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DRAFT MINUTES

Subject: Meeting of the EUROPEAN COUNCIL
held on 17 and 18 March 2016

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1. Exchange of views with the President of the European Parliament

The President of the European Parliament was heard by the European Council.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The European Council adopted its agenda as set out in document EUCO 13/16.

3. Migration

The European Council confirmed its comprehensive strategy to tackle the migration crisis and called for a number of actions to be taken forward following the decisions of the Heads of State or Government of 7 March, and in the context of the Joint Action Plan with Turkey and its expansion.

4. Jobs, Growth and Competitiveness

The European Council endorsed the policy priority areas of the Annual Growth Survey. It agreed to discuss the progress achieved in the work towards completing the Economic and Monetary Union and to adopt an Agenda for the implementation of all aspects of the Single Market at its June meeting. The European Council called on the Council to rapidly examine the Commission's Communication "Steel: Preserving sustainable jobs and growth in Europe". Noting the situation of farmers seriously affected by the drop in prices, it invited the Commission to quickly act upon the outcome of the Council meeting of 14 March. The European Council also noted that the Commission intends to publish shortly a Communication on an action plan on VAT and welcomed the intention of the Commission to include proposals for increased flexibility for Member States with respect to reduced rates of VAT.

5. Climate and energy

The European Council discussed issues related to climate change and energy security.

6. Approval of the conclusions

The European Council approved the conclusions, reflecting the outcome of its discussions, as set out in document EUCO 12/1/16 REV 1. At this occasion, the Hungarian member of the European Council requested the entry of a statement in the minutes of the meeting (see Annex).

7. Adoption of the minutes of the European Council meeting held on 17-18 February 2016

The European Council adopted the minutes of its meeting held on 17-18 February 2016 as set out in document EUCO 3/16.

Statement by Hungary to the minutes of the European Council

"Hungary is of the view that the explicit reference to the wording "accelerated relocation from Greece" in point 2 - last bullet - of the European Council conclusions on 17-18 March 2016 is without prejudice to the pending Court proceeding launched by Hungary relating to the Council Decision (EU) 2015/1601 of 22 September 2015."
