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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: Preparing European agriculture for the accession of Ukraine to the EU
- Information from the Polish delegation

Delegations will find in the Annex a document on the above subject to be presented by the Polish delegation under "Any other business" at the "Agriculture and Fisheries" Council on 10-11 December 2023.

Preparing European agriculture for the accession of Ukraine to the EU

Opening up the EU to new Member States can be a strategic investment in peace, stability, security and growth across the European continent.

The current challenges facing the EU further underline the need to strengthen the resilience of the agri-food sector to current and future crises. Both the EU and its Member States should make every effort to preserve the European agricultural model. It is essential that the EU maintains its position as one of the main producers of quality food in the world, but also be ready for potential future crises.

Poland's position has consistently been that the overriding objective of EU agriculture must remain to ensure food security for the EU population in a sustainable manner. Strengthening the resilience and transformation of the agri-food sector and protecting the EU internal market from an inflow of products produced in food systems that are not sustainable is essential to this end.

It should be borne in mind that food security - so essential for building the EU's strategic autonomy - cannot be maintained without ensuring the profitability of agricultural production. Therefore, European agriculture should continue to be an efficient supplier of high quality food to the internal market and to markets abroad.

The forthcoming planned accession negotiations will take place in the context of an unprecedented, powerful pressure on the agri-food sector, triggered by a series of unforeseen, severe shocks to the global food market caused, inter alia, by the COVID-19 pandemic, the occurrence of extreme weather events and war in the EU's immediate neighbourhood. The necessary measures must therefore be taken to ensure that further enlargement of the EU does not result in a reduction in the profitability of agricultural production, the depopulation of rural areas and the abandonment of farming in the current EU Member States.

We are convinced that the future accession of the new Member States to the EU will, like the previous enlargements, bring significant benefits, both to the acceding countries and to the current EU Member States, only if the following conditions are fulfilled:

- the accession negotiations will guarantee the protection of family farms, which are and should remain the foundation of the agricultural system in the EU;
- the protection of the interests of farmers and other actors in the agri-food sector of the EU Member States, in particular of those neighbouring EU candidate countries and of countries with a significant agri-food sector contribution to the economy, will be ensured at every stage of the accession negotiations;
- the boundary conditions to be complied with by the acceding countries will guarantee fair conditions for the functioning of the EU agri-food sector and for the placing on the EU internal market of products originating in those countries;
- all Member States will be involved in the arrangements made by the European Commission at each stage of the accession negotiations;
- the arrangements conducted by the EC with the EU candidate countries will be preceded by a thorough assessment of the impact of accession on the EU's agriculture, agri-food sector and the EU's position in international trade.