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'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Special Committee on Agriculture/Council
Subject:	Draft REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on the definition, description, presentation and labelling of spirit drinks, the use of the names of spirit drinks in the presentation and labelling of other foodstuffs, the protection of geographical indications for spirit drinks, the use of ethyl alcohol and distillates of agricultural origin in alcoholic beverages, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 **(first reading)** - Adoption of the legislative act - Statements

Statement by the Commission on labelling rules

The Commission declares that, should the empowerments provided for in Articles 19(1) and 50(3) be used, careful consideration will be given in particular to transparency of information for consumers for all spirit drinks placed on the market in the European Union.

Statement by the Commission on the unbundling clause

The Commission recalls that point 31 of the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Law-making provides that empowerments may be bundled on condition that the Commission provides objective justifications based on the substantive link between two or more empowerments contained in a single legislative act, and unless the legislative act provides otherwise. The Commission notes that the co-legislators have agreed to exclude bundling of empowerments in the present case, which may cause additional administrative burden and make it less easy for those affected by the legal framework to have access to a simple and comprehensive set of legal instruments. The Commission considers that this cannot be seen as creating a precedent for other ongoing legislative negotiations.

Joint statement by Germany, Denmark and Finland

The German, Danish and Finnish delegations assume that the European Commission, in coordination with the EFSA, will on its own initiative and in good time review the permissible hydrocyanic acid and ethyl carbamate contents in stone fruit spirits and stone fruit marc spirits and, if necessary, adopt measures to reduce these contents, to ensure the best possible preventive health protection for consumers in the European Union.

Statement by Greece

Greece would like to thank the Commission and the Council Presidency for their efforts throughout the negotiations on the creation of a new Regulation on spirit drinks.

In spite of these efforts, Greece cannot support the proposal for a Regulation, since we think that in its final form it does not meet the particular characteristics and practical needs of the sector, given the importance of spirit drinks in both the export trade and the cultural heritage of the EU.

More specifically, we think that on particularly important issues such as the regime, and the procedure for the recognition, of geographical indications, account has not been taken of the particular characteristics of the sector, while the specific regime of established geographical indications resulting from the original Regulation 1576/89, by which they were recognised as the outcome of political agreement in the Council, has been neglected.

Lastly, the proposed Regulation raises issues concerning the transparency and effectiveness of intervention by the Member States, insofar as it provides for Commission delegated acts to govern matters which are fundamental for the sector and of major political and economic importance.