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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
Subject: European Council meeting (26 and 27 March 2020)
– Annotated draft agenda

In accordance with Article 3(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the European Council, the President of the European Council, in close cooperation with the member of the European Council representing the Member State holding the six-monthly Presidency of the Council and with the President of the Commission, is to submit an annotated draft agenda to the General Affairs Council.

Delegations will find attached the annotated draft agenda submitted by the President of the European Council, setting out the main items the European Council is expected to address at the above meeting.

In the light of the final discussion to be held by the General Affairs Council within the five days preceding the European Council meeting, the President of the European Council is to draw up the provisional agenda.

In the margins of the March meeting the members of the European Council and the High Representative will meet with the Heads of State of the G5 Sahel partner countries, in the presence of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and of the Secretary General of the United Nations.

At the start of the meeting, the Member of the European Council representing the Member State holding the six-monthly Presidency of the Council will provide an overview of progress on the implementation of earlier European Council conclusions.

I. STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMIC BASE

The European Council will hold a comprehensive discussion on strengthening the economic base of the EU, centred around the opportunities offered by the digital transformation and the green transition. It will provide guidance on tackling existing barriers in the single market, on developing a forward-looking industrial policy, and on improving support to SMEs.

The European Council will also be invited to endorse policy guidance on the priorities for the Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy, as well as the Recommendation on the economic policy of the euro area.

II. DIGITAL

Shaping the digital transformation is crucial for ensuring Europe's democracy, its security, social market model and competitive sustainability, as well as its future economic growth.

The European Council will provide guidance on the overall direction and political priorities of a forward-looking digital policy, including in the areas of 5G, artificial intelligence and data.

III. ENLARGEMENT

In line with its conclusions of October 2019, the European Council will revert to the issue of enlargement.

IV. EXTERNAL RELATIONS

The European Council will hold a strategic discussion on EU-China relations ahead of the EU-China summit and the EU-China Leaders' meeting.

It will also assess the outcome of the EU summit with India on 13 March, and hold an exchange of views on preparations for the Western Balkans Summit to be held in Zagreb in May.

In the light of events, the European Council may address other specific foreign policy issues.

V. OTHER ITEMS

The European Council will be invited to endorse the new strategic guidelines in the field of justice and home affairs.
