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'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
Subject:	Memorandum of Understanding between the European Union and the Kingdom of Norway on a partnership on sustainable land-based raw materials and battery value chains <i>- Authorisation to sign a non-binding instrument</i>

1. On 7 July 2022, the Commission informed the Working Party on Competitiveness and Growth (Industry) about its intention to enter into discussions to draw up a Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the EU to establish a partnership on sustainable raw materials and batteries value chains with Norway¹.
2. The partnership, as a non-binding instrument, intends to set a comprehensive framework for future-oriented and long-term cooperation between the EU and Norway in the following potential areas of collaboration:
 - closer economic and industrial integration of Norway and the EU in the strategic value chains of primary and secondary raw materials and batteries, in particular through mapping resources, identifying projects throughout the respective value chains, facilitating business opportunities and linkages and attracting private investment, as well as ensuring the well-functioning and resilience of these critical supply chains;

¹ WK 9851/2022.

- closer bilateral cooperation on research and innovation;
 - the application of guidelines and best practices on high environmental, social and governance standards, including as regards human rights and rights of indigenous people, throughout the raw material value chains;
 - the identification and deployment of financial and investment de-risking instruments; and
 - the development of the necessary skills for high-quality jobs in these clean technology sectors.
3. On 12 February 2024, the Working Party on Competitiveness and Growth (Industry) received an information note from the Commission on the Memorandum of Understanding to be signed on behalf of the EU with the Kingdom of Norway, establishing a partnership on sustainable land-based raw materials and battery value chains, with the draft text of the Memorandum of Understanding in an attachment².
4. The Memorandum of Understanding between the European Union and the Kingdom of Norway on a partnership on sustainable land-based raw materials and battery value chains, set out in document 6911/24, would constitute a non-binding instrument. The Memorandum of Understanding sets forth the intentions of both partners. It is not legally binding upon the partners.
5. The Working Party on Competitiveness and Growth (Industry) examined the draft Memorandum of Understanding between the European Union and the Kingdom of Norway on a partnership on sustainable land-based raw materials and battery value chains at its meeting on 19 February 2024. Delegations generally welcomed the Memorandum of Understanding and indicated overall support to the Commission's proposal to sign it on behalf of the Union.

² WK 2356/2024 + ADD 1.

6. Following the examination by the Working Party, the Permanent Representatives Committee is asked to:

- confirm its agreement on the text of the Memorandum of Understanding as set out in document 6911/24;
- recommend that the Council authorises the Commission to sign, on behalf of the Union, the Memorandum of Understanding, as set out in document 6911/24, as an ‘A’ item on the agenda of a forthcoming Council meeting.
