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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
Subject:	Conclusions on cohesion and Cohesion Policy post-2027 – <i>Statement by Hungary</i>

Delegations will find in the ANNEX the statement by Hungary.

Statement by Hungary on the Council Conclusions on cohesion and Cohesion Policy post-2027

Hungary welcomes the approval of the Council Conclusions on cohesion and Cohesion Policy post-2027, as they play an important role in recognizing the policy's core principles (as essential for fostering convergence, resilience, and competitiveness), and in reaffirming its fundamental role in the European Union ahead of the post-2027 legislative proposals.

However, Hungary is concerned about the convoluted wording of paragraph 8 and maintains its position that any possible link between the respect of EU values, including rule of law and the Charter, and the access to EU funding is to be subject to the negotiations on the post-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework.

Therefore, the paragraph in question cannot in any way prejudice any discussions leading up to, or belonging within the framework of the MFF negotiations.

Based on Hungary's regretful experience concerning the current mechanisms of conditionality that can be used in a biased manner to block a Member State's access to EU funds, **be it the Regulation on a general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget, the horizontal enabling conditions** under the Common Provisions Regulation **or the system of supermilestones concerning the Recovery and Resilience Facility**, we reiterate our position that the current system has not worked in accordance with the required principles of objectivity, non-discrimination and equal treatment of Member States but rather as a political weapon to exert undue pressure on certain Member States.

Hungary also recalls the subsidiary character of the conditionality mechanism, the application of which should only be considered, especially in the field of cohesion policy, where other procedures set out in Union law, including the use of infringement procedures would not allow to protect the Union budget effectively.

As Hungary has indicated previously, based on our experience **we will not agree to the continuation of the conditionality system in its current form**. Thus, Hungary agrees to the approval of the current Council Conclusions with the understanding that **it cannot be interpreted in any way as a call to keep any of the mentioned mechanisms in their current form and especially not as a call to their further reinforcement or extension or to create a stronger link between Union values or the Charter of Fundamental Rights and access to EU funds**. We recall that it is still primarily for the Member States' to ensure respect for values and fundamental rights, based on their constitutional traditions and rules.

Moreover, while Hungary agrees with the importance of the protection of the financial interest of the Union, it recalls that the obligations arising from that principle should apply also to the EU institutions when managing the allocation of EU funds, at least as strictly as it is required from Member States.
