

EC/Mauritania Fisheries Partnership Agreement: fishing opportunities and financial contribution for the period 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2012. Protocol

2008/0093(CNS) - 29/08/2008 - Document attached to the procedure

ACT: Commission Decision of 29 August 2008 concerning the payment of the annual financial contribution for 2008 within the terms of the Partnership Agreement concluded between the European Community and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania in view of the coup d'état which took place in this country on 5 August 2008.

CONTENT: on 6 August 2008, a coup d'état took place in Mauritania and the authorities which had been democratically elected in 2007 were replaced by a military regime. The Presidency of the Union, the European Commission, the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, as well as the UN Security Council, condemned this military coup d'état and called for the return of legitimate institutions in Mauritania and for the immediate liberation of the democratically elected president.

In view of these circumstances, the Commission decided to examine the impact of these events on Community relations with Mauritania and, in particular, in regard to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement and its protocol.

To recap, the fisheries protocol between the Community and Mauritania provides for, among other things, the payment of a financial contribution of €86 million to the Mauritanian Treasury for the first year of the protocol's application. This payment was to be made by 31 August 2008 at the latest. The Commission decided to proceed with the transfer of this sum by Decision C/2008/4056 of 1 August 2008. However, in view of its responsibility for the implementation of the Community budget, the Commission needs to ensure that the appropriate administrative and technical conditions facilitating the implementation of the Fisheries Agreement are in place, in particular as regards the intended purpose and utilisation of the financial transfers.

In view of the coup d'état, however, the Commission considers that the information that it has does not permit it to ensure that these conditions prevail for the moment. It is therefore necessary for the authorising officer to verify these and the time necessary to undertake this task exceeds the maximum period of time by which the first contribution should be transferred (31 August 2008). As a consequence, the Commission has reached the following decision:

- to allow the authorising officer the necessary time to check to ensure that the procedures provided for in Decision No. C/2008/4056 and the implementation of the fisheries protocol, and in particular in relation to the payment of the annual financial contribution, respect the principle of sound financial management;
- to keep the European Parliament, the Council and the Member States informed so that the latter may, in turn, keep any economic operators concerned informed.