

2254. Council - GENERAL AFFAIRS

Press Release: Luxembourg (10-04-2000) - Press: 101 - Nr: 7533/00

RELATIONS WITH TURKEY

The Council approved the Community position to be taken at the 39th session of the EU-Turkey Association Council in Luxembourg on 11 April 2000.

The EU position also covered the following draft Decisions to be taken by the Association Council concerning:

- the establishment of eight Association Committee subcommittees, this in the context of Turkey's candidature for accession to the EU and with the aim of monitoring progress towards the approximation of legislation and to accompany both the EU pre-accession strategy and the national Turkish action programme;
- the opening of negotiations aimed at the liberalisation of services and the mutual opening of procurement markets; these negotiations will start shortly.
- the repeal of Decision No 4/72 on the definition of the concept of "originating products" from Turkey, this Decision now being obsolete since Protocol 3 to Decision No 1/98 of the EC-Turkey Association Council of 25 February 1998 on the trade regime for agricultural products laid down the rules of origin to be applied henceforth to trade in agricultural products between Turkey and the Community.

Association with Hungary

The Council agreed on behalf of the EU to the Decision regarding the transition to the second stage of the Association pursuant to Article 6 of the Europe Agreement to be adopted by the EU-Hungary Association Council by written procedure.

It is recalled that Article 6 of the EU-Hungary Europe Agreement provides for a transition period of a maximum duration of ten years, divided into two successive stages, each in principle lasting five years. The Agreement entered into force on 1 February 1994, which means that the first stage ended on 31 January 1999.

Article 6 also provides for the Association Council to decide the transition to the second stage in the light of the application of the Agreement and "Hungary's accomplishments in the process leading to a market economy system".

Custom union with Turkey

The Council adopted a Regulation regarding the implementation of measures to intensify the EC-Turkey custom union.

The aim of the regulation is to assist Turkey in preparing for accession by establishing closer links with the European Union in all fields connected with the intensification of the custom union. These measures provide for financial support of cooperation projects and operations in several areas within the custom union with a financial reference amount of 15 MEURO for the implementation of this Regulation for the period 2000-2002.