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European Union

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NOTE

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| From: | General Secretariat of the Council |
| To: | Delegations |
| Subject: | Ninth Environment for Europe (EfE) Ministerial Conference (Nicosia, Cyprus, 5-7 October 2022) - Information from the Presidency and the Commission |

Delegations will find in the Annex an information note from the Presidency and the Commission on the above subject, to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the Council (Environment) meeting on 24 October 2022.

**Ninth Environment for Europe (EfE) Ministerial Conference
(Nicosia, Cyprus, 5-7 October 2022)**

- Information from the Presidency and the Commission -

The 9th Environment for Europe Conference was held from 5 to 7 October 2022 in Nicosia, Cyprus. In its 31st year, the Environment for Europe (EfE) process, founded in Dobříš in Czechoslovakia, aims to address environmental challenges, improve environmental governance, and promote environmental and cross-sectoral cooperation and information-sharing among countries. The main topics of the Conference were “Greening the economy in the pan-European region: working towards sustainable infrastructure” and “Applying principles of circular economy to sustainable tourism”. They were chosen due to their cross-cutting nature with a view to injecting also new vitality into the EfE process. Apart from the two main topics, the conference confirmed the establishment of the Shared Environmental Information System, that will enable informed policymaking and make data more accessible, and the launch of the 4th cycle of the Environmental Performance Review (EPR’s).

The Conference also included the 1st High-Level Meeting of the Ministers of Education where ministers discussed the future of Education on Sustainable Development (ESD). The Ministers reflected on the new strategic planning to develop networks and multilateral collaborations, discussed and shared experience on key issues of ESD. The Conference was attended by around thousand participants from more than 60 countries, representing national and local authorities, international organisations, civil society, youth, women, academia, business and finance communities.

At the end of the Conference, the Ministerial Declaration reaffirming the participants’ commitment to improving environmental protection, advancing sustainable development and outlining pan-European commitments for the next period was adopted. Russia and Belarus were not officially invited to the event and, therefore, were not in a position to oppose the Declaration which includes two paragraphs condemning the Russian aggression against Ukraine and also the involvement of Belarus in this act of aggression.