



Council of the
European Union

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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Western Balkans - Request by the Italian Delegation for an AOB item

Delegations will find attached a note from the Italian Delegation concerning the Western Balkans. The topic will be included as an “Any other business” item on the agenda for the Foreign Affairs Council on 22 January 2024.

AOB item requested by Italy for the FAC (22 January 2024)

1. The stabilization of Western Balkans remains a priority for European foreign and security policy. While dynamics in the region remain challenging, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina and between Serbia and Kosovo, the EU must continue enhancing its engagement in the Western Balkans.
 2. Italy considers a strategic goal keeping the region at the top of the EU agenda and advancing decisively on the path of its European integration. The proposed Growth Plan for the Western Balkans provides important opportunities for supporting economic growth and jobs in the region and for accelerating its gradual integration in the EU single market.
 3. We must keep EU engagement in the Western Balkans ambitious and pro-active. 2024 must be a year of concrete progress towards the European integration of the Western Balkans, in line with the December **European Council** Conclusions.
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