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'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1)/Council

No. Cion doc.: 11947/17 RECH 295 FIN 523 COMPET 587 ENER 348 - COM(2017) 452
final

Subject: Proposal for a Council Decision amending Decision 2008/376/EC on the
adoption of the Research Programme of the Research Fund for Coal and
Steel and on the multiannual technical guidelines for this programme
- Agreement in principle
- Request for the consent of the European Parliament

1. On 25 August 2017 the Commission submitted to the Council the proposal for a Council Decision amending Decision 2003/76/EC establishing the measures necessary for the implementation of the Protocol, annexed to the Treaty establishing the European Community, on the financial consequences of the expiry of the ECSC Treaty and on the Research Fund for Coal and Steel¹.

¹ Doc. 11947/17.

2. The proposed Decision is limited in scope and aims to provide a bridging solution to the exceptional decrease in the revenue stemming from the assets of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in liquidation dedicated to the funding of research projects for coal and steel. The decrease, due to the low-interest-rate environment on the capital markets in recent years, has led to the proposed revision of the rules on the cancellation of commitments made under the research programme of the Research Fund for Coal and Steel (RFCS) and on recovered amounts, so as to authorise their recycling in the research programme. These de-commitments and amounts recovered from the RFCS cannot be allocated to budget items other than research in the sectors related to the coal and steel industry, in accordance with Protocol No 37 on the financial consequences of the expiry of the ECSC Treaty and on the Research Fund for Coal and Steel, annexed to the Treaty on European Union and to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.
3. The Research Working Party examined the proposal on 2 October, 23 October and 13 November and agreed on a number of amendments mainly to make the text more comprehensive and clearer from a legal point of view.
4. In accordance with the first paragraph of Article 2 of Protocol No 37 on the financial consequences of the expiry of the ECSC Treaty and on the Research Fund for Coal and Steel, the European Parliament has to give its consent to the draft Council Decision.
5. The Permanent Representatives Committee is, therefore, invited to recommend to the Council:
 - to agree in principle on the draft Council Decision as finalised by the legal-linguists and set out in doc. 14532/17, and
 - to decide to forward the draft Council Decision as set out in doc. 14532/17 to the European Parliament for its consent.