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PRESS RELEASE

Declaration of the EU Nuclear Alliance Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Hungary, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Sweden

Meeting of March 4th, 2024

In preparation for the Leader's Nuclear Summit to be held on March 21st in Brussels, the European Nuclear Alliance met on Monday 4 March 2024 in the margin of the Energy Council. We, the Ministers and representatives from 14 Member States¹ took part in this meeting, as well as the European Commission.

- 1- **The launch of the European Nuclear Alliance one year ago sent a clear signal to recognize the role of nuclear in the decarbonization of our economy, achieve security of supply and to contribute to an open strategic autonomy: our work must be pursued and intensified**

Since the launch of the European Nuclear Alliance on February 28th, 2023, we acknowledge that a fruitful dialogue and a closer cooperation have been created among the participants and with the European Commission. This intense collaboration led to concrete results at EU level recognizing the essential role of nuclear energy, alongside renewable energy, for achieving our climate targets and for security of supply. We are determined to pursue and intensify our cooperation in this format.

In line with the Declaration of the Nuclear Alliance on July 11th 2023, in Valladolid "A new strategy on the use of Nuclear Energy for the European Union", we acknowledge that positive results were achieved thanks to our unique cooperation. In particular we welcome and strongly support:

a/ **The recognition of the role of nuclear energy alongside renewable energies** and all sustainable energy solutions for our decarbonization objectives, **the latest example being the Net Zero Industry Act** and the European Commission latest Communication on **2040 Climate objective** which set the tone for a more technology neutral approach in EU policies;

¹ Italy participated as an observer.

b/ The launch of the SMR Industrial Alliance by the European Commission which aim to accelerate the deployment of Small and Advanced Modular Reactors and ensure a strong EU supply chain, including a skilled workforce. The development, of net-zero technology markets of the future, such as SMRs, will be essential for energy resilience, decarbonization, cost-reduction, economic growth and reducing strategic dependencies.

We consider it of the utmost importance that this SMR industrial alliance succeeds in: i) fostering industrial collaboration across the EU through concrete projects and, ii) designing proposals for the potential evolution of the overall framework to develop nuclear capacities and the entire value chain. We agreed that the Nuclear Alliance will focus on evaluating the outcomes of this promising initiative on a regular basis.

2- This momentum must now be converted into a comprehensive and enabling European framework for nuclear development, exploring essential policies dimensions including financing

These positive results set a clear tone for a more technology neutral approach to ensure a level playing field of the nuclear energy for all Member States in their efforts to reach carbon neutrality by 2050.

a/ One of the key issues that needs to be achieved is the challenge of financing Nuclear

We discussed the opportunity to launch a “Working group on European instruments to deploy nuclear reactors in the EU and associated European value chain” within the Nuclear Alliance in order to explore the possibilities and benefits of financing instruments (such as EIB support, Innovation Fund, State Aid guidelines, IPCEI, ...) and the way they could be used or updated in order to support deployment of large-scale reactors and SMR technologies.

Furthermore, we call for an open discussion about the **broadening of the European Hydrogen Bank** to low-carbon hydrogen production from electrolysis, in line with relevant delegated acts, in order to decarbonize the European economy.

b/ Another key topic are the decarbonization objectives in terms of greenhouse gas emissions which have to be explored to ensure a level playing field among Member States in that regard, without prejudice to our existing and agreed climate and energy targets. We encourage the Commission to develop the 2040 energy policies based on **updated scenarios** taking into account the latest announcements for the deployment of nuclear capacities in the updated NECPs.

c/ Strengthening the European industrial value chain for nuclear energy. We share with the Commission the interest to support the safe and cost-effective development of a dynamic and innovative nuclear value chain capacities in Europe and the creation of a strong industrial basis for both SMR and large-scale reactor projects.

We are determined to pursue and intensify our cooperation in the European Nuclear Alliance format and encourage the European Commission to pursue its efforts in designing, an enabling framework for the deployment of nuclear energy and the accounting of its contribution, alongside renewable energy, to the decarbonization of the EU as soon as possible.

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