EC/ASEAN: extension of the EC/ASEAN cooperation agreement to Vietnam

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The Committee is recommending to Parliament, in line with the rapporteur Mr HINDLEY (PSE,UK), the endorsement of the extension to Vietnam of the Cooperation Agreement between the European Community and the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei and, since 1995, Vietnam). The extended EC-ASEAN agreement will be applied to Vietnam in parallel with the bilateral Cooperation Framework Agreement concluded between the EC and Vietnam in 1995. The bilateral agreement is more modern and complete and, for that matter, takes precedence, in case of conflict, over the provisions of the EC-ASEAN agreement. In particular, the former contains a human rights clause which permits the suspension of the agreement in case of serious humans rights violations. The implementation of the human rights clause is, according to the rapporteur, extremely important not only in what concerns Vietnam, but also in the perspective of future treaties with other ASEAN member states which will have to include such a clause.