

Angela Merkel TURNS her back on EU: German leader REJECTS Brussels top job

ANGELA Merkel yesterday denied that she is in the hunt for a top European Union job after her term as German chancellor ends.

Ms Merkel fuelled speculation that she is vying to replace Jean-Claude Juncker or Donald Tusk after claiming a “renewed sense of responsibility” for Europe. The German Chancellor has been forced to deny that she will be moving to Brussels to take either the European Commission or Council presidency after she steps down from her role in 2021. On Thursday, she told a press conference in Berlin that she would not take a senior post inside the EU after her fourth and final term as German chancellor ends.

She said: “I am not available for any further political office, no matter where it is, not even in Europe.”

Initially, Ms Merkel ruled out a move to the EU in October after she announced her decision to step down as chancellor after 14 years in the job.

But she reignited speculation after telling German newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* that she has a “responsibility” for Europe’s future.

She said: “Many people are worried about Europe, including myself.



Angela Merkel rules herself out of top EU job ahead of talks on Jean-Claude Juncker's successor (Image: GETTY)

"This gives me an even greater sense of responsibility to take care of the fate of this Europe of ours together with others."

"I, as German chancellor, should intensify rather than not intensify my efforts towards a good, functioning Europe," Ms Merkel added.

Mark Rutte, who was holding a joint press conference with the German leader, showed support for Ms Merkel's decision to steer clear of Brussels.

The Dutch prime minister said: "She is clear on what she wants to do after her term, and we've respected that."

"I am also not a candidate for this office, just to make clear."

EU leaders are expected to begin the process of selecting Mr Juncker's successor as Commission president after the European elections next week.

They are scheduled to meet in Brussels for a special dinner summit on May 28, where they will discuss a timetable for the appointments of the top jobs.

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