



# New Direction

the foundation for european reform

# THE HERALD

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## BELGIUM IN MOURNING AFTER 'MURDEROUS MADNESS'

EUOBSERVER.COM

"Belgium is mourning and will never be the same," King Philippe of Belgium said on Tuesday (22 March) evening after bomb attacks in Brussels killed at least 30 people and injured 230.

In a televised address, he called on the Belgian people to "keep trust" in themselves. "This trust is our strength," he said.

A three-day national mourning had been declared earlier by the government.

At the same time, life was starting to return as close as possible to normal as trains, metros and trams began to operate again and people started driving out of Brussels.

From 4pm onward, the Federal Crisis Centre said people were no longer advised to stay inside. The main train stations reopened, public transportation restarted, and schools could go back to normal.

Authorities did not impose a lockdown like they did last November, when Belgium's capital ground to a halt for three days after information about a "serious and imminent" threat.

But they did maintain a level four alert - the highest - for the whole of Belgium, meaning that the threat is "very serious", as authorities feared terrorists could be preparing other attacks.

"Stay calm and vigilant," the Belgian crisis centre said. It added to non-residents: "Do not come to Brussels".



## EXPLOSIVES FOUND IN BELGIUM RAIDS AS WORLD REACTS TO ATTACKS

DW.DE



Belgian authorities have confirmed a nationwide manhunt for a suspect who fled a Brussels airport after his suicide belt failed to detonate. The day after the attacks, newspaper front pages revealed a world in horror.

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## ITALY CALLS FOR COMMON EUROPEAN DEFENCE AFTER BRUSSELS ATTACKS

EURACTIV.COM



Italy's Prime Minister Matteo Renzi called Tuesday for a "European pact for freedom and security" following the attacks in Brussels claimed by the Islamic State group that killed around 35 people. "Today they hit Belgium, but they also hit the capital of the European Union," Renzi said in a speech, vowing that "it will take months, perhaps years, but we will beat them".

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## UNHCR SLAMS GREECE'S MIGRANT 'DETENTION FACILITIES'

DW.DE

Following a controversial EU-Turkey deal, the agency has suspended activities at Greek holding facilities. More than 1,600 migrants have arrived in Greece despite the implementation of the agreement. The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) on Tuesday said it would no longer provide support to mandatory "detention centers" for refugees in Greece.

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## TOP FRENCH COURT RULES SARKOZY'S WIRETAPS ARE LEGAL

FRANCE24.COM

France's top appeals court dealt a blow to Nicolas Sarkozy's hopes of a presidential comeback on Tuesday when it ruled that wiretaps of his conversations with his lawyer were admissible as evidence against him in a case involving alleged corruption. The Court of Cassation rejected an appeal by the conservative former head of state against the legality of intercepts of two mobile phones rented for him under an alias after he left office.

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## FRANCE INSISTS EURO 2016 WILL HAVE 'MAXIMUM SECURITY'

THELOCAL.FR

French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said Tuesday that security for Euro 2016 was already at a maximum and could not be increased further in the wake of more deadly terror attacks in Europe. Cazeneuve was speaking during a scheduled Euro 2016 Steering Committee meeting on security which took place in Paris as deadly explosions rocked Brussels airport and metro.

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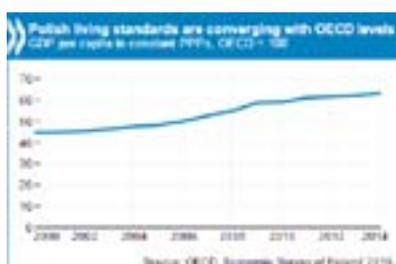


## SLOVAK PARTIES SIGN PACT TO GIVE PM FICO THIRD TERM

REUTERS.COM

Slovakia's ruling leftist party Smer and three small centrist and nationalist partners signed a coalition agreement on Tuesday, paving the way for a new government to be sworn in later this week. Prime Minister Robert Fico's Smer won the most votes in a March 5 election but lost its majority by a big margin. Fico moved fast to cobble together a majority and is expected to be sworn in for a third term as premier on Wednesday or Thursday.

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## OECD: POLAND NEEDS TO INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE AND LABOUR

THENEWS.PL

A survey published on Tuesday by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) said that Polish economic growth "remains solid" and unemployment is on the decline. But it warned that "further investments in infrastructure and skills will be essential to sustain a continuing improvement" in living standards, environmental quality and well-being in the country.

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23 MARCH, 2016

# THE AGENDA

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## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

- The European Parliament has raised its alert level in Brussels to orange and heightened security in close cooperation with the Belgian authorities, following the terror attacks in Brussels on Tuesday. Staff have been requested to stay inside where they are until further notice. The Parliament remains open, but the visitors' entrance and the Parliamentarium have been closed. The President has decided to ask staff to telework today and to close all Parliament buildings in Brussels with the exception of the main building, which will remain accessible but which will be further secured through systematic checks of ID documents and bags. Also, **all missions, meetings and visits scheduled for today have been cancelled.**
- Responding to the terrorist attacks in Brussels, European Conservatives and Reformists leader **Syed Kamall** MEP said: "Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families, and with the emergency and security services who have worked so hard to keep us safe. These were wicked and indefensible acts. Today they targeted people in Brussels but it could just as well have been in any of our cities or towns. People of all faiths, races and views today stand united to state that these terrorists may attack us, but they will never defeat us and our freedom, our pluralism, or our way of life."