

EC/Tajikistan Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

2004/0176(AVC) - 20/04/2005 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to conclude a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Community and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Tajikistan, of the other part.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision.

CONTENT: to recall, relations between Tajikistan and the EC are currently governed by the trade and cooperation agreement signed with the former Soviet Union on 18 December 1989 (which entered into force on 1 April 1990), as endorsed by the Republic of Tajikistan in an exchange of letters on 4 February 1994.

The Council adopted its negotiating directives on 5 October 1992, amending them on 10 October 2003, and the Commission formally launched the negotiations for a partnership and cooperation agreement in November 2003. After the second round of negotiations, the text of the agreement was initiated by the negotiators of the Commission and the Government of Tajikistan in Brussels on 16 December 2003.

The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement is a mixed agreement covering some matters for which the European Communities are competent and others for which the Member States are competent. It is concluded for an initial period of ten years.

The Agreement includes a clause permitting its unilateral suspension if an essential element is violated (i. e. respect for democracy, human rights and the principles of a market economy).

The Agreement establishes institutional machinery for its implementation in the form of a Cooperation Council, a Cooperation Committee and a Parliamentary Committee.

Pending the entry into force of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, it is proposed that the European Communities and Tajikistan conclude an interim agreement mainly concerning trade, cooperation and the institutional framework, as provided for in Article 101 of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.

Having completed the negotiating process, the Commission now proposes that the Council approve the results of the negotiations and initiate the procedures for the signing and conclusion of this agreement.

The proposed Partnership and Cooperation Agreement will help consolidate and strengthen the EU's political and economic and trade presence in Tajikistan and Central Asia in general. It also aims to promote economic growth and support sustainable development, action against poverty and stability in Tajikistan and Central Asia. In addition, it will provide a framework for future EU cooperation with Tajikistan.

Though modelled on other partnership and cooperation agreements, the EU Tajikistan agreement is the first to include clauses on action against terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. It will be concluded for a period of 10 years, automatically renewable from year to year thereafter. The Agreement will open the way for deeper relations in a great number of fields, based on reciprocity and partnership. The Agreement is founded on respect for the essential principles of democracy, human rights and the rule of

law, and on the promotion of sustainable development and the link between different aid instruments (the link between relief, rehabilitation and development).

The proposed Agreement has three main components as well as general and institutional provisions to sustain those components:

1) Political dialogue: the EU and Tajikistan will pursue a regular political dialogue. They will in particular cooperate against terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and trafficking, including the drugs trade;

2) Cooperation: the Agreement includes provisions in the area of social and economic cooperation, finance and trade, science, information society and technologies, culture, education and audio-visual, state reform and public administration, social and legislative cooperation. The Agreement also provides for commitments and cooperation in re-admission, in the control of illegal immigration, and in combating drugs and organized crime. The Agreement also provides for cooperation on democracy and human rights. A separate protocol covers mutual assistance in customs matters;

3) Trade: the Agreement also includes provisions on trade in goods and services and on trade and investment.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: This agreement has no impact on the budget.