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NOTE

From: Presidency

To: Permanent Representatives Committee

Subject: Modalities on the convening, preparation and organisation of informal videoconferences of ministers during the COVID-19 crisis

**Modalities on the convening, preparation and organisation of
Informal Videoconferences of Ministers
during the COVID-19 crisis**

Given the exceptional circumstances due to the COVID-19 outbreak in which the Council is unable to hold physical meetings, it is necessary to set out clear and predictable modalities on the convening, preparation and organisation of informal videoconferences of ministers.

These modalities are aimed at ensuring, in line with recital 4 of Council Decision 2020/430¹ a thorough preparation, national coordination, public transparency, and the involvement of national parliaments in accordance with the practices of Member States. Such videoconferences cannot however replace a formal Council meeting. No formal Council acts can be adopted. However, as far as possible, the Council's Rules of Procedure should be followed *mutatis mutandis* when convening, preparing and organising informal videoconferences of ministers.

I. Planning and convening

1. The Presidency shall establish a consolidated list of meetings at ministerial level - formal Council meetings and informal videoconferences of ministers - it plans to hold during its semester.
2. When it is decided to hold an informal videoconference of ministers instead of a Council meeting, the informal videoconferences of ministers shall be convened by the Presidency, with the help of the General Secretariat of the Council.
3. The agenda shall be sent to delegations and the Commission at least 14 days in advance of the informal videoconference. Delegations or the Commission may request, until at least 16 days in advance of the informal videoconference, that an item be discussed at the videoconference. After the above deadlines, a new item may be added only with the agreement of Coreper. Any other business items may also be requested.

¹ Published in OJ L 88 I, 24.3.2020, p. 1.

II. Preparation and follow-up

4. Each informal videoconference of ministers shall be prepared by Coreper. It will receive and examine the agenda of the relevant videoconference at least 14 days in advance. Coreper shall also ensure the follow-up to such videoconferences.

5. Any draft text of a statement to be made by ministers at an informal videoconference or any papers intended to be the subject of discussions at an informal videoconference of ministers shall be examined in advance by Coreper.

III. Publicity and organisation

6. The agendas of informal videoconferences of ministers shall be made public upon being sent to delegations and the Commission.

7. Discussions at informal videoconferences of ministers that would, under the Council's Rules of Procedure, be held in public shall be held in public and the papers which are the subject of such discussions shall also be made public.

8. Where it is established, the list of participants to informal videoconferences of ministers shall be made public in the same way as this is done in the case of Council meetings.

9. Informal videoconferences of ministers shall be organised using the videoconferencing facilities of the General Secretariat of the Council and with its help.
