

EC/Israel Framework Agreement: participation in Community programmes. Protocol to the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement

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PURPOSE: to ensure the participation of Israel in Community programmes.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

BACKGROUND: as part of the European Neighbourhood Policy, the gradual opening-up of certain Community programmes and agencies to the participation of ENP partner countries represents one of many measures designed to promote reform, modernisation and transition in the European Union's neighbourhood.

On this basis, on 18 June 2007, the Council issued directives to the Commission to negotiate Framework Agreements with Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Tunisia, and Ukraine, on the general principles governing their participation in Community programmes.

The June 2007 European Council reaffirmed the paramount importance of the European Neighbourhood Policy and endorsed a report in which it mentioned the Council directives for negotiating relevant additional protocols, identifying Israel, Morocco and Ukraine as being likely to be the first partner countries to benefit from these measures.

Negotiations with **Israel** have since been completed to the satisfaction of the Commission. The text of the Protocol negotiated with Israel is attached.

CONTENT: the purpose of this proposal is to conclude a Protocol aiming to approve a Framework Agreement on the general principles governing Israel's participation in Community programmes. It contains standard stipulations that are intended to be applied to all ENP partner countries with which such protocols are to be concluded. The negotiated text also allows the Parties to provisionally apply the provisions of the Protocol from the date of its signature. This is particularly relevant in the case of Israel. The specific terms and conditions, including financial contribution and reporting and evaluation procedures, regarding Israel's participation in each particular programme should be determined by agreement between the Commission of the European Communities, acting on behalf of the Community, and Israel.

Financial contribution: Israel shall contribute financially to the general budget of the European Union corresponding to the specific programmes in which Israel participates. If Israel applies for Community external assistance to participate in a given Community programme on the basis of [Regulation \(EC\) No 1638/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council](#) laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument or pursuant to any similar Regulation providing for Community external assistance to Israel that may be adopted in the future, the conditions governing the use by Israel of the Community assistance shall be determined in a financing agreement.

Implementation and provisional application: the negotiated text allows the Parties to provisionally apply the provisions of the Protocol from the date of its signature. This is particularly relevant in the case of Israel.

The present Framework Agreement shall apply for the period for which the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the State of Israel, of the other part, is in force.

This Protocol shall be signed and approved by the Community and by Israel in accordance with their respective procedures. No later than three years after the date of entry into force of this Agreement, and every three years thereafter, both Contracting Parties may review the implementation of this Agreement on the basis of Israel's actual participation in one or more Community programmes.

According to Article 300(3) TEC, the European Parliament will be requested to give its assent to this Protocol.