



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR ENERGY

**Directorate A - Energy policy**  
**The Director**

Brussels,

dir(2018) 240542

**NOTE TO THE ATTENTION OF MR. D. RISTORI**  
**DIRECTOR GENERAL, DG ENERGY**

**Subject: Request to launch a written procedure on a "Joint Declaration from the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Southern Gas Corridor Advisory Council, Baku, Azerbaijan 15 February 2018"**

I hereby seek your agreement to launch the written procedure on a draft Commission Decision to adopt the above mentioned document following the inter-service consultation ISC/2017/09262. Following the adoption of this proposal by the Commission, the Council will be asked to endorse the document in due time for it to be signed, on behalf of the European Union, by Vice President Šefčovič at the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Southern Gas Corridor Advisory Council that will take place in Baku, Azerbaijan on 15 February 2018.

To date, three ministerial meetings have taken place, in 2015, 2016 and 2017, all in Baku, Azerbaijan. This Joint Declaration is similar to the one that was signed at the Third Ministerial Meeting of the Southern Gas Corridor Advisory Council in Baku on 23 February 2017 by the Commission on behalf of the European Union, together with the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Turkey, Georgia, the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Albania, the Italian Republic, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Republic of Croatia, the United States of America, Montenegro and the United Kingdom. It restates the political commitment of the signatories to making the Southern Gas Corridor a reality and provides the latest developments and progress made along the Southern Gas Corridor.

The inter-service consultation involved the Legal Service, the Secretariat General, DG CLIMA, DG COMP, DG DECO, the EEAS, DG ENV, DG GROW, DG NEAR and DG TRADE. All replied with a positive opinion. The Legal Service, Secretariat General, the EEAS and DG TRADE replied with comments on the draft Joint Declaration, which have been taken into account in the attached document.

The Council has been duly informed about the preparation of this document by way of an oral presentation at the Council Energy Working Party meeting on 12 December 2017.

The Commission is requested to adopt the draft Decision and authorise the Vice President to sign the "Joint Declaration from the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Southern Gas Corridor Advisory Council" on behalf of the European Union.

In view of the multilateral context and nature of this Joint Declaration, the Commission's representative would be authorised to accept non-substantial changes to the draft Joint Declaration, as set out in the draft Commission Decision.

The Joint Declaration from the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Southern Gas Corridor Advisory Council does not, nor is it intended to, create any legal obligations on either side under domestic or international law.

Following a recent ECJ ruling, the guidelines for inter-institutional cooperation with regards to the adoption of non-binding international instruments foresee that the final text of the Joint Statement should be submitted for endorsement by the Council. In order to submit the Joint Declaration with enough time for the Council to give its endorsement before the Ministerial Meeting of the Southern Gas Corridor Advisory Council on 15 February 2018, the Vice President's Cabinet has asked the President's Cabinet to authorise the adoption by the College, of the Joint Declaration and the Commission Decision in English only.

In light of this, I would be grateful for your agreement to request and launch a written procedure for the adoption of this draft Commission Decision.

For any additional information please contact [REDACTED] ENER A3 [REDACTED].

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