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'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
Subject:	Draft DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on energy efficiency and amending Regulation (EU) 2023/955 (recast) **(first reading)** - Adoption of the legislative act = Statements

Statement by Latvia

Latvia acknowledges and recognises the key role of the energy efficiency improvement measures for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in reaching the Union's climate ambitions, as well in ensuring the Union's and Latvia's energy security and energy independence targets, that are of utmost importance now.

However, Latvia would like to stress that it is also important to promote energy efficiency measures in the most cost-efficient manner, in order to ensure our competitiveness, economic growth and the well-being of our population.

Hence, Latvia considers that the agreed targets for new savings each year from 1 January 2021 set out in paragraph 1(b) of Article 8, and the measures to be taken to reach those targets in Annex V, are beyond the level of feasibility and impossible to achieve, given Latvia's national circumstances, the structure of its economy , its energy balance and the possibilities available to its communities. We strongly believe that it is not possible to fulfil the new savings targets in a cost-efficient manner.

Nevertheless, Latvia will make the best efforts to reach the energy savings targets, while strictly maintaining the position that the measures must not endanger the livelihood and well-being of households and businesses.

Statement by Hungary

Hungary supports the transition to climate neutrality and is committed to taking effective measures that take into account economic and social feasibility, and ensure security of energy supply and the affordability of energy prices.

However, we are concerned about the increased level of ambition laid down in the final compromise, in particular the objectives set out in Articles 4 and 8, and the limitation of the use of fossil fuels after 2026. We believe the provisions of the Directive will impose a disproportionate economic and social burden on Hungary and that the objectives cannot be implemented cost-effectively. Consequently, the proposal goes beyond the limits of what we can responsibly undertake.

We would also stress that the specificities and different starting positions of the Member States must be duly taken into account when achieving energy savings.

Furthermore, with reference to recital 125 and Article 24(4), where 'sex' and 'gender' are mentioned together, Hungary interprets the term 'gender' to mean 'sex' and the term 'gender equality' to mean 'equality between the sexes', i.e. 'equal chances and opportunities for women and men'. Hungary recognises and promotes equality between men and women in accordance with the Fundamental Law of Hungary and the primary law, principles and values of the European Union, as well as commitments and principles stemming from international law. Equality between women and men is enshrined as a fundamental value in the Treaties of the European Union.

Due to the above-mentioned concerns, Hungary cannot support the proposal for an Energy Efficiency Directive.

Statement by Poland

The Republic of Poland agrees that energy efficiency is of crucial importance as a tool for achieving emission reduction targets, improving security of energy supply, reducing the EU's dependence on fuel imports and protecting final customers.

At the same time, the Polish government identifies risks related to meeting the targets in Articles 4 and 8 of the Energy Efficiency Directive. It should be stressed that the levels of ambition proposed do not take account of their feasibility or the current economic crisis, during which energy efficiency should primarily be implemented using the most cost-effective measures. In its positions, the Republic of Poland has repeatedly emphasised that excessively high targets which do not take account of the individual characteristics of the Member States' economies may ultimately have negative economic effects.

Furthermore, Poland reiterates its negative position on the 'Fit for 55' package as a whole, which sets unrealistic targets and ambitions and has a significant impact on Member States' energy mix. Poland is of the opinion that most of the package is being dealt with on an incorrect legal basis, which creates a dangerous precedent.

Statement by Slovakia

The Slovak Republic hereby declares that it will abstain from voting on the recast Energy Efficiency Directive.

The Slovak Republic recognises the importance of the Energy Efficiency Directive and the need to promote energy efficiency measures and the use of energy in the most cost-effective manner while ensuring security of supply and reducing dependency on fossil fuel imports.

However, Slovakia considers that the agreed targets contained in Articles 4 and 8 of the Energy Efficiency Directive fall beyond the limits of feasibility, given Slovakia's national circumstances and the structure of its economy. We firmly believe that these targets cannot be achieved in a cost-effective manner. Nevertheless, we declare that we will make every effort to contribute to meeting these targets, while strictly adhering to the view that the measures should not compromise the livelihood and well-being of households, businesses and industry.