# EC/Switzerland agreement: mutual recognition to conformity assesment MRA

1999/0109(AVC) - 04/05/1999 - Initial legislative proposal

PURPOSE: conclusion of an agreement with Switzerland on the mutual recognition of conformity assessment. CONTENT: In the context of the overall package of liberalisation agreements negotiated with Switzerland and initialled by the parties on 26.02.1999, the Commission is proposing an agreement in the area of mutual recognition of conformity assessment. The approach advocated by the Commission is a 'global' one integrating in each of the 7 agreements a common clause regarding simultaneous entry into force (this is to avoid that the referendum process in Switzerland applicable to the approval of these agreements does not give rise to a partial application of the agreements). The Agreement provides for the reciprocal acceptance of testing, certification and approval of products by each Party against the regulatory requirements of the other Party or those of the same Party where deemed equivalent. Products can therefore be certified by recognised Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) in the EU and placed on the Swiss market without having to undergo any further approval procedures, and vice versa. The MRA thus reduces the costs and time associated with obtaining product approvals, and will facilitate market access. The sectors covered by the Agreement are machinery, personal protective equipment, toys, medical devices, gas appliances and boilers, pressure vessels, telecommunications terminal equipment, equipment and systems intended for use in potentially explosive atmospheres (ATEX), electrical equipment and electromagnetic compatibility, construction plant and equipment, measuring instruments, motor vehicles, agricultural and forestry tractors, good laboratory practice (GLP) for chemicals and medicinal products (GMP) inspection and batch certification. The Commission considers that the initialled MRA fully meets the Council's negotiating directives and mandate, and will bring benefits for Community producers and exporters, and other regulatory benefits. As regards institutional aspects, provision is made for the establishment of a committee to ensure good implementation and management of the Agreement.