EC/Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

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OBJECTIVE: conclusion of a partnership and cooperation agreement between the European Communities and their Member States and Russia. COMMUNITY MEASURE: Council and Commission Decision 97 /800/ECSC, EC, Euratom on the conclusion of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Russian Federation, of the other part. SUBSTANCE: This is a mixed agreement covering areas of responsibility both of the Community and of the Member States. - Duration of the Agreement: it has been concluded for an initial period of 10 years and will be automatically renewed year by year, provided there is no objection by either side. - Democracy clause: the Agreement is based on respect for human rights and democratic principles, and on the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris. - Most-favoured-nation clause: the Agreement makes provision for most-favoured-nation treatment, though not for the first five years in relation to a certain number of advantages specified in the Agreement (this transitional period may be extended by mutual consent). - The Agreement establishes a political dialogue between the parties, relating primarily to the strengthening of economic and political ties between the European Union and Russia and to international issues. - Areas of cooperation: The Agreement makes provision for the future establishing of a free-trade area (in 1998 the parties will examine whether circumstances allow the beginning of negotiations for this purpose) and consolidates cooperation in the following fields: trade in goods (including nuclear materials, with provision for future arrangements in this field); conditions for the employment of nationals of both parties; establishment and operation of companies; cross-border supply of services; payments and capital; competition; protection of intellectual, industrial and commercial property; legislative cooperation; economic and industrial cooperation (development of business links, investment promotion and protection, public procurement); cultural cooperation; cooperation in science and technology, energy, transport, telecommunications, etc.; cooperation in the field of education and training; cooperation on the environment; cooperation in the field of justice and internal affairs (drugs, money laundering, illegal activities, corruption); financial cooperation, in the form of non-refundable assistance under the TACIS programme. - The Agreement lays down the institutional framework for its implementation, providing - as part of the political dialogue - for annual meetings at the highest level (EU-Russia Summit), meetings at ministerial level (Cooperation Council), meetings of senior officials (Cooperation Committee) and meetings at parliamentary level (Parliamentary Cooperation Committee bringing together the European Parliament and the Duma). ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE AGREEMENT: the Agreement signed by the parties on 24 June 1994 enters into force on 1 December 1997.