

Emergency autonomous trade measures for Tunisia

2015/0218(COD) - 25/02/2016 - Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 475 votes to 126, with 35 abstentions, **amendments** to the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the introduction of emergency autonomous trade measures for the Republic of Tunisia.

The **matter was referred back to committee**. The vote has been postponed to a later sitting.

To recall, the Commission proposed to offer a temporary, zero-duty tariff quota of 35 000 tonnes per year (70 000 tonnes in total) for exports of olive oil from Tunisia to the EU, in the form of an autonomous trade measure, and to do this without increasing the overall volume of imports. This tariff-rate quota will be available for a period of two years, from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2017, and will enter into force as soon as the current duty-free tariff quota of 56 700 tonnes laid down in the EU-Tunisia association agreement has been exhausted.

The emergency autonomous trade measures established by this Regulation are intended to alleviate the difficult economic situation, which Tunisia is currently facing, due to the terrorist attacks. Those measures should therefore be **limited in time and be without prejudice to negotiations between the Union and Tunisia on the establishment of a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA)**.

Preferential arrangements: Parliament considered that **an annual duty free import tariff quota of 35 000 tons for calendar years 2016 and 2017** should be opened for imports into the Union of untreated olive oil originating in Tunisia where such virgin olive oil is wholly obtained in Tunisia and transported directly from Tunisia to the Union.

Mid-term review: Parliament called on the Commission to conduct **an assessment of the impact of this Regulation on the Union olive oil market at mid-term** following its entry into force and present the conclusions of that assessment to the European Parliament and to the Council. If it is found that the Union olive oil market is affected by the provisions of this Regulation, the Commission shall be empowered to adopt an implementing act in order to introduce **corrective measures** aiming to restore the situation on that market.

It should be noted that plenary turned down a proposal to reject the Commission's proposal which was presented by more than 40 members, by 114 votes to 528 with 9 abstentions.