EC/Tunisia Euro-Mediterranean Agreement: accession of Bulgaria and Romania. Protocol

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PURPOSE: to **conclude** a Protocol to the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and Tunisia, of the other part, to take account of the accession of the Republic of Bulgaria and Romania to the European Union.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

CONTENT: on 23 October 2006 the Council authorised the Commission, on behalf of the European Community and its Member States, to negotiate with Tunisia a protocol amending the agreements concluded between the European Community and third countries, in particular the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and Tunisia, of the other part, to take account of the accession of the new Member States to the EU.

The Treaty concerning the accession of the Republic of Bulgaria and Romania to the European Union entered into force on 1 January 2007 (AVC/1995/0132).

Pursuant to Article 6(2) of the Act annexed to the Treaty of Accession, the accession of the new Contracting Parties to the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement shall be agreed by the conclusion of a protocol to that Agreement.

The negotiations with Tunisia have since been completed to the satisfaction of the Commission. Tunisia marked its agreement in an exchange of letters which was concluded on 25 June 2009.

The accession of the new Member States to the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement is to be agreed by a simplified procedure, whereby the protocol is to be concluded by the Council, acting unanimously on behalf of the Member States, and by the third country concerned. This procedure is without prejudice to the Community's own competences.

The text of the protocol negotiated with Tunisia is attached. The most important aspects of the protocol are the provisions for the accession of the new Member States to the EU-Tunisia Association Agreement, and the inclusion of the new official languages of the EU, to take account of the enlargement of the EU.

The European Parliament will be called upon to give its assent to this protocol.