JUNCKER TO SPEAK OUT ON POST-JUNCKER EU

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The EU executive chief, who has already said he will not seek another term after 2019, will try to weigh in on discussions and defend what he considers the EU's common interest.

He is expected to call for an increase of the EU budget to over 1 percent of the bloc's GDP.

In a speech last month, he said the EU was worth "more than a cup of coffee a day" - the price it now costs to each EU citizen.

With a shortfall of □□□ to □□□ billion each year because of Brexit, the future multi-annual financial framework (MFF) will have to fund new priorities, such as managing migration, developing a digital economy, or increasing defence capacities, while continuing policies such as the common agriculture or cohesion funds.

"We need more than one percent of GDP if we are to pursue EU policies and fund them adequately," Juncker pointed out last month.

Own resources

The commission is said to be mulling ways to increase the EU's own resources, which are now limited to customs duties and VAT revenues.

According to the Financial Times, the commission will propose transferring corporate tax receipt revenues to the EU - a measure that would bring in between €21 and €140 billion.

It also intends to 'map' needs and costs in order to demonstrate to EU countries that more money is needed if they want to fulfil the political goals they have set themselves.

On Wednesday, Juncker will also speak out in defence the so-called 'Spitzenkandidat' (lead candidate) process to choose the next European Commission president.

Juncker was the first one, in 2014, to benefit from the process, by which the top candidate of the party that wins the most seats in the European elections becomes commission chief.

He noted last week that the process was in "big danger" because "almost a majority" of member states were against it.

EU leaders want to keep a hand on the selection process and not face a commission president

they have not chosen.

"We need to be standing by our spitzenkandidat system," Juncker told MEPs.

The European Parliament later adopted a resolution saying it would reject any candidate for the commission that is not a Spitzenkandidat.

But Juncker is expected to go even further, ahead of the leaders' discussion on the issue next week.

Single president

He will likely call again for merging the position of president of the European Commission with the position of president of the European Council - where EU leaders meet.

He first launched the idea in his State of the Union speech last September.

"Having a single president would simply better reflect the true nature of our European Union as both a Union of States and a Union of citizens," he said at the time.

"Europe would function better," he insisted.

Wednesday's press conference at the commission will be the first one in months.

Juncker, who speaks regularly at events - at short press points with leaders, at EU summits and in the EU parliament - hasn't spoken at length about his actions in his own institution since January 2016.

At the time, at the height of the migration crisis, he spoke for over one hour and rejected "the idea that this is somehow the beginning of the end."

The last time he was alone in the commission press room was the day after the Brexit vote, in June 2016.

He stayed for nine minutes at the podium and took two questions.

Kaynak/Source: