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NOTE

From:	The Netherlands delegation
To:	Council
Subject:	Work programme of the incoming Presidency - Information from the Netherlands delegation

On 1 January 2016, the Netherlands will take up the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the 12th time. During the months to come, the Presidency will put all its efforts in making progress and, where possible, concluding ongoing legislative files and furthering policy initiatives, gratefully building upon the excellent work done by the Luxembourg Presidency, and the preceding Latvian and Italian presidencies. Being fundamentally attached to the European construction and the values and principles of the Union, the Netherlands Presidency is committed to act as a facilitator and honest broker in trying to find approaches representing the views of all Member States.

Network and information security is essential for the functioning of our societies and economies. The directive concerning measures to ensure a high common level of network and information security across the Union (NIS) is an important building block for improving cross-border cooperation to ensure security of information systems in the EU. Given the state of negotiations and the important progress already made, we have full confidence the Luxembourg Presidency will succeed in a timely completion of the file. If not, the Netherlands is ready to finalize it during its Presidency.

Improving the accessibility of websites is crucial in order to encourage the inclusion and participation of all users in the digital economy and society, in particular for people with functional limitations. The intention of the Netherlands Presidency is to achieve considerable progress on the directive on the accessibility of public sector bodies' websites.

Besides the ongoing dossiers, the incoming Presidency is determined to advance the Digital Single Market towards its completion.

The digital economy is a powerful lever for growth and competitiveness. The Netherlands Presidency underlines the potential of the European digital economy and aims to foster an integrated approach on the Digital Single Market. Therefore, the Telecoms and Competitiveness Councils will be held on one day, May 26th. The Netherlands Presidency intends to help forward the revision of the telecoms regulatory framework and to address this topic during a High Level Meeting on 20 April 2016 in Amsterdam.

If appropriate, the Netherlands Presidency will facilitate further discussions on digital platforms, cloud computing and the upcoming review of the roaming wholesale market which is essential to end roaming charges in the EU by 15 June 2017. Conferences on e-skills, cyber security and e-government are also foreseen in March, May and June 2016. Finally, the Netherlands Presidency is committed to make progress on the announced proposal for a decision of Council and Parliament on the 700MHz frequency band for mobile broadband.
