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ΠΕΚΙΝΟ  
ΓΡΑΦΕΙΟ ΤΥΠΟΥ & ΕΠΙΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑΣ

EMBASSY OF GREECE  
BEIJING  
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Ανταπόκριση του Πρακτορείου Νέα Κίνα από την Αθήνα προβάλλει δηλώσεις του επικεφαλής του Συνδέσμου Ελλάδας - Κίνας κ. Α. Ποταμιάνου για το ελπιδοφόρο μέλλον των ε/κ σχέσεων με την απόκτηση του πλειοψηφικού πακέτου διαχείρισης του ΟΛΠ από την China COSCO Shipping με έδρα την Σαγκάη, και τις θετικές προοπτικές που δημιουργούνται με τα σχεδιαζόμενα έργα επέκτασης του λιμένα, ειδικά στο τομέα της κρουαζιέρας, την δυνατότητα μεγαλύτερης χρονικής πρόσδεσης πλοίων εκεί και τα οφέλη για την τοπική τουριστική οικονομία, και συνακόλουθα με τη δημιουργία δεκάδων χιλιάδων θέσεων εργασίας. Συνημμένα επίσης σχετικά ρεπορτάζ οικονομικού ενδιαφέροντος ιστοσελίδων CHINA.ORG, XINHUA, CHINA DAILY. /

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## Interview: Success of Piraeus port privatization to benefit both countries: Greece-China Association head

In the final stretch to the conclusion of Piraeus Port Authority (PPA) privatization in June, Andreas Potamianos, one of the protagonists in Greek shipping for decades and president of the Greece-China Association, expressed confidence that the success of the project will benefit both countries.

Speaking to Xinhua during a recent interview at his office overlooking Greece's largest port, Potamianos hailed the acquisition of the 67 percent stake in PPA by China COSCO Shipping as a landmark step in Sino-Greek cooperation as well as in the progress of the "Belt and Road" initiative and Greece's economic development.

According to Potamianos, the combination of Greeks' deep knowledge of maritime affairs and Chinese's excellence in organization will help transform Piraeus into a modern key transit hub for passenger vessels and cargos in Europe and give boost to the revival of the ancient Silk Road and Greece's efforts to restore growth and exit the six-year debt crisis.

Potamianos was not always in favor of PPA's sale to foreigners, he told Xinhua. As most Greeks, he preferred that the port stayed in Greek hands, because he knew well Piraeus' potential to hold a leading role in the development of Greek economy due to its geographical position.

But since Greeks failed to fully exploit this potential so far, he is glad for the cooperation with the Chinese and the signing of the deal in April rather than with any other investor.

The mutual respect and friendship between the two countries and peoples will be the most significant key to success, he said, pointing to the success story of COSCO Shipping's first investment at Piraeus at the containers terminal. The results of Sino-Greek collaboration over the past seven years are impressive, he noted.

"I believe that if the Chinese exploit the port well they will see that it is very profitable and this cooperation will prove to be successful... Which is the goal after all? To improve the competence of employees and quality of services offered, to the benefit of the economy. I think that everyone is willing to help in this direction," he told Xinhua.

The upgrade of Piraeus will benefit both sides, he explained. The port is already being transformed into a major gate for Chinese products and services into Europe, other multinationals have followed and the planned upgrade of the railway link to central Europe will enhance its significance in trade and transports.

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Studies conducted by various institutes have shown that Greece will benefit from the creation of about 125,000 much-needed jobs in the recession-hit country and the multi-billion euro revenues raised over the next three decades by Piraeus' upgrade with the help of the Chinese.

"I believe that they will significantly contribute to the development of Piraeus port which will become one of the most important ports in the future. And this is not only my opinion, but I know that also several major companies believe that Piraeus port can become a hub for passenger ships from abroad," Potamianos stressed.

Currently, the port cannot host several gigantic cruise ships for long, he explained. Therefore, tourists rush to Athens to visit the Acropolis hill and leave within hours. The port's extension is a priority so that cruise ships can remain docked for longer at Piraeus and foreign visitors can travel by train to other archaeological sites in the mainland, Potamianos said.

He appeared confident that closer Sino-Greek cooperation can lead to miracles. Greeks have a long experience in maritime affairs and Chinese are hard working people who can quickly materialize good ideas, he underlined.

Potamianos has been serving since 1987 as president of the Greece-China Association which this year celebrates the 60th anniversary of its establishment aiming to promote bilateral ties.

"In the beginning, we, including myself, did not realize the significance China could have for Greece. Over time we all realized it and everybody embraces China today," Potamianos told Xinhua.

He called for the further enhancement of bilateral collaboration in many fields.

"Hopefully, there will be more such cooperation partnerships with the Chinese," he said.

In particular, in the shipping sector he knows so well, he suggested the creation of Sino-Greek companies focusing on cruises.

His family's involvement with shipping started in the mid-19th century. His great grandfather Anastassios Potamianos launched his first shipping venture in 1850 transporting cargo and passengers along the Danube river. The name Potamianos in Greek means the River Man.

"Epirotiki" Line operated cruise vessels, cargo and tanker vessels worldwide for decades.

The secret of Greeks' leading role in international shipping is that current ship owners started as captains, like his great grandfather, and not businessmen with no previous experience of the sea, Potamianos explained.

He expressed certainty that the Chinese can also further develop in the shipping sector, since they do have the basic elements available: shipyards, fine vessels and crews, and marvelous places to visit. Enditem

### **Spotlight: "Major breakthrough" on Greece bailout achieved in Eurogroup meeting**

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Finance ministers of the 19-country eurozone have hammered out a deal in Brussels with Greece in the early hours of Wednesday after an 11-hour-meeting to which is described as a "major breakthrough" to start debt relief and unlock over 10 billion euros bailout cash for Greece.

The long-delayed tranche amounting to 10.3 billion will be paid with a first 7.5 billion euros tranche in June and the rest in several disbursements later.

The move came two days after Greek legislators approved fresh austerity measures including tax hikes and a new privatization fund.

"We achieved a major breakthrough on Greece which enables us to enter a new phase in the Greek financial assistance program,....This is stretching what I thought would have been possible not so long ago,"Eurogroup president Jeroen Dijsselbloem told a press conference.

"Of course this should lead to a full and positive conclusion of the first review, on that basis we've promised to look at debt and discuss debt sustainability, "added Dijsselbloem.

Greece urgently needs the next tranche of bailout money to repay billions of euros in loans to the European Central Bank (ECB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in June and July.

The Eurogroup meeting also achieved a "major breakthrough" on the issue of Greece debt relief, which had been a key demand by the IMF.

The IMF insists that Greece needs "upfront" and "unconditional" debt relief, saying in an assessment on Monday that Greece cannot meet the terms of the bailout program and that interest payments on the soaring national debt would eat up 60 percent of the budget by 2060 without debt forgiveness.

However,the possible debt relief will be delivered at the end of the program in mid-2018 and the scope will be determined by the Eurogroup on the basis of a revised debt sustainability analysis (DSA), according to a Eurogroup meeting statement.

The Washington-based fund analyzed that Greece needed longer time to repay loans, with the interest rate on its loans fixed at 1.5 percent, and its creditors should make debt relief automatic once the bailout program ends in 2018.

Holding the view that Athens has done enough reforms, Germany argued that Greece could meet its austerity targets and stands strongly against any debt relief for Athens.

Meanwhile, the Eurogroup also agreed on a set of short-, medium- and long-term measures to ensure the sustainability of Greece's public debt.

"I think there is some ground for optimism that this can be the beginning of turning Greece's vicious circle of recession-measures-recession into one where investors have a clear runway to invest in Greece," said Greek Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos after the meeting.

Last year, international creditors agreed to give Greece an 86-billion-euro (96 billion U.S. dollar) bailout loan to avert its exit from the single currency bloc. However, the second tranche

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has been locked for months as Greece's austerity reforms being scrutinized by international lenders.

This breakthrough deal may ease the worries of a possible avert default by Greece that will lead to a big risk threatening the Eurozone recovery.

Ministers have "stretched their political capital" to get this deal on the table, Dijsselbloem told reporters.

Donald Tusk, president of the European Council, also hailed the agreement before heading to Japan for a G7 meeting.

"I welcome Eurogroup agreement on Greece. Strong message of stability for Greece, Europe and the global economy," Tusk said on his twitter. Endit

### **Eurogroup to unlock 10-billion-euro bailout for Greece**

Finance ministers from the Eurogroup have agreed to unlock 10.3 billion euros (11.5 billion U.S. dollars) of bailout money for Greece.

The long-delayed tranche will be disbursed to Greece in several steps, with the first 7.5 billion euros (8.4 billion dollars) in June, the ministers said in a statement after an 11-hour meeting that ended on Wednesday morning in Brussels.

The move came two days after Greek legislators approved fresh austerity measures including tax hikes and a new privatization fund.

Greece needs the bailout desperately to repay billions of euros in loans to the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in June and July.

However, the disbursements will be made on the conditions that Greece has fulfilled all prior austerity promises, and that the eurozone member states have endorsed the agreement in line with their national procedures, according to a statement of the finance ministers.

Last year, international creditors agreed to give Greece an 86-billion-euro (96-billion-dollar) bailout loan to avert its exit from the single currency club. However, the second tranche has been locked for months as Greece's austerity reforms being scrutinized by the international lenders.

At the same time, the Eurogroup meeting achieved a "major breakthrough" in the issue of Greek debt relief, which had been a major concern of the IMF.

"The possible debt relief will be delivered at the end of the program in mid-2018 and the scope will be determined by the Eurogroup on the basis of a revised debt sustainability analysis," the statement said.

The IMF insisted that Greece need "upfront" and "unconditional" debt relief, saying in an assessment on Monday that Greece cannot meet the terms of the bailout program and that interest payments on the soaring national debt would eat up 60 percent of the budget by 2060 if not given debt forgiveness.

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The IMF believed that Greece needs longer time to repay loans, with the interest rate on its loans fixed at 1.5 percent, and its creditors should make debt relief automatic once the bailout program ends in 2018.

Germany argued that Greece had undergone enough reforms to meet its austerity targets, therefore it stands strongly against any debt relief for Athens. Endi

**CHINADAILY** 中国日报网  
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After six years' austerity, Greeks feel no joy from new debt deal

(Agencies)



Protesters from the Communist-affiliated trade union PAME take part in a demonstration against unemployment in front of the parliament building in Athens, Greece April 10, 2016. [Photo/Agencies]

ATHENS - While Greece's government trumpeted a debt relief deal with other euro zone countries on Wednesday as the beginning of the end of its bruising six-year financial crisis, many Greeks remained unconvinced.

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After years of austerity measures demanded by Greece's international creditors - the latest passed in parliament last Sunday - Greeks wonder whether the sacrifices they have made to stay in the euro were worth the pain.

"We are done, we can't even leave our homes anymore to have a coffee," said Panagiotis Zabetakis, 50, a carpenter who, like one in every four Greeks, is unemployed.

Playing with worry beads at a cheap cafe in an Athens suburb, Zabetakis paid 1 euro (\$1.10) for his morning coffee. That will rise on June 1 when the measures passed to secure Wednesday's deal start coming into force.

By next year Greeks will pay an extra 20-30 cents for their coffee and the price of just about everything else will rise too as added tax will (VAT) goes up to 24 percent from 23 percent. Greeks' spending power, meanwhile, is in sharp decline.

"We are running after the Europeans, hoping they throw us a bone which would suffice for a few months. I'm very disappointed," Zabetakis said, criticising the deal which opens the way for debt relief from 2018, but does not include any firm promise to reduce the payments Greece has to make.

### **VORTEX OF AUSTERITY**

Greece have been hit with waves of pension cuts and tax increases since it was forced to seek its first bailout in 2010.

Leaving the meeting in Brussels where he secured 10.3 billion euros (\$11.5 billion) in new funds from his euro zone colleagues, Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos said he hoped the deal marked "the beginning of turning Greece's vicious circle of recession-measures-recession into one where investors have a clear runway to invest in Greece."

The deal won a provisional commitment from the IMF to return to the bailout process, but with Germany opposed to cutting the debt pile, euro zone ministers made any relief measures such as extending maturities on loans contingent on Athens respecting strict criteria, something Greeks fear means more austerity.

"This cannot continue ... they (the Europeans) are telling us we will be in debt for 100 years. How can we be pleased?" asked pensioner Eleni Palaiologou, 85.

Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, elected in early 2015 on a promise to end austerity only to row back and accept a new bailout to avoid being forced out of the euro, struggled to get his coalition to accept the latest reforms.

Scraping through with a narrow majority of 153 members in the 300 seat parliament, there is some stirring dissent. One of Tsipras' lawmakers quit after Sunday's vote.

"We are adopting measures and policies which run counter to the core of our values and policies," the resigned member of parliament, Vassiliki Katrivanou, said on her Facebook page. "But I cannot think of any credible alternative."

On the streets of Athens, a 33-year-old chartered accountant, who declined to give his name fearing repercussions at work, said he was tired of scraping by.

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"I feel we are just living in this vortex of austerity measures," he said. "It's a constant of just sacrifices."



## Greece reaches bailout deal

Source:AFP

### Agreement unlocks \$12b to repay big loans to ECB, IMF

Eurozone ministers reached a vital deal with Greece Wednesday to unlock bailout cash and start tackling the country's debt mountain as demanded by the IMF, but analysts warned details are sketchy, spelling trouble further down the road.

The agreement unlocks 10.3 billion euros (\$12 billion) in bailout cash that Greece urgently needs to repay big loans to the European Central Bank (ECB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) in July, having already fallen behind in paying for everyday government duties and wages.

The US-based IMF has made easing Greece's huge debt burden a condition for its continued participation in the bailout program, despite opposition from Germany to giving Athens more favors.

The 19 ministers from the countries that use the euro met two days after Greek lawmakers passed yet another round of spending cuts and tax hikes demanded by its creditors.

After hammering out a deal at late-night talks in Brussels, Eurogroup chief and Dutch Finance Minister Jeroen Dijsselbloem said the ministers had achieved a "major breakthrough."

The bailout rewards Athens for meeting the terms of its 86 billion euro bailout program agreed last July.

Greece's creditors will pay a first 7.5 billion tranche in June and the rest in a series of later disbursements.

Greek government bonds soared in response to the deal, pushing the yield on the benchmark 10-year bond to below 7 percent for the first time since November.

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The hardest part of the talks was defusing the row between Greece's creditors, the eurozone governments and the IMF, over the state of the Greek economy and debt relief.

But analysts, pointing to a lack of detail on such a deal, said negotiators had simply postponed thorny discussions.

"The Greeks have got the next installment of their funding, and in a spectacularly sophisticated show of kicking the can down the road debt relief will be considered - later," said Paul Donovan, an economist at UBS.

"With nothing so vulgar as amounts of money being discussed," he noted.

One eurozone official candidly confirmed that this reading was accurate.

"Yes we did kick the can down the road," the official said.

IMF staff on the ground had trouble getting agreement from the IMF's management on the compromise deal, "at one point" even failing to get IMF chief Christine Lagarde on the phone.

### **Eurozone finance ministers seek Greek bailout deal as creditors at impasse**

Source:Xinhua

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Finance ministers of the 19-country eurozone met on Tuesday to seek a deal on the **Greek bailout** which would unlock a new tranche of funds, while the country's creditors remained at an impasse on Greek debt sustainability.

The ministers' meeting came two days after Greek legislators approved fresh austerity measures including tax hikes and a new privatization fund, in a move to meet creditors' demands and conclude the first review of its bailout program.

"Today we are going to hear from the institutions whether all the reforms have been implemented in the right way," said Eurogroup President Jeroen Dijsselbloem at his arrival for the meeting.

Greece is again faced with tough times as it desperately needs the next tranche of a bailout distribution to repay billions of euros in loans to the European Central Bank (ECB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in June and July.

The IMF insists that Greece needs "upfront" and "unconditional" debt relief, saying in an assessment on Monday that Greece cannot meet the terms of the bailout program and that interest payments on the soaring national debt would eat up 60 percent of the budget by 2060 without debt forgiveness.

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The Washington-based fund analyzed that Greece needed longer time to repay loans, with the interest rate on its loans fixed at 1.5 percent, and its creditors should make debt relief automatic once the bailout program ends in 2018.

The European side, however, holds the view that Athens has done enough to be given the next distribution. Germany believes Greece could meet its austerity targets and stands strongly against any debt relief for Athens.

"We still have to discuss with the IMF," Germany Finance Minister Wolfgang Schauble said. In the meantime, the minister stood confident and optimistic ahead of the meeting. "I am positive that we will find an agreement," he told reporters.

Ministers agreed that Athens has made a lot of efforts in a bid to successfully complete the creditors' first review.

Dijsselbloem said the Greek government "has done a lot of work" since the summer and in the last couple of weeks, pushing forward reforms, difficult measures and getting them through parliament.

"I hope that there is a full agreement between the institutions and that we can move on in the program," he told reporters.

Greece has reduced the retirement pensions, raised income tax, value-added tax, and created a contingency mechanism, which means that if there are any deviations of public deficit, certain measures will kick in, said Spanish Finance Minister Luis De Guindos.

"There is a consensus on this among the institutions, so I think there will be closure today," he told reporters.

Slovak Finance Minister Peter Kazimir, however, voiced concern about the uneasy talks ahead. "I am afraid that we are going to spend the whole night," he said, adding that many things remained "open" and "unresolved."

"We should focus on disbursement, on agreement about the tranche and also we would like to conclude the review... this is essentially for us," he said.

Athens is awaiting creditors' nod to the first review on its third bailout program which would unlock a new tranche of distribution worth up to 11 billion euros (12.26 billion U.S. dollars).

Finance ministers of the single currency bloc met two weeks ago but only decided to make a final conclusion on Tuesday. Greece was then urged to take more austerity measures as concerns were raised on the country's debt sustainability.

Last year, international creditors agreed to give Greece an 86-billion-euro bailout loan to avert its exit from the single currency bloc.

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## U.S. stocks open higher on Greece bailout, rising oil

U.S. stocks opened higher on Wednesday, as investors assessed a new bailout deal for Greece and rising oil prices.

Shortly after the opening bell, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 79.58 points, or 0.45 percent, to 17,785.63. The S&P 500 gained 10.14 points, or 0.49 percent, to 2,086.20. The Nasdaq Composite Index rose 17.41 points, or 0.36 percent, to 4,878.46.

Finance ministers of the eurozone have hammered out a deal in Brussels with Greece early Wednesday after an 11-hour meeting, which is described as a "major breakthrough" to start debt relief and unlock over 10 billion euros (about 11.1 billion U.S. dollars) in bailout cash for Greece.

Oil prices were also in focus, as both U.S. oil and Brent crude rose over 1 percent in early trading Wednesday.

Meanwhile, investors tried to shake off worries that the possibility of a June rate hike becomes higher after the release of the Federal Reserve's hawkish minutes from its April meeting, but the latest speech from Fed officials indicated a hike sooner rather than later.

St. Louis Fed President James Bullard told CNBC overnight that a U.S. Federal Reserve rate hike in June or July wasn't set in stone, but labor data suggested it was time to pull the trigger.

U.S. stocks ended more than 1 percent higher Tuesday, following sharp gains in European equities, as Wall Street cheered upbeat economic data and quarterly earnings reports. Endit

## Xinhua world news summary at 1530 GMT, May 25

Kenya's military said Wednesday its soldiers killed 21 Al-Shabaab fighters and recovered weapons during an ambush in Hawina area in southern Somalia.

Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) spokesman Col. David Obonyo said the troops under the African Union peacekeeping mission (AMISOM) also killed a junior-level Al-Shabaab commander who is believed to have been in-charge of the group. (Kenya-Military)

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ROME -- The Italian Navy on Wednesday saved around 500 migrants and recovered seven bodies off the Libyan coast, a statement from the navy said.

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The navy's Bettica ship during its surveillance and security activities in the area pinpointed a boat in trouble with numerous migrants onboard, according to the statement.

"Shortly later, the boat capsized because of the overcrowding and instability due to the too high number of people onboard," the statement added. (Italy-Shipwreck)

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BRUSSELS -- Finance ministers from the Eurogroup have agreed to unlock 10.3 billion euros (11.5 billion U.S. dollars) of bailout money for Greece.

The long-delayed tranche will be disbursed to Greece in several steps, with the first 7.5 billion euros (8.4 billion dollars) in June, the ministers said in a statement after an 11-hour meeting that ended on Wednesday morning in Brussels.

The move came two days after Greek legislators approved fresh austerity measures including tax hikes and a new privatization fund. (EU-Greece-Assistance)

### **Major news items in leading German newspapers**

The following are the major news items in leading German newspapers on Wednesday.

Sueddeutsche Zeitung:

-- The quality of nursing homes and home care services in Germany is significantly worse than German official care service provider TUV of health insurance so far presented.

Die Welt:

-- The evacuation of the Greek camp of Idomeni on the border with Macedonia started on Tuesday. By the afternoon, buses brought more than 1,500 migrants from the camp to the Macedonian border, as the authorities reported.

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung:

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-- Greece can hope for the disbursement of new aid loans of the euro crisis fund ESM. The finance ministers of the euro area have expressed the intention to decide a credit release at least in principle before their meeting on Tuesday evening in Brussels. Endit

### **(Recast) G20 summit should aim for progress on major global issues, expert**

The Group of Twenty (G20) Summit should push forward change on income inequality, financial stability, climate change and migration, said an expert on global economics.

The summit should focus on a number of issues which really need international cooperation, said Guntram Wolff, director of Brussels-based think tank Bruegel told Xinhua in a recent interview.

One topic to pursue is the global rise of income inequality, said Wolff, a former economics and financial expert with the European Commission.

"There is a global problem that global income goes more and more to capital income and less and less to labor income, so that the labor income share globally is falling," said Wolff.

Governments must tax capital and prevent it from illegally reaching tax havens, he added.

Though taxing capital income is extremely difficult, he believes the G20 countries could lead on this issue by stepping up cooperation.

The second topic the summit should focus on is stabilizing the financial system or even restructuring it, according to Wolff.

The financial system has a very large and well-developed banking system but too small capital market-based financial inter-mediation such as equity or bond markets, which are less developed and less well-supervised, he said.

"This will end up being a problem because when the banking system hits trouble, financing dries up," said Wolff.

This is particularly relevant to China and the European Union. Both need to make their financial systems more robust and more conducive to global growth, he added.

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As for the issue of how to step up efforts on climate change, Wolff said a good follow-up process to the Paris agreement is urgently needed.

The G20 should send clear signals to the market that either an emission trading system or taxation of greenhouse gases will come into effect.

The countries making progress on combatting climate change have a disadvantage temporarily because of tax penalties on some industries.

Some industry will move from one country to others that are reluctant to take action, which will be unfair because fighting climate change is a common goal, Wolff said.

"This is really a coordination problem that can be achieved at the G20 level," he added.

In addition to the above, Wolff said he would like to add the issue of migration, a key concern for a number of G20 countries.

"The conflict in Syria is a global conflict with a lot of players including Russia, the United States, the EU, Turkey and so on; it's really a global issue that should deserve the attention of the G20 also," he said.

Migration issues basically includes two aspects, according to Wolff. One is achieving peace in order to reduce the number of refugees, and the other technically managing the current migration problem.

"We should encourage the countries which are not taking refugees to take them: including the United states and Britain," he said. Migration should not be seen a problem put to Germany and Sweden, or Greece and Italy, because the origin of this conflict dates back to long ago and many players that sit around the G20 table are also involved in it, he added.

"It's also a humanitarian catastrophe and I hope the G20 could jointly make some progress," Wolff said.

China will host the 2016 G20 Summit in the eastern city of Hangzhou on Sept. 4-5 under the theme "Building an innovative, invigorated, interconnected and inclusive world economy."  
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(Xinhua)



A 'GB' (Great Britain) sticker with an European Union design is seen adhered to the rear of a vehicle in London, Britain, January 29, 2016. [Photo/Agencies]

BRATISLAVA - The European Union (EU) has to be prepared for whatever outcome the British referendum on staying in the EU will yield, announced European Parliament Chairman Martin Schulz after meeting Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico in Bratislava on Thursday.

Schulz and Fico discussed Slovakia's Presidency of the Council of the EU that is set to begin on July 1. They both believed that the whole EU will have to respond to the outcome of the referendum on June 23.

"No matter what will be the result of it, we'll have to be prepared to cope with it," said Schulz.

Fico has promised that Slovakia will take up its role in a responsible way.

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"Despite the hectic period, I'd like to guarantee that Slovakia will be well prepared," stressed Fico.

He said that the presidency is a great opportunity for Slovakia to make itself more visible.

"A small country will be in the center of European discussion about topics that are not seen every month," explained Fico, adding that Slovakia's priorities might be influenced by various incidents.

"We have to realise that there is the referendum in Britain on June 23, less than a week after that there is an important general election in Spain. We're also still worried by the situation in Greece regarding the financial situation and the migration crisis is still a very lively topic," summed up Fico.

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