

Political Declaration
on the occasion of the conclusion of the Agreement establishing
an Interinstitutional Body for Ethical Standards for the members of
institutions and advisory bodies mentioned in Article 13 of the
Treaty on European Union

1. The Member States meeting within the Council welcome the conclusion of the Agreement establishing an Interinstitutional Body for Ethical Standards, which is to contribute to promoting a common culture of ethics and transparency, specifically by developing common minimum standards for the conduct of members of institutions and advisory bodies mentioned in Article 13 TEU.

2. According to Article 16(2) TEU, the Council consists of representatives of each Member State at ministerial level, who may commit their government and cast its vote. These representatives are subject to their respective national rules on ethical behaviour, including when exercising their functions as member or Presidency of the Council.

3. There is no legal basis in the Treaties allowing the Council to establish a harmonized set of rules on ethical behaviour of the representatives of Member States within the Council. As a consequence, the representatives of the Member States' governments cannot be subject to the common ethical standards to be developed by the Interinstitutional Body.

4. The citizens of the Union must be able to trust that any person exercising a mandate in a Union institution or advisory body is bound by robust rules on ethical behaviour, regardless of his/her particular status.

5. Against this background, the Member States meeting within the Council have decided that each Member State may, by means of voluntary and individual national declarations, make publicly available on the website of the Interinstitutional Body, during their term of office as Presidency of the Council and in the six months preceding and following this term, the information on either their national rules, standards or practices on ethical behaviour for the members of their governments which are relevant for the exercise of their role as Presidency of the Council.

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