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'I' ITEM NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Permanent Representatives Committee
Subject: External aspects of migration - Monitoring results

1. In its Conclusions of 28 June 2016, the European Council has extensively addressed migration, with a special focus in particular on delivering rapid results in preventing illegal migration and returning irregular migrants arriving in Europe through the Central Mediterranean route. In this context, the European Council has called for an effective Partnership Framework of cooperation with individual countries of origin or transit, which will contribute to the implementation of the Valletta Action Plan. Building on the relevant Commission communication¹, this Partnership Framework will be put in place and swiftly implemented, based on effective incentives and adequate conditionality, starting with a limited number of priority countries of origin and transit.

¹ Commission Communication on establishing a new Partnership Framework with third countries under the European Agenda on migration (10014/16)

2. The above-mentioned European Council Conclusions stress that the establishment of the Partnership Framework aim at achieving the following objectives:

- to pursue specific and measurable results in terms of fast and operational returns of irregular migrants, including by applying temporary arrangements pending the conclusion of full-fledged readmission agreements;
- to create and apply the necessary leverage, by using all relevant EU policies, instruments and tools, including development and trade;
- to also mobilise elements falling within Member States' competence and to seek synergies with Member States in the relations with the particular countries.

Cooperation on readmission and return will be a key test of the partnership between the EU and these partners.

3. The European Council Conclusions entrust the High Representative with the implementation of this new approach, ensuring close and effective coordination between the EU institutions and services and the Member States.

4. It is of paramount importance to deliver rapidly on this new approach.

5. As underlined by the Conclusions of the European Council, the Council and the Commission will regularly monitor the process and assess its results. To this end, the Council and its preparatory bodies will on a regular basis :

- assess, in preparation for the compacts, progress in discussions held by the High Representative in close cooperation with Member States and, where required, provide further support in defining the compacts,
- assess the progress achieved as regards the implementation of the compacts and their results, with a special focus on readmission and return.

This requires that the Council and its preparatory bodies are regularly and timely informed by the teams involved in discussions with third countries.

6. Within the Council and its preparatory bodies, it appears appropriate to identify a Working Party which, under the guidance of COREPER, should coordinate the monitoring called for by the European Council. The High-Level Working Group on Asylum and Migration (hereafter 'HLWG'), which brings together representatives from the Foreign Affairs and Home Affairs Ministries, is best placed to oversee the development of the Partnership Framework and assess its results, assisting Coreper in ensuring coordination between the EU's external action and Home Affairs policies. This role is consistent with the expertise that the HLWG has accumulated over time through the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM)² and the follow-up to the Valletta Action Plan.
7. COREPER therefore:
- tasks the HLWG with the monitoring and the assessment of the process to be implemented under the European Council Conclusions of 28 June 2016, involving, where relevant, other Council Working Parties, and
 - invites the HLWG to regularly report to it and to the Council on the results delivered under the Partnership Framework, in order for COREPER to develop an overall picture of results and achievements and provide further guidance where required.

² See the relevant Council Conclusions (9417/12)