

EC/Jordan agreement: Euro-Mediterranean association agreement

1997/0291(AVC) - 29/10/1997 - Legislative proposal

OBJECTIVE: conclusion of a Euro-Mediterranean Agreement between the Community and Jordan.

SUBSTANCE: The objective of the draft Agreement, initialled on 16 April 1997, is to establish an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and Jordan, of the other part. It will replace the cooperation agreement and the agreement governing ECSC products signed in 1977, which are still in force. General principle and duration: the Agreement will be concluded for an unlimited period and will consolidate the existing ties between Europe and Jordan, creating a relationship based on reciprocity, partnership and joint development. Its main objective is gradually to create a free-trade area and establish a new partnership. Democracy clause: respect for democratic principles and human rights constitute an essential element of the Agreement. Main provisions: - establishing of a regular political dialogue on bilateral and international issues of common interest; - establishing of a free-trade area: in accordance with WTO rules, a free-trade area between the Community and Jordan will be created gradually over a period of no more than 12 years. Jordan, which up to now has granted the Community no concessions, will progressively eliminate trade barriers affecting the Community's industrial exports and will apply preferential duties to the Community's agricultural exports. The preferential arrangements currently applied by the Community (free market access for Jordanian industrial exports, and concessions on Jordanian agricultural exports) are confirmed, and will be further improved by means of additional concessions; - specific provisions on agricultural trade: the Agreement contains a special clause under which the parties undertake to examine the agricultural trade situation from 2002 with a view to establishing more reciprocal concessions and gradually liberalizing trade in this sector; - services: the Agreement contains provisions anticipating future arrangements in the framework of Jordanian membership of the WTO, foreseeing limited reciprocal liberalization of the right of establishment and a commitment to allow progressively the supply of services; - economic cooperation: existing cooperation will be strengthened on as wide a basis as possible in all areas of interest to the parties; - financial cooperation: financial cooperation will be established in accordance with appropriate procedures and resources; - other forms of cooperation: the Agreement makes provision for cooperation in the economic, scientific, technological, cultural, audiovisual, environmental and vocational training fields, etc., with a view to strengthening mutual links. It also attaches special importance to regional cooperation. A major section is devoted to social cooperation, with a view to improving living and working conditions for Jordanian and Community nationals legally resident in each other's territory. The Agreement also provides for cooperation in combating illegal immigration. At institutional level, the Agreement makes provision for the establishing of an Association Council and an Association Committee with decision-making powers. Cooperation between the European Parliament and the Jordanian Parliament will also be encouraged.