



**Brussels, 14 June 2019
(OR. en)**

10326/19

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'A' ITEM NOTE

From: Presidency
To: Council

Subject: COUNCIL DECISION on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union within the Plenary Meeting of the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) or within the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe as regards the decision on granting the Union observer status in GRECO
- Adoption

1. GRECO was established in 1999 by the Council of Europe. The objective of GRECO is to improve the capacity of its members to fight corruption by monitoring their compliance with Council of Europe anti-corruption standards through a system of mutual evaluations and peer pressure. Currently, GRECO comprises 49 Member States (48 European states, including all the Member States of the European Union, and the United States of America) and 10 observers. The European Parliament has repeatedly called for the EU to submit an application for membership of GRECO.
2. The question of the participation of the EU in GRECO has been under discussion since 2011. This topic was further discussed at the meeting of the DROIPEN Working Party on 10 April 2019. Following a letter sent by GRECO in this respect, the Presidency submitted a Note inviting delegations to hold a discussion on the proposal that the EU could join GRECO with observer status (8563/19). This issue was further considered by CATS at its meeting on 13 May 2019.

3. On 23 May 2019 the Presidency submitted a Note (9336/19), in which it invited COREPER/Council to:
 - confirm the position expressed by delegations at the CATS meeting on 13 May 2019 that the EU should join GRECO with observer status, and in order to achieve this objective;
 - invite the Commission to submit a proposal for a Council Decision based on Article 218(9) TFEU (acts having legal effects in respect of bodies set up by an international agreement). The Presidency Note was approved by the JHA Council at its meeting on 6-7 June 2019.
4. On 6 June 2019 the Commission presented a proposal for a Council Decision on the position to be taken, on behalf of the European Union, in the 83rd Plenary meeting of the Group of States against corruption (GRECO) as regards the participation of the European Union as observer in GRECO (9850/19). On 7 June 2019 the Commission proposal was considered in the framework of a JHA Counsellors meeting. Having regard to the outcome of the meeting the Presidency submitted a Note containing a revised draft of the Council Decision (9883/19) and invited the Permanent Representatives Committee to approve it.
5. At its meeting on 13 June 2019 the Permanent Representatives Committee considered the text of the Council Decision as set out in 9883/19 and approved it.
6. The Council is invited to adopt the text of the Council Decision, as set out in 9884/19 (text finalised by the legal-linguistic experts).