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'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
No. Cion doc.:	9772/20
Subject:	Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION Amending Decision 2003/76/EC establishing the measures necessary for the implementation of the Protocol, annexed to the Treaty establishing the European Community, on the financial consequences of the expiry of the ECSC Treaty and on the Research Fund for Coal and Steel *- Agreement in principle* *- Request for the consent of the European Parliament*

1. On 16 July 2020, the Commission submitted to the Council the proposal for a Council Decision amending Decision 2003/76/EC establishing the measures necessary for the implementation of the Protocol, annexed to the Treaty establishing the European Community, on the financial consequences of the expiry of the ECSC Treaty and on the Research Fund for Coal and Steel[1].

[1] Doc.9772/20.

2. The Research Fund for Coal and Steel (RFCS) is an EU research programme, funded outside the Multiannual Financial Framework by the revenue of the assets of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in liquidation allocated to this fund according to Protocol 37. In accordance with this Protocol, the RFCS finances exclusively research projects in the coal and steel sectors.

3. The aim of the proposed Decision is to allow selling a share of the assets of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in liquidation for the period 2021-2027 in order to provide an annual Research Fund for Coal and Steel (RFCS) allocation of EUR 111 million. This annual allocation will continue to support collaborative research in the coal and steel sectors and will enable the funding of breakthrough technologies leading to near zero-carbon steel-making projects, as well as research projects for the just transition of coal mines and related infrastructure.

4. Following the work since September 2020 within the Research Working Party, resulting to some limited changes to the initial proposal, the Council (Competitiveness) at its meeting of 27-28 May 2021, adopted a General Approach on the text.

5. In accordance with the first paragraph of Article 2 of Protocol No 37 on the financial consequences of the expiry of the ECSC Treaty and on the Research Fund for Coal and Steel, the European Parliament has to give its consent to the draft Council Decision.

6. The Permanent Representatives Committee is, therefore, invited to recommend to the Council:

   - to agree in principle on the draft Council Decision as finalised by the lawyer-linguists and set out in doc. 9399/21, and

   - to decide to forward the draft Council Decision as set out in doc. 9399/21 to the European Parliament for its consent.