

Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes: opening accession to all UN Member States

2013/0127(NLE) - 13/12/2013 - Final act

PURPOSE: to accept an Amendment to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision 2013/790/EC on the acceptance on behalf of the European Union of the Amendment to Articles 25 and 26 of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

BACKGROUND: the European Union is a Party to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes following its approval in 1995.

The main purpose of the Convention is to establish a framework for bilateral and multilateral cooperation to prevent and control the pollution of transboundary watercourses and to ensure the rational use of water resources in the Member countries of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

At their 2003 Meeting, the Parties to the Convention expressed a wish to allow States situated outside of the UNECE region to become Parties to the Convention in order to promote river basin cooperation throughout the world.

The European Community participated in the 2003 Meeting of the Parties which adopted the Amendment allowing accession of any State that is a Member of the United Nations to accede to the Convention upon approval by the Meeting of the Parties. The Amendment will enter into force upon acceptance of all States and organisations that were Parties to the Convention on 28 November 2003.

The Amendment should be accepted on behalf of the Union.

CONTENT: under this Decision, the Council, with the Parliament's consent, accepts on behalf of the Union, the Amendment to Articles 25 and 26 of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes opening accession to the Convention to all United Nations Member States.

The Amendment is presented in the annex to this Decision.

Once the Amendment enters into force, the Convention will be of particular importance for countries that border the UNECE region, such as Afghanistan, China, the Islamic Republic of Iran and certain Central Asian States. Some of these States have expressed an interest in acceding to the Convention. Their participation in the Convention will be beneficial in encouraging cooperation on management of transboundary water resources, especially in light of growing pressures of climate change, desertification as well as the importance of water access for stability and security.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: the Decision shall enter into force on 13.12.2013.