EU/Georgia Association Agreement

2014/0086(NLE) - 02/06/2014 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to conclude the Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Georgia, of the other part.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

BACKGROUND: on 10 May 2010, the Council authorised the Commission to open negotiations with Georgia for the conclusion of a new Agreement between the Union and Georgia to replace the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.

Those negotiations were successfully finalised, and the Association Agreement between the European Union and the EURATOM and their Member States, of the one part, and Georgia, of the other part was initialled on 29 November 2013.

In accordance with a Council Decision, the Agreement was signed subject to its conclusion at a later date.

It is now necessary to conclude this Agreement on behalf of the European Union.

CONTENT: under this proposal, the Council is called upon to approve the Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Georgia, of the other part on behalf of the Union.

Objectives of the Association Agreement: the draft Agreement establishes an association between the Parties, aiming at **political association and economic integration** of Georgia and leaving open the way for further progressive developments.

The overall aims of the association focus on:

- strengthening the framework for enhanced political dialogue;
- promoting, preserving and strengthening peace and stability in both the regional and international dimensions;
- promoting cooperation on peaceful conflict resolution;
- establishing conditions for enhanced economic and trade relations leading towards Georgia's gradual economic integration with the EU internal market in selected areas;
- enhancing justice, freedom and security cooperation with the aim of reinforcing the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and
- establishing conditions for increasingly close cooperation in other areas of mutual interest.

For further details of the objectives of the Agreement, please refer to the summary of the *initial Commission legislative proposal from 14/03/2014*.

Geographical indications: the draft Agreement sets out the relevant procedures for the protection of geographical indications which are given protection pursuant to the Agreement. The Agreement should not be construed as conferring rights or imposing obligations which can be directly invoked before Union or Member State courts and tribunals.

It is stipulated that a name protected under the “Geographical Indications” of the Agreement may be used by any operator marketing agricultural products, foodstuffs, wines, aromatised wines or spirits conforming to the corresponding specification.

The Member States and the institutions of the Union shall enforce the protection provided for in the Agreement, including at the request of an interested party.

On a procedural note, modifications to the Agreement through decisions of the Geographical Indications Sub-Committee shall be approved by the Commission on behalf of the Union.

Where interested parties cannot reach agreement following objections relating to a geographical indication, the Commission shall adopt a position on the basis of the specific procedure.