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Delegations will find attached the declassified version of the above document.

The text of this document is identical to the previous version.

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TRANSMISSION OF TEXT

from : Secretariat

Subject : Report of the Asia Oceania Working Group of 23 April 2002

Please find annexed the report of the Asia Oceania Working Group of 23 April 2002.

ASEM

- *information on the Economic Coordinators' Meeting, Madrid, 16 April 2002*

1. The Commission representative gave a detailed briefing, complementing the written report circulated in document 71/02. He indicated that the Coordinators had had a lengthy discussion on a possible date for the SOMTI VII Meeting and IEG V in Indonesia (Bali), the date would probably be 15/17 July. He underlined the need to respect the timetable for the implementation of the two Action Plans, TFAP and IPAP, as set out in page 2 of document 71/02. He suggested that facilitators and co-facilitators could meet in parallel with the IEG before SOMTI. He also urged Member States to take a more active interest in AEBF activities, especially in the Steering Committee on 7 June in which officials were full members. It was also important that business people attend this meeting. The French delegation made a number of comments and put some questions, to which the Commission replied.

2. In the light of discussions, the Presidency invited delegations to provide information on their contact points on IPAP and TFAP to the Commission and also to provide the information requested for the purpose of drawing up reports such as measures taken to overcome obstacles to trade and suggestions for the work programme for priority areas as well as recent data on investment trends, before 30 May. The Presidency also invited the Commission to provide a note on the results of the AEBF Steering Committee on 7 June. The Group would discuss the preparation of the SOMTI VII on 30 May.

- *AEETC: EU position for the Environment Experts' Meeting of 7/8 May in Bangkok*

3. The results of discussions on this item were circulated in doc. 77/02 by a silence procedure which expired on 29 April at 13h00. This text reads:

"At the experts meeting in Bangkok on May 7/8, the EU would stress that there is no consensus for maintaining the AEETC after its pilot phase ends this year as is indicated in the Chair's Conclusions of the Lanzarote SOM. The EU proposes that the AEETC should, on the basis of its work to date, be invited to prepare a final report on elements for inclusion in future ASEM cooperation and dialogue on environmental issues as outlined at the ASEM Environment Ministers' Meeting in

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January 2002. The experts could be invited to focus their discussions on this subject (in particular, with a view to a possible meeting of ASEM Environment Ministers).

If Thailand presents the document distributed on 12 April entitled "Recommendations on the AEETC after the pilot phase", the EU would take note of it, while remarking that its recommendations are not in line with the conclusion of the SOM in Lanzarote and therefore neither supported by the EU nor by its Member States."

- *Intellectual Property Cofacilitators' Report*

4. The French delegation briefed on the report of the ASEM Cofacilitators on Intellectual Property which it had circulated in Doc. 67/02. It drew attention in particular to the ASEM Seminar on IPR enforcement (for which France and Thailand are cofacilitators in Hanoi on 16-17 May) held in the context of TFAP and it invited partners to participate. It regretted that there was, at present, a lack of information on the operation and enforcement of intellectual property rights in Europe. It invited Member States to cooperate by providing contributions on their situation with a view to elaboration of an EU response taking account of the importance of enforcement. The Presidency noted that the results of the Hanoi meeting would be considered by the Group on 30 May.

- *New ASEM initiatives of Vietnam and Thailand*

5. The Group noted document 73/02 containing information on the new ASEM initiatives proposed by Vietnam and Thailand. The Commission invited delegations to indicate whether they wish to co-sponsor any of these projects.

- *Invitation letter on the ASEM SPS Phytosanitary Workshop in Beijing on 20/24 May*

6. The above invitation was distributed at the meeting.

CAMBODIA

- *Preparation of the Joint Commission, Brussels, 2/3 May 2002*

7. The Group noted the Doc. 74/02 and the additional explanations of the Commission, and agreed to the Annotated Agenda for the meeting which will be held on 2 May in Brussels.

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Delegations are invited to transmit any additional observations to the Commission and the Presidency before Friday, 26 April, 16h00.

AUSTRALIA

- *Information from Commission on EC-Australia Ministerial Consultations (18 April)*

8. The Commission representative gave a detailed briefing on the above consultations and circulated the Press Communiqué (see doc. 76/02). The Commission agreed to circulate a further note on the discussions.

9. He stressed that certain Press reports on the meeting had been based on briefings by the Australians, and did not accurately reflect all the discussions, for example there was no intention to revise the existing EU-Australia declaration.

10. The Presidency noted the importance that the Commission keep the group informed of ongoing developments, on issues such as the wine agreement, which should also be treated at the 133 Committee.

CHINA

11. The Group noted the report on the visit of Commissioner Patten to China from 28 March to 4 April (Coreu COM 0148/02) and the Commission's proposal for the conclusion of a maritime transport agreement with China (Council Document 7840/02), as well as doc. de séance 68/02 and the additional information by the Commission on the various issues.

AOB

ASEAN

- *Possible meeting of the EC-ASEAN Sub Committee on Drugs*

12. The Commission informed the Group that the next meeting of ASEAN narcotics experts would be held from 14 - 17 October 2002 in Kuala Lumpur, and that the ASEAN side had suggested to hold a back-to-back meeting of the EC-ASEAN Sub Committee on Narcotics. The Commission had asked the ASEAN side for substantive information on the programme and the

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agenda of the planned meeting and would inform the Council's Drugs Working Group once this information will be available. The Group underlined the political importance of this meeting and agreed to promote the attendance of EU experts.

AFGHANISTAN

- Member States' co-operation activities

13. The Commission circulated an updated version of the Matrix (Doc. 75/02) concerning EU reconstruction aid for Afghanistan and invited delegations to communicate rapidly the missing information. The Commission also informed the Group on the difficulties encountered with the execution of the 20 million US dollar contribution to the UNDP Trust Fund: the transfer to the AIA of the 14 million tranche earmarked for the payment of salaries has been delayed due to the absence of a satisfactory arrangement on the currency exchange issue. Negotiations are continuing with the IMF and the World Bank. Out of the remaining 6 million US dollars earmarked for the purchase of equipment etc., approximately 2 million US Dollars will be used to finance the funding gap for the Emergency Loya Jirga. The Commission will also seek additional information from the IFIs on their intended handling of their own budget support for the AIA/TA. Finally the Commission confirmed that Commissioner Patten will visit Kabul from 20 to 21 May and that he will raise these issues with the AIA as appropriate.

EU-JAPAN ACTION PLAN

- Symposium on people to people exchanges and civil society links

14. The Commission representative briefed on the meeting on 9 April organized by the Commission with Japan to prepare the above Symposium to be held in Japan later this year. The attendance had been good, 70 participants in all including 25 from Japan, and attendance by NGOs, officials, journalists, and representatives of some Member States. The Commission intended to circulate a note on this meeting.

15. Referring to the EU-Japan Action Plan, the Presidency indicated that the Group, at its next meeting on 30 May, would review the state of play in regard to trade and economic elements in this Plan with a view to the EU-Japan Summit on 8 July.
