Marrakesh Agreement establishing the World Trade Organization (WTO): Agreement on Trade Facilitation. Protocol

2015/0029(NLE) - 01/10/2015 - Final act

PURPOSE: to conclude, on behalf of the European Union, the protocol amending the Marrakesh agreement establishing the World Trade Organization (WTO).

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision (EU) 2015/1947 on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Protocol Amending the Marrakesh Agreement establishing the World Trade Organisation.

CONTENT: under this Decision, the Council approved on behalf of the European Union, the Protocol Amending the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organisation.

The Ninth WTO Ministerial Conference held in Bali on 3-6 December 2013 adopted the Ministerial Decision on Trade Facilitation, which concluded negotiations on the Agreement on Trade Facilitation subject to the legal review of the text.

At its meeting on 27 November 2014, the WTO's General Council adopted the Protocol amending the Marrakesh Agreement establishing the World Trade Organisation and opened it for acceptance by WTO Members.

The Protocol includes the Agreement on Trade Facilitation and the commitments of developing countries that are incorporated as an Annex to that Agreement.

The Agreement contains a set of measures designed to improve the cross-border movement of goods by improving transparency, streamlining customs procedures and eliminating red tape. For developing countries, it also contains innovative flexibilities which may become standard in future rules type agreements.

The Agreement is divided into two sections:

- the first contains provisions for **expediting the movement, release and clearance of goods**;
- the second contains special and **differential treatment provisions for developing and least-developed countries** aimed at helping them implement the provisions of the Agreement.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 1.10.2015.