EC/Lao agreement: cooperation agreement

1997/0062(CNS) - 10/11/1997 - Final act

OBJECTIVE: conclusion of a Cooperation Agreement between the Community and the Lao People's Democratic Republic. COMMUNITY MEASURE: Council Decision 97/810/EC concerning the conclusion of the Cooperation Agreement between the European Community and the Lao People's Democratic Republic. SUBSTANCE: The agreement is based on respect for human rights and democratic principles. Its main objective is to strengthen cooperation between the parties by developing lasting trade and economic relations and establishing further development cooperation. It provides for the reciprocal application of the most-favoured-nation clause for trade in goods (except for the advantages granted under customs unions, free trade areas, trade arrangements with neighbouring countries or obligations under international agreements). The actions will seek to assist the most vulnerable sections of the population. The agreement provides for four main types of cooperation: 1) trade cooperation: development and diversification of trade, elimination of barriers to trade, in particular non-tariff barriers); 2) development cooperation: action against poverty, local development and job creation, action to combat AIDS, development of education, action on drug addiction, protection of the most vulnerable sections of the population, mine clearance, etc.; 3) economic cooperation: development of the economic environment, contacts between economic operators, strengthening investment and the transfer of technology, promotion of international standards in trade, development of a favourable business climate, etc.; 4) other cooperation: environment (development of appropriate legislation for sustainable development, development of non-polluting sources of energy, strengthening of sustainable methods of forest management, etc.), agriculture (in particular, diversification of agricultural exports), energy, regional cooperation (promotion of intraregional trade), science and technology (implementation of regional, Europe-South-East Asia research projects), chemical drug precursors (promotion of alternative crops), money laundering, development of transport and telecommunications infrastructures, information, communication and culture (in particular cooperation in the field of the media, exchanges to improve cultural understanding, conservation of the cultural heritage). With regard to institutional aspects the agreement establishes a joint committee composed of representatives of sufficient seniority of both parties meeting every two years to establish the priorities of the agreement and to ensure its proper implementation. The agreement has a future developments clause. TERM OF THE AGREEMENT: the initial period of the Agreement is five years and it can then be tacitly renewed. ENTRY INTO FORCE: 01.12.1997.