EU-Thailand Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

2022/0252(NLE) - 23/08/2022 - Preparatory document

PURPOSE: to conclude, on behalf of the European Union, of the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Partnership and Cooperation between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Kingdom of Thailand, 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: in November 2004, the Council authorised the Commission to negotiate individual Framework Agreements on Partnership and Cooperation (PCA) with Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei.

The PCA with Thailand was first initialled in March 2013 but it signature was put hold in 2014 following the military take-over in the country. In light of political normalisation in Thailand, in October 2019, the Council considered it appropriate for the EU to take steps towards broadening its engagement with Thailand by preparing for the timely signature of the PCA.

The negotiations on the Agreement were resumed on 13 July 2021 and were concluded following the 7th round on 11 June 2022.

CONTENT: this draft Council Decision seeks to approve, on behalf of the Union, the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Partnership and Cooperation between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Kingdom of Thailand, of the other part.

The PCA broadens considerably the scope for mutual engagement in several areas, including justice and home affairs as well as dialogue in the economic and trade domain. The Agreement strengthens the cooperation across a wide spectrum of policy fields, including human rights, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, counter-terrorism, the fight against corruption and organised crime, trade, migration, the environment, energy, climate change, transport, science and technology, employment and social affairs, education, agriculture, culture, etc.

It also includes provisions to protect the EU’s financial interests.

On a political note, the PCA with Thailand marks an important step towards strengthening the EU’s role in South-East Asia, based on shared universal values such as democracy and human rights.

The Agreement establishes a Joint Committee that will monitor the development of the bilateral relationship between the Parties. It also includes a non-execution clause that provides for the possibility of suspending the application of the Agreement in case of violation of essential elements.