**May 24**

The EU member states endorsed an EU bill against online hate speech.

A two-day NATO Summit began in Brussels. Twenty eight NATO members and one non-member state attended the event.

**May 25**

The EU Council President Donald Tusk together with EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker met with the US counterpart Donald Trump in Brussels to discuss bilateral issues between the EU and US.

French President Emmanuel Macron met with the President of the EU Commission Jean-Claude Juncker in Brussels to discuss the fight against terrorism, climate change, trade and social issues concerning the EU.

Former Greek Prime Minister Lucas Papademos was injured when a bomb exploded in his car.

**May 26**

The United Nations envoy for Cyprus ended his shuttle diplomacy to broker unification accord between Turkish-Greek Cypriots as the two sides had failed to agree on conditions.

Eastern European members of the European Union (Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and Romania) urged the EU for a soft Brexit in order to protect the interests of their citizens in the United Kingdom.

**May 29**

Moldovan pro-European government expelled five Russian diplomats enraging the country's pro-Russian president.

**May 30**

Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic stepped down as Prime Minister to assume the presidency he won a month ago.

**Mr. Muhammad Ahsan**  
**Ms. Munazza Nargis Kazmi**