International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives (2015)

2017/0107(NLE) - 27/09/2016 - Document attached to the procedure

PURPOSE: signature, on behalf of the European Union, and provisional application of the International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives, 2015.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

BACKGROUND: the new International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives was adopted on 9 October 2015 by the representatives of 24 Member States of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and two intergovernmental organisations during the United Nations Conference for the negotiation of an agreement. It is intended to succeed the International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives, 2005.

In order to avoid an interruption in the application of the rules laid down in the 2005 International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives, provision should be made for:

- the Union to provisionally apply the Agreement if the procedure for its conclusion by the Union has not been completed before 1 January 2017 ;

- the Union may provisionally apply the Agreement if the requirements for its final or provisional entry into force have not been met by 31 December 2016.

CONTENT: under the draft Council Decision, the signature, on behalf of the Union, of the International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives, 2015 would be authorised, subject to its conclusion.

The objectives of the Agreement seek to:

- seek to achieve uniformity in national and international legislation relating to the physico-chemical and organoleptic characteristics of olive oils, olive pomace oils and table olives in order to prevent any obstacle to trade;
- conduct activities in the area of physico-chemical and organoleptic testing in order to add to the knowledge of the composition and quality characteristics of olive products, with a view to consolidating international standards and so enabling: (i) product quality control; (ii) international trade and its development; (iii) protection of consumer rights; (iv) prevention of fraudulent and misleading practices and adulteration;
- strengthen the role of the International Olive Council as a forum of excellence for the international scientific community in the area of olives and olive oil;
- coordinate studies and research on the nutritional qualities and other intrinsic properties of olive oil and table olives;
- facilitate the exchange of information on international trade flows;
- promote technical cooperation and research and development in the olive sector by encouraging the cooperation of public or private bodies and/or entities, whether national or international;
- conduct activities for the identification, preservation and utilization of the gene sources of olive trees;

- study the interaction between olive growing and the environment, particularly with a view to promoting environmental conservation and sustainable production, and to ensure the integrated and sustainable development of the sector;
- foster the transfer of technology through training activities in the fields connected with the olive sector by organizing international, regional and national activities;
- promote the protection of geographical indications of olive products in compliance with the corresponding international agreements to which a member may be a party;
- encourage the exchange of information and experience in the phytosanitary field on olive growing ;
- enhance the role of the International Olive Council as a world documentation and information centre about the olive tree and its products and as a meeting point for all the operators in the sector;
- promote the consumption of olive products, the expansion of international trade of olive oil and table olives and information in relation to the trade standards of the International Olive Council;
- support international and regional activities encouraging the dissemination of generic scientific information on the nutritional, health and other properties of olive oil and table olives with a view to improving consumer information;
- examine the world balances for olive oil, olive pomace oils and table olives, undertake studies and propose appropriate measures;
- disseminate economic data and analyses on olive oil and table olives and provide members with the indicators necessary to contribute to the smooth functioning of the olive products markets;
- disseminate and use the results of research and development programmes linked to olive growing and study their applicability in increasing production efficiency.