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'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 2)/Council
Subject: Joint Statement on the launching of the Critical Raw Materials Club
- Authorisation to negotiate a non-binding instrument

1. Access to a secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials is a shared challenge for the global community. In the Communication of 16 March 2023 on a secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials in support of the twin transition (ST 7551/23), the Commission announced its intention to establish, together with interested countries, a Critical Raw Materials (CRM) Club.
2. The idea of the CRM Club is to bring together consuming and producing countries to promote a secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials. In particular, the CRM Club should foster sustainable investment in producing countries, allowing them to move up the value chain. The intention of the Commission is to invite interested countries to launch the CRM Club through a Joint Statement.

3. On 11 August 2023, the Trade Policy Committee (Deputies) was informed by the Commission, in a note, of its intention to commence negotiations on a non-binding instrument in the form of a Joint Statement on the launching of the CRM Club. This Joint Statement is to be released by founding members before the end of 2023.
4. At the meetings of the Trade Policy Committee (Deputies) on 14 September and 25 October 2023, the Commission provided additional information to delegations. The Trade Policy Committee (Deputies) was subsequently consulted on the matter, by way of written consultation. No delegation opposed the Commission's intention mentioned above.
5. It is expected that the Commission will regularly inform the Trade Policy Committee (Deputies) of the progress made in the negotiations.
6. It is understood that the Commission will revert at the end of the negotiations to obtain, in accordance with Union law, an authorisation from the Council for the approval, on behalf of the Union, of a non-binding instrument in the form of a Joint Statement that should result from the negotiations.
7. In view of the above, the Permanent Representatives Committee is invited to:
 - confirm its agreement for the Commission to negotiate, on behalf of the Union, a Joint Statement on the launching of the CRM Club; and
 - recommend that the Council, as an 'A' item on the agenda of one of its forthcoming meetings, authorises the Commission to negotiate, on behalf of the Union, this Joint Statement.
