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**PROVISIONAL VERSION**

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- RESEARCH ONLY -

2547th Council meeting

- COMPETITIVENESS -

(Internal market, Industry and Research)

Brussels, 26 November 2003

President : **Mrs Letizia MORATTI**, Minister for Education, the Universities and Research of the Italian Republic

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1 Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.

2 The documents whose references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site http://ue.eu.int.

3 Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the above mentioned Council Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.
PARTICIPANTS

The Governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

**Belgium**:
Mr Serge KUBLA Vice-Minister-President and Minister for Economic Affairs, SMEs, Research and New Technologies (Walloon Region)

**Denmark**:
Mr Helge SANDER Minister for Science, Technology and Development

**Germany**:
Mr Wolf-Michael CATENHUSEN State Secretary for Research

**Greece**:
Mr Apostolos TSOCHATZOPOULOS Minister for Development

**Spain**:
Mr Juan José COSTA CLIMENT Mr. Pedro MORENES EULATE Minister for Science and Technology
State Secretary for Science and Technology Policy

**France**:
Ms Claudie-HAIGNERÉ Minister attached to the Minister for Youth, Education and Research, with responsibility for Research and New Technology

**Ireland**:
Ms Mary HARNEY Tánaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment

**Italy**:
Mrs Letizia MORATTI Mr Guido POSSA Minister for Education, the Universities and Research
Deputy Minister for Education, the Universities and Research

**Luxembourg**:
Ms Erna HENNICOT-SCHOEPGES Minister for Culture, Higher Education and Research, Minister for Public Works

**Netherlands**:
Mr Laurens Jan BRINKHORST Minister for Economic Affairs

**Austria**:
Mr Martin BARTENSTEIN Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Labour

**Portugal**:
Ms Maria da Graça CARVALHO Minister for Science and Higher Education

**Finland**:
Mr Mauri PEKKARINEN Minister for Trade and Industry

**Sweden**:
Mr Thomas ÖSTROS Minister for Education

**United Kingdom**:
Ms Jacqui SMITH Minister of State for Industry and the Regions and Deputy Minister of Women and Equality

**Commission**:
Mr Philippe BUSQUIN Member
The Governments of the Acceding States were represented as follows:

**Czech Republic**:  
Mr Ludek STAVINOHA  
Deputy Permanent Representative

**Estonia**:  
Mr Margus RAHUOJA  
Deputy Permanent Representative

**Cyprus**:  
Mr Markos KYPRIANOU  
Minister for Finance

**Latvia**:  
Mr Eduard STIPRAIS  
Deputy Permanent Representative

**Lithuania**:  
Mr Rimantas VAITKUS  
Deputy Minister for Education and Science

**Hungary**:  
Mr Egon DIENES-OEHM  
Deputy Permanent Representative

**Malta**:  
Mr Edwin VASSALLO  
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs

**Poland**:  
Mr Michael KLEIBER  
Minister for Science

**Slovakia**:  
Mr Martin FRONC  
Minister for Education

**Slovenia**:  
Mr Zoran STANČIČ  
State Secretary, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport
ITEMS DEBATED

IMPROVING COMPETITIVENESS AND GROWTH - Council Conclusions

The Council adopted the following Conclusions:

"The Council

1. RECALLING the conclusions of the European Council meeting held on 16 and 17 October 2003 which highlighted, within the Growth Initiative, the fundamental role of innovation and research and development for the purposes of Europe's economic and social growth in the pursuit of the Lisbon objectives;

2. NOTING that the European Council meeting on 16 and 17 October 2003 invited the relevant formations of the Council, with a view to the European Council meeting on 12 and 13 December 2003, to make their own contribution to the establishment of the Quick-Start Programme identifying a list of projects in an enlarged Union based on transparent criteria, along with assessments of their significance for the integration of the internal market in the enlarged Europe, their economic and financial viability, their impact on growth and the leveraging effect on private capital;

3. EMPHASISING that it considers projects in the sector of innovation and research to be identified for the Quick-Start Programme should:
   - meet the criteria of complementarity and synergy with the thematic priorities of the Sixth Framework Programme, while actively pursuing its implementation, and ensuring full consistency of the objectives and implementing instruments for European action in the R&D sector;
   - maintain a character of excellence in the context of realising the European Research Area;
   - contribute to Europe's economic and social growth as outlined by the Lisbon Process;

4. RECALLING the preliminary exchange of views which took place at the Competitiveness Council held on 10 November 2003, on the basis of a number of considerations tabled by the Presidency regarding possible priority areas and quick-start projects for research and development;

5. WELCOMES the communication from the Commission on a European Initiative for Growth - Investing in Networks and Knowledge for Growth and Jobs\(^2\), and in particular, the criteria to be used in identifying projects for the quick-start programme, namely the maturity of the project, its transfrontier dimension, its impact on growth and innovation in an enlarged European Union and its benefits for the environment;

6. CONSIDERS that the areas proposed in the Commission's communication constitute a first list of R&D priorities; NOTES that the list of priorities is non-exhaustive and may be supplemented as and when necessary."

\(^2\) Doc. 14893/03
EUROPEAN SPACE POLICY

The Council took note of the presentation by Commissioner Philippe Busquin on the Commission's White Paper on implementing the European Space Policy. It instructed the competent preparatory bodies of the Council with a view to enabling the Competitiveness Council to make an adequate response to bring the work forward rapidly.

In this White Paper, the Commission proposes the implementation of an extended European Space Policy to support the achievement of the European Union's policy goals. In particular, it is proposed to exploit the special benefits space technologies can deliver in support of the Union’s policies and objectives: faster economic growth, job creation and industrial competitiveness, enlargement and cohesion, sustainable development and security and defence.

It is recalled that a number of Council resolutions and conclusions between 1998 and 2001 all pointed in the direction of developing a European space strategy. This culminated in the adoption by the Council in December 2001 of a Resolution entitled "Towards a European Space Strategy" inter alia inviting the Commission to present a proposal for a negotiation mandate for a framework agreement between the European Community and the European Space Agency (ESA). Following to negotiations conducted by the Commission on behalf of the Community with the ESA, a framework Agreement was signed on 25 November 2003 between the two Parties. This Agreement will have an initial duration of four years and will form an important basis for initially implementing the European space policy.
STEM CELL RESEARCH

The Council heard the presentation of Commissioner Philippe Busquin on the Commission's revised proposal in the light of the opinion of the European Parliament. This revised text concerns the main conditions for the use of stem cells procured from human embryos for research activities funded under the Sixth Framework Programme specific programme "Integrating and strengthening the European Research Area".

After discussing this issue informally over lunch, the Council decided to meet again on 3 December with a view to taking a decision.

The Commission's proposal aims at establishing implementing provisions concerning research activities involving human embryos and human embryonic stem cells eligible for Community funding as envisaged by the Council/Commission statement at the time of the adoption of the specific programme "Integrating and strengthening the European research area" adopted on 30 September 2002.

INTERNATIONAL THERMONUCLEAR EXPERIMENTAL REACTOR

The Council decided unanimously to amend the Commission's negotiating directives on the establishment of an international framework concerning the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) authorising the Commission to put forward Cadarache (France) as the European candidate site. The Council also decided unanimously that the ITER European legal entity will be located in Spain.

The negotiations on ITER are currently being undertaken by Canada, China, the European Union, Japan, Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States.

The next meeting of the Parties to the ITER agreement will be held on 4 December. Three candidates for hosting this site, Cadarache (France), Clarington (Canada) and Rokkasho (Japan) have been put forward.