EU/Afghanistan Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development

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PURPOSE: to conclude, on behalf of the European Union, the Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development between the European Union and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

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

BACKGROUND: in July 2011, the Foreign Affairs Council1 expressed its willingness to negotiate an agreement with Afghanistan that would reflect its long-term commitment to the country's development. In November 2011, the Council adopted a Decision authorising the Commission and the High Representative to negotiate a Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development (CAPD) with Afghanistan

After three rounds of negotiations that went on until November 2012, talks were resumed in 2015, with the new Afghan Government. The fourth and final round of negotiations took place in Brussels on 29 April 2015 and was concluded successfully. The two sides **initialled the Agreement in Kabul on 2 July 2015.**

CONTENT: the proposal requires the Council to adopt a decision to approve the Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development between the European Union and Afghanistan.

The Agreement is the **first contractual relationship between the European Union and Afghanistan** and underpins the EU's commitment to supporting Afghanistan's future development during its 'decade of transformation' agreed at the Bonn conference in 2011. The two parties are committed to pursuing and extending their cooperation, to strengthening existing links and to establishing a close and lasting relationship based on reciprocity and mutual interests.

The Agreement includes **provisions on political dialogue and on cooperation** in a broad range of areas. It draws on the **EU's standard political clauses on human rights** and the International Criminal Court, and includes commitments related to the rights of **women and children**. It reiterates the willingness of the parties to address shared concerns, including:

- the fight against terrorism, international crime and illegal trafficking;
- non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, disarmament and nuclear security;
- weapons of mass destruction (WMD);
- small arms and light weapons (SALW) ; and
- counter-narcotics.

The provisions on cooperation cover the following sectors:

- infrastructure development,
- energy,
- transport,
- health,
- natural resources,

- tax,
- education and culture,
- employment and social affairs,
- science and technology, and
- environment and climate change.

The Agreement also emphasises the importance of **legal cooperation** and affirms the parties' commitment to fighting organised crime, money laundering and corruption.