EC/Israel agreement: scientific and technical cooperation agreement

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1. Category of referral: Council Decision 2. Expected date of referral: expected for 1995 (first part) 3. Committee responsible: ENER 4. Previous Community legislation: No previous general agreement, but cooperation in specific areas (see point 10) 5. Previous position of EP: One part of the 4th Framework Programme on Research and Development (R&D) for the EU is cooperation in the field of R&D. This scientific and technological cooperation in Europe is also extended to other scientific and technological cooperation frameworks in Europe outside the EU. The aim of this activity is to optimize research in Europe through appropriate cooperation, taking into account national efforts, both those of Member-States and those of EFTA-countries, as well as those of COST, EUREKA, and other European organizations. The objective of this cooperation is to promote the interest of the Community and to optimize the efforts made in the area of Research, Technological Development and Demonstration (RTD), by facilitating access to sources of science and technology of Third Countries. This approach was highly welcomed by the EP and the Council in its codecision on the Framework Programme. 6. Situation in the Member States (MS): All MS can participate via the various RTD-programmes of the EU in cooperation projects with Israeli partners. 7. Content of the planned legislation: Negotiations will start in November 1994; planned legislation could be in line with other agreements (see for example: Australia agreement, see point 10). 8. Legal Basis envisaged by the Commission: 130m in conjunction with Article 228(2) and 228(3). 9. Documentation and sources: EU 4th Framework Programme, COM(93) 0276, LINKOHR-Report on 4th Framework Programme, Doc. A3-0360/93, Part A and Doc. A3-0063/94, Council Decision of 26.4.1994, OJ L 126 of 18.5.1994, and L 115 of 6.5.1994, pp. 31-35. 10. Background information: The Research Council adopted on 24 September 1994 a Decision authorizing the Commission to negotiate a scientific and technical cooperation agreement between the Community and the State of Israel. That Decision supplements that on the negotiation of an association agreement. The objective is to associate Israel with the RTD programmes (except the nuclear programmes) adopted for the implementation of the Community R&D Framework Programme. As usual with this type of agreement, Israel's contribution to the budget for the programmes will be in the proportion that its GNP bears to the Community's. In addition, the agreement will provide for reciprocity in the opening of Israel's research activities equivalent to those of the Fourth Framework Programme to bodies established within the European Union. Negotiations with Israel will start in November 1994; signature of the final agreement is expected in mid-1995. The R&D cooperation with Israel follows the general objectives concerning R&D cooperation with third countries and international organizations: to add value to the Community's and the Member States' RTD activities and other Community policies by means of selective, mutually advantageous cooperation with third countries and international organizations (Research Council of 29.9.1994). Israel should participate in all EU-RTD-Programmes within the 4th Framework Programme (without nuclear research, EURATOM). The EU is extremely interested to support with this cooperation the ongoing peace process in the Middle East and to benefit from the high and exceptional RTD-potential in Israel. Cooperation EU-Israel in the field of Science and Technology was in line with the general Framework agreement on Cooperation from 1975. Israeli R&D institutions and scientists had in the past opportunities to cooperate with the EU: - in the multilateral R&D programme "Sciences et Technologies du Vivant pour Pays en Développement" (STD, until 1991) - within the Community programme "International Scientific Cooperation" (R&D Cooperation on a bilateral basis between laboratories in the EU and third Countries in Latin America, Asia and the Mediterranean Region). A cooperation agreement with Israel could be in line with the Australia-Agreement concerning scientific and technical cooperation (see: Council Decision of 27.6.1994, OJ L 188 /17 of 1994): - research in areas of common interests - mutual benefits through R&D-cooperation - participation in R&D projects - shared use of R&D facilities - visits and exchange of scientists - exchange on information such as practices, laws, regulations and programmes.