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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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THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**PVD 69
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TRANSMISSION OF TEXT

from : Secretariat

Subject : Report of the Asia Oceania Working Group of 27 November 2003

Please find annexed the report of the Asia Oceania Working Group of 27 November 2003.

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1. EC-LAO PDR Joint Committee: 7 January 2004, Vientiane, Laos

- Annotated agenda

The Commission representative presented the annotated agenda for the EU-Lao PDR Joint Committee taking place on 7 January 2004 (doc. 112/03). The meeting should be an opportunity to agree with Laos on the creation of working groups, within the framework of the EC-Laos Co-operation Agreement, on Trade and Co-operation, on one hand, and on institution building and administrative reform, governance and human rights, on the other.

2. ASEM

- Follow-up to Rome SOM, 13/14 November 2003

The Presidency and the Commission representative briefed the Group on the discussions held at the SOM. On ASEM working methods, all participants except one (ROK) agreed to hold Foreign Ministers meetings once every two years, in the years where there is no Summit. Upon request from the Asian side, the Commission will produce a summary paper on ASEM working methods. The SOM was open to starting an electronic secretariat. The dates in the programme of meetings for 2004 were also discussed.

The Asian side had not shown flexibility on ASEM enlargement. At an internal co-ordination meeting, the EU side decided that the EU's position on the issue should be adopted at political level.

3. China: information on procedure for ADS signature

The Commission and the Council Secretariat have foreseen the following calendar for the signature of the ADS Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with China:

- 5 December: the Commission will transmit the MoU to the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC) in all languages.
- 16 December: the Jurist-Linguists of the GSC conclude the review of all languages.
- 18 December: Coreper 2 to approve signature.
- 19 December: Justice and Home Affairs Council to decide signature as "A" point.

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- 19 December afternoon: signature.
- GSC to submit MoU to the European Parliament (EP) before the end of the year.
- According to the Commission, the EP would be able to notify its opinion to the Council in early January. Conclusion by Council would follow shortly afterwards.
- The MoU would enter into force as provided in its Article 9(1) and (2).

The ADS Committee will be set up in accordance with Article 6 of the MoU. Its first meeting would in principle take place the same day the MoU enters into force. The EC will be represented by the Commission.

The Commission representative encouraged Member States to begin to implement the MoU as from now, for instance by identifying an "ADS" correspondent in their consular team in Beijing. Member States might also wish to start collaboration with Chinese authorities to establish a list of travel agencies for the purposes of the MoU.

4. Chinese Policy Paper on the EU (doc.103/03)

The Presidency highlighted the many elements that China's Policy Paper on the EU and the EU's Policy paper on China had in common, especially in the economic field. China's paper, however, contained conservative political language on certain issues (Tibet, Taiwan). It was worthwhile noting that China's paper had been received with great interest in India.

The Commission's services were completing their analysis of China's Paper in light of the forthcoming seminar to be held in Beijing in early February, which will be devoted to both the EU's and China's papers. The seminar could be a good opportunity to start considering a new structure of the EU's relations with China, currently based on the 1985 Co-operation Agreement. The Commission representative pointed out that China might be interested in updating the Agreement. An interesting element is that 3rd generation Co-operation Agreements contain a clause on human rights.

One delegation found that justice and home affairs, which constitute an EU priority, were not given sufficient relevance in the Chinese paper. This delegation also proposed a more structured steering of EU-China relations by Coreper and by the China experts group.

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5. AOB - COASI working methods

The Presidency, with the support of several delegations, pleaded for an accelerated reform of COASI working methods. The working party COASI I does not offer sufficient flexibility in its current format. The possibility of entrusting COASI I with preparing debates at PSC should also be considered.

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