EC/Morocco agreement: scientific and technological cooperation

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PURPOSE : to conclude a scientific and technological co-operation agreement with Morocco. PROPOSED ACT : Council Decision. CONTENT : the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an association between the EU and Morocco entered into force on 1 March 2000. Article 47 of this Agreement identifies scientific and technological cooperation as an area of particular interest and potential, and provides, amongst other things, for the establishment of permanent links between the parties' scientific communities. In the context of the implementation of an ambitious international dimension for the European Research Area, the Commission underlined the need to strengthen relations with the Mediterranean partner countries in the fields of science, technology and innovation in order to promote the socio-economic progress of the whole Euro-Mediterranean area. The main objective is to stimulate cooperation between the European Community and Morocco in the areas covered by the RTD framework programmes: - the agreement is designed to enable the Community and Morocco to profit, on the basis of the principle of mutual benefit, from the scientific and technical progress achieved under their respective research programmes, by means of participation by the Moroccan scientific community and Moroccan industry in Community research projects and independent participation, without funding, by bodies established in the Community in Moroccan projects; - the beneficiaries in the EC and Morocco will be the scientific communities, industry and the general public, thanks to the direct and indirect effects of cooperation. More specifically, this Agreement will enable legal entities of the Kingdom of Morocco to participate in all the indirect activities of the specific programmes SP1 and SP2 of the 6th Framework Programme in accordance with the participation rules decided upon by the Council and the European Parliament. The Agreement is based on the following principles: - mutual benefit; - non-discrimination; - effective protection of intellectual property; - equitable sharing of intellectual property rights. It also provides for the organisation and extension of scientific and technological cooperation between the European Union and Morocco through appropriate ways and means. The coordination and promotion of the activities covered by this agreement will be the responsibility of the EC-Morocco Joint Scientific and Technical Cooperation Committee composed of representatives of both parties. This Joint Committee will monitor the implementation and evaluate the impact of the agreement, and propose any appropriate measure aimed at improving and developing scientific and technological cooperation. Moreover, the dissemination and the utilisation of the information and the management, allocation and exercise of intellectual property rights arising from the joint research carried out under the Agreement will be subject to the conditions set out in Annex II to the Agreement ("Intellectual property rights"), which is an integral part of the Agreement. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS : - relevant budget headings : the costs associated with the activities of monitoring and implementing the agreement will be charged to the specific budget headings of the programmes under the Community RTD framework programme (Chapter B6-6013); -total cost : EUR 100 000/year; - duration : the agreement will be concluded for an unlimited period. It may be terminated at any time by either party upon six months' written notice; - type of expenditure : 100% financing of missions to Morocco by Commission officials; organisation of workshops, seminars and meetings in Europe and Morocco.