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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee
Subject:	Initiative for a European Day in Remembrance of the Victims of Accidents at Work and for the Protection and Dignity of Workers - <i>Information from Italy</i>

Delegations will find attached information from Italy on the above subject, with a view to the meeting of the Permanent Representatives Committee of 29 October 2025 (Any Other Business item).

Initiative for a European Day in Remembrance of the Victims of Accidents at Work and for the Protection and Dignity of Workers.

Italy proposes to establish a dedicated **European Day in Remembrance of the Victims of Accidents at Work and for the Protection and Dignity of Workers** with the suggested date of 8 August.

With the establishment of such a day, we intend to honour the memory of the victims at work in Europe and to bring visibility to a daily and often silent tragedy.

Each year, according to data from Eurostat and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, more than 3,000 people lose their lives in Europe due to workplace accidents, and hundreds of thousands suffer serious injuries. Behind each of these figures are families, colleagues, and communities left devastated by painful losses. A European Day of Remembrance would represent a solemn and symbolic moment to commemorate these victims and to strengthen the shared commitment to preventing future tragedies.

As recognized in the EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2021–2027, strengthening prevention is a cornerstone of both the sustainability and competitiveness of the EU economy. A dedicated day would provide an annual opportunity to raise awareness and promote a culture of prevention and safety at the European level. The EMPL Commission of the European Parliament has also expressed the hope of the establishment of this day with a letter of its President Andersson addressed to EVP Minzatu last July 16th.

The proposed date carries deep symbolic value, commemorating the tragic fire of 8 August 1956 in Marcinelle (Belgium) at the Bois du Cazier mine, which caused the death of 262 miners of 12 different nationalities - 136 Italians, 95 Belgians, 8 Poles, 6 Greeks, 5 Germans, 3 Algerians, 3 Hungarians, 2 French, one English, one Dutch, one Ukrainian, and one Russian.

Other tragedies, sometimes even more disastrous, have occurred in Europe; nevertheless, the Marcinelle disaster is particularly emblematic, because the sacrifice of so many workers from various Nations of our continent took place in a site of shared labour aimed at rebuilding a territory shattered by the Second World War, at a time when the foundations had already been laid for the great peace project that is our Union.

For this reason, a European Day of Remembrance would complement the 28 April, when the International Labour Organization commemorates every year the World Day for Safety and Health at Work.

Establishing a **European Day in Remembrance of the Victims of Workplace Accidents and for the Protection and Dignity of Workers** would serve as a call to keep alive, especially among younger generations, the awareness of the fundamental importance of workers' rights, notably workplace safety, but also of the value of mobility and legal migration. It would represent a bridge between memory and future awareness.

Such an initiative would reaffirm the founding values of the European Union, and celebrate an inclusive Europe of labour, protection, and dignity for all workers. Priorities that are, today more than ever, crucial to build a safe, respectful of dignity at work and competitive Europe.
