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EESC: STATEMENT BY COUNCILLOR ULGIATI TO THE INT SECTION

During the meeting of the Section for the Single Market, Production and Consumption (INT) of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), held in Brussels on the 15th of April, a number of issues of great importance for the future of European citizens were addressed, including the revision of CO2 emission standards for passenger cars and light commercial vehicles, in connection with the adoption of the Opinion INT/1115. The EESC recommends that the co-legislators revise the Regulation on CO2 emission levels in such a way as to restore the competitiveness of the automotive sector, without, however, compromising the ultimate strategic objective of the EU provisions, in line with EU climate legislation. A pragmatic, predictable and technology-neutral approach must therefore be adopted, whereby CO2 emission standards are consistent not only with market conditions but also with the climate targets for 2040, in order to safeguard growth, quality employment and innovation in Europe. For Councillor Ulgiati «the issue of emissions has become a strategic project in Europe that has now also taken on a political and, at times, even ideological character, clearly having an impact on the automotive sector as well. The Opinion – said Ulgiati - highlights the principle of technological neutrality and the strengthening of the “Made in the EU” label, thereby seeking to safeguard the industrial capacity of European manufacturers, but also, and above all, jobs. It is not easy, particularly at this delicate moment

when ongoing wars are reshaping the geopolitical landscape, - continued the EESC representative - but we Europeans must defend the interests of European citizens, in spite of those who would like to see a Continent of mere consumers. To this end, it is important to recognise the role of low-emission renewable fuels, which can serve as a valid alternative even to electric cars during the transition». Support for the roll-out of charging infrastructure for electric cars is justified, according to Councillor Ulgiati, but «we must bear in mind that such networks are not suited to the ever-increasing new energy demands, and furthermore that they are inadequate given that they are also powered by energy sources produced via photovoltaics, which creates technical difficulties within the networks themselves. It is therefore essential - concluded Ulgiati - that flexibility clauses be introduced into the new legislation».



EU UNVEILS ACTION PLAN FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

Europe's stability, economic growth and security are closely linked to the Mediterranean. For this reason, a few days ago, the European Commissioner for the Mediterranean, Dubravka Šuica, presented the first set of key initiatives, in the form of an Action Plan, to promote the implementation of the Mediterranean Pact, drawn up by the European Commission in October 2025 through a broad and inclusive consultation process and established precisely to create a common space between the European Union, Countries bordering the Mare Nostrum and Partners in the Gulf, which is connected, prosperous, resilient and secure. The first edition of the Action Plan has therefore launched 21 initial actions, to be implemented this year, divided into three pillars. The first is dedicated to “people”, the driving force behind change and innovation, through eight actions, including the Mediterranean University Initiative, which is not a new university but aims to “deepen” academic collaboration, research and innovation across the Mediterranean region. The second pillar, on the other hand, aims to build “stronger, more sustainable and integrated economies” based on four actions focused on the region’s energy and digital future, such as the



Trans-Mediterranean Initiative for Cooperation on Renewable Energy and Clean Technologies (T-MED) which, together with its investment platform, aims to accelerate projects in renewable energy, the electricity grid and clean technologies by mobilising public and private funding, mitigating financial risks and promoting industrial partnerships. Finally, the third pillar addresses the issues of security, emergency preparedness and migration management through nine actions, including “Secure Borders”, with the aim of strengthening operational and institutional capacities for border management and security governance.