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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
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Subject:	Communication from the Commission on the Nuclear Illustrative Programme presented under Article 40 of the Euratom Treaty for the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee – Exchange of views

At the Working Party on Atomic Questions (WPAQ) of 20 April 2016, the Commission presented its Communication on the Nuclear Illustrative Programme (PINC)¹. On this occasion, a number of delegations already shared their preliminary comments on the Communication. These comments² focused on the balance of topics covered by the PINC, the way in which certain cost estimates had been calculated, in particular with regard to decommissioning funds and long term operations, and the feasibility of enhanced cooperation between regulators in the licencing process for new nuclear power plants.

¹ doc. 7517/16

² A detailed account of delegations' comments can be found in the outcome of proceedings of the WPAQ of 20 April, see doc. 8337/16.

Following this preliminary exchange, the Presidency concluded that several delegations wished to discuss the PINC further. Therefore, the Presidency intends to hold an exchange of views on the PINC at the WPAQ on 25 May 2016, giving delegations another opportunity to share their positions on the document, especially since more than half of the Member States have not done so yet. This exchange of views will conclude the discussion of the PINC under the NL Presidency. The Presidency intends to prepare a summary of the discussion after the WPAQ meeting, which will constitute a useful point of reference for future Presidencies should they wish to discuss the topic further.

To guide the exchange of views, the Presidency proposes several questions below, which are based on delegations' initial comments on 20 April. However, the Presidency would like to stress that these questions are only indicative and that delegations are welcome to comment on any aspects of the PINC during the discussion. Written contributions are also welcome.

Questions for the exchange of views

1. *In your view, does the PINC cover all relevant topics in relation to future nuclear investments?*
 - *If not, what should be added to get a comprehensive analysis of the investments needed?*
2. *The PINC suggests that the licensing process for new nuclear reactors presents opportunities for enhanced cooperation between national regulators.*
 - *Do delegations see a potential for enhanced cooperation in this area? If so, how this could be done?*
3. *The PINC suggests that standardisation of nuclear reactor designs by the industry could be encouraged to improve cost efficiency and nuclear safety.*
 - *Do delegations see a potential for a higher degree of standardisation? If so, how could this be achieved?*
4. *In the coming years, a large number of nuclear installations in the EU will be decommissioned.*
 - *Should Member States which have experience in this area share their knowledge?*
 - *What experience and best practices could be shared and how could this best be done?*