

Procedure file

Basic information		
AVC - Assent procedure (historic)	1995/0132(AVC)	Procedure completed
EC/Tunisia Euro-Mediterranean association agreement See also 2004/0265(AVC) See also 2009/0174(NLE) See also 2014/0118(NLE) See also 2018/0310(NLE)		
Subject 6.40.05.02 Relations with the countries of the Great Maghreb and Maghreb		
Geographical area Tunisia		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	AFET Foreign Affairs, Security and Defense Policy	FE CALIGARIS Luigi	22/06/1995
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development		
	BUDG Budgets	FE DI PRIMA Pietro Antonio	23/06/1995
	ENER Research, Technological Development and Energy		
	RELA External Economic Relations	PSE BERÈS Pervenche	21/06/1995
	TRAN Transport and Tourism	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	DEVE Development and Cooperation	UPE BALDINI Valerio	19/07/1995
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	General Affairs	2066	26/01/1998
	General Affairs	1871	02/10/1995
	General Affairs	1864	17/07/1995
	General Affairs	1844	10/04/1995
	General Affairs	1830	06/03/1995
	General Affairs	1827	06/02/1995
	General Affairs	1825	23/01/1995

Key events			
21/12/1994	Additional information		Summary
23/01/1995	Debate in Council	1825	
06/02/1995	Debate in Council	1827	
06/03/1995	Debate in Council	1830	
10/04/1995	Debate in Council	1844	Summary
31/05/1995	Initial legislative proposal published	COM(1995)0235	
06/07/1995	Legislative proposal published	07761/1995	Summary
18/09/1995	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
21/11/1995	Vote in committee		Summary
21/11/1995	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A4-0298/1995	
13/12/1995	Debate in Parliament		Summary
14/12/1995	Decision by Parliament	T4-0624/1995	Summary
26/01/1998	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		
26/01/1998	End of procedure in Parliament		
30/03/1998	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1995/0132(AVC)
Procedure type	AVC - Assent procedure (historic)
Procedure subtype	International agreement
	See also 2004/0265(AVC) See also 2009/0174(NLE) See also 2014/0118(NLE) See also 2018/0310(NLE)
Legal basis	ECSC Treaty C 095; EC before Amsterdam E 238; EC before Amsterdam E 228-p2
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/4/06969

Documentation gateway					
Initial legislative proposal		COM(1995)0235	31/05/1995	EC	
Legislative proposal		07761/1995	06/07/1995	CSL	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A4-0298/1995 OJ C 017 22.01.1996, p. 0005	21/11/1995	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T4-0624/1995 OJ C 017 22.01.1996, p.	14/12/1995	EP	Summary

Additional information

European Commission

[EUR-Lex](#)

Final act

[Decision 1998/238](#)[OJ L 097 30.03.1998, p. 0001](#) Summary

EC/Tunisia Euro-Mediterranean association agreement

1. Category of referral Council Decision. 2. Expected date of referral Possibly first half of 1995, but a delay beyond that limit cannot be excluded. 3. Committee responsible Development and Cooperation. Opinions: Possibly REX and Foreign Affairs. 4. Previous community legislation Cooperation Agreement between the European Economic Community and the Republic of Tunisia. The Agreement was signed on 25 April 1976. It entered into force on 1 October 1978 for an unlimited period with effect from 1 January 1979. 5. Previous position of the EP In its resolution of 26 May 1993 on relations between the European Community and the Maghreb, the European Parliament came out clearly in favour of stepping up cooperation between the Community and the Maghreb and approved the new concept of partnership proposed by the Commission for its revised cooperation policy. The EP considered that in reviewing its development policy the Community should have as one of its priorities the countries of the Mediterranean region, particularly the Maghreb countries, although this should not be at the expense of regions to the south of the area. It believes that there is a vital need to develop cultural exchanges on both sides of the Mediterranean and considers it vital that the Maghreb countries embark upon a genuine process of democratisation based on participation and appreciation of the concerns and aspirations of civil society, respect for the fundamental rights of the individual, equality for men and women, an immediate end to the practice of torture and respect for minority languages and cultures. The EP welcomed the establishment of the Maghreb Arab Union (AMU) and reaffirmed the importance of regional integration in the Maghreb. On the question of political dialogue, Parliament called for a meeting of Heads of State of the Twelve and of the Maghreb and for the establishment of an institutional framework going beyond the purely governmental sphere, to bring together the various partners existing in society. Finally, the EP supported the idea of a free-trade area between the European Community and the Maghreb but maintained that, by itself, this would not be sufficient to impart the impetus and credibility required in order to link the Maghreb firmly to Europe. 6. Situation in the Member States Italy and Spain seem to have some difficulty accepting a continuation of the present arrangement allowing Tunisia access to the EU market for a quantity of 60.000 tonnes of olive oil per year. 7. Content of the planned legislation The new agreement, the name of which remains to be decided, will replace the previous agreement from 1976 and provide for the following: - political dialogue; - the gradual creation of a free trade area; - social and cultural cooperation; - the widest possible economic cooperation; - financial cooperation. It had originally been planned to conclude the negotiations before the end of 1994, but at present this seems unlikely. The two main points still giving rise to difficulties are: a. Access to the European market for Tunisian agricultural products. Tunisia, whose departure position concerning olive oil was to call for a definitive regime guaranteeing an outlet for 60 000 tonnes annually, has been promised an offer of compromise that it will be able to accept, one that maintains the traditional trade flows. The two parties hope to reach an overall compromise on the agricultural section taking into account the Tunisian concern to improve access for certain products (new potatoes, citrus fruits and tomato paste) and, in addition, not to lose the advantages that it has so far traditionally enjoyed under the specific access regime to the French market. A list of new products would be proposed under preferential access (cut flowers, asparagus, etc.). Finally, Tunisia is said to be hoping that the principle of establishing free trade in agricultural goods will be included in the agreement even if it agrees with the Commission that this cannot be achieved in the medium term. b. Tariff dismantling by Tunisia. Tunisia reportedly accepts the Commission proposal to limit the transition period to 12 years pending adjustments that will allow a less accelerated rate of opening, the insertion of safeguard clauses and the exclusion of certain products (negative list) from liberalisation. To accompany this, it is hoping for a substantial financial effort from the European Union in order to ensure that its economy is brought into line and in order to strengthen support to SMEs and, more generally, to increase to promotional means (investments, corporate partnerships, etc.) required within this framework. 8. Legal basis envisaged by the European Commission Not yet known. The likely basis will be Articles 113, 238, 228 and possibly Articles 130u and 130w. 9. Documentation and sources a. Present legislation Council Regulation (EEC) Nr 2212/78 of 26 September 1978 concerning the conclusion of the Cooperation Agreement between the European Economic Community and the Republic of Tunisia OJ L265, 27.9.1978 p. 1. b. Future legislation Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: The future of relations between the Community and the Maghreb. Brussels 30 April 1992, SEC(92) 401 final. 10. Complementary research Open. ?

EC/Tunisia Euro-Mediterranean association agreement

There was general agreement on the whole of the new Agreement, apart from one problem still outstanding that the Permanent Representatives Committee was instructed to resolve at its meeting on 12 April 1995. The Commission should accordingly be able to initial the Agreement in the next few days.

EC/Tunisia Euro-Mediterranean association agreement

The proposal of the Council and the Commission concerns the conclusion of a Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and Tunisia, of the other part. The agreement replaces the cooperation agreement and the agreement on ECSC products signed in 1976, which are still in force. General principles: the agreement is concluded for an unlimited period and strengthens existing ties between the European Communities and the Member States, of the one part, and Tunisia, of the other part, by establishing relations based on reciprocity and partnership; Democracy clause: respect for democratic principles and human

rights constitutes the fundamental element of the agreement; Main elements: - regular political dialogue at all levels; - the creation of a free-trade zone: this is to be established gradually, in accordance with WTO rules, between the Community and Tunisia over a maximum period of 12 years. Tunisia, which hitherto has not granted any concessions to the Community, will gradually eliminate barriers to trade affecting the Community's exports of industrial goods and will apply preferential tariffs to its agricultural exports. The Community preferential regime currently in force (complete opening of its market to Tunisia's industrial exports and concessions for the bulk of its agricultural exports) is confirmed, but is also improved as far as agricultural products are concerned. As regards olive oil, the preferential regime has been renewed for a period of 4 years. The parties will have to reconsider the situation before deciding what regime is to apply thereafter. A specific clause stipulates that the agricultural trade situation is to be reviewed from 1 January 2000 with a view to determining new reciprocal concessions and attaining greater liberalization; - the agreement contains provisions on freedom of establishment and liberalization of services: the Association Council will be asked to make recommendations in this field. Meanwhile, the parties will consult together with the aim of ensuring completely free movement of capital. The Agreement also provides for Community competition rules to apply to Tunisian businesses; - economic cooperation: the existing economic cooperation will be stepped up on the widest possible basis in all fields of interest to both parties and will be the subject of regular dialogue; - social cooperation is provided for which exceeds the existing provisions: a regular dialogue will be initiated to implement those provisions which relate to all social topics of common interest. This dialogue will be backed up by cultural cooperation; - financial cooperation is also provided for, using appropriate arrangements and funding. An Association Council and an Association Committee with powers of decision are to be set up to implement the Agreement. Cooperation between the European Parliament and the ESC and their Tunisian counterparts will also be facilitated. ?

EC/Tunisia Euro-Mediterranean association agreement

The Committee adopted the report by Mr M Luigi CALIGARIS (UPE, I) on the partnership agreement with Tunisia, in which it recommended that Parliament give its assent (by a majority of votes cast). The Euro-Mediterranean Agreement, which is to replace the cooperation agreement of 1976 establishing an association between Tunisia and the European Communities, is the first in a long series of such agreements (Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Israel). It seeks to establish lasting relations, founded on the principles of reciprocity and partnership, between the European Communities and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Tunisia, of the other part (mixed agreement). The aim of the agreement is to establish a free-trade zone within a period of 12 years. The main elements of the agreement are as follows: * The agreement makes specific reference to the respect of human rights and political and economic freedoms. The breach of democratic principles is not expressly quoted as one of the extreme cases giving rise to protective measures. However, specific measures may be taken in the event of failure to implement the agreement. * The association agreement sets up a regular political dialogue which is aimed at improving mutual understanding and developing joint initiatives. It will help to establish lasting links and will contribute to the prosperity and stability of the region. * Finally, the programme of cooperation will include various areas of activity, namely the economic and social sectors, culture and finance. ?

EC/Tunisia Euro-Mediterranean association agreement

The rapporteur pointed out that this was the first agreement in a long series of negotiations with the countries to the south of the Mediterranean. It was also consistent with the strategy approved in Barcelona to provide a framework for the bilateral agreements in the context of joint action. In that respect, this agreement could be seen as testing the waters for the Union's desire to give concrete expression to its own political decision taken in Barcelona through significant, operational initiatives for the countries south of the Mediterranean. Supporting this open approach to the innovative agreement with Tunisia, Commissioner MARIN summarised the three major issues in the political and security, economic and financial, and social and human fields. He added that the financial section envisaged adequate resources to help Tunisia make all of the efforts required to reform its economy, without neglecting social development, with a view to the creation of a free trade area in 2010.

EC/Tunisia Euro-Mediterranean association agreement

In adopting the report by Mr CALIGARIS (FE, I), the European Parliament gave its assent to the conclusion of the EU-Tunisia Euro-Mediterranean Agreement. ?

EC/Tunisia Euro-Mediterranean association agreement

OBJECTIVE: to conclude a Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement between the European Communities and Tunisia. **COMMUNITY MEASURE:** Council and Commission Decision 98/238/EC, ECSC on the conclusion of a Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Tunisia, of the other part. **SUBSTANCE:** The agreement is concluded for an indefinite period. Its purpose is to strengthen the existing ties between the Communities and their Member States and Tunisia by establishing relations based on reciprocity and partnership. **Democracy clause:** respect for democratic principles and human rights is one of the fundamental elements of the agreement. **Main elements:** the agreement provides for: -the institution of regular political dialogue at all levels (including security and regional development); -the creation of a free trade area: this is to be established gradually, in accordance with WTO rules, between the Community and Tunisia over a period not exceeding 12 years from the date of entry into force of the agreement. Tunisia, which hitherto has not granted any concessions to the Community, will gradually eliminate barriers to trade affecting the Community's exports of industrial goods, and will apply preferential tariffs to its agricultural exports. The Community preferential regime currently in force (complete opening of its market to Tunisia's industrial exports and concessions for the bulk of its agricultural exports) is confirmed, but is also improved as far as agricultural products are concerned. As regards olive oil, the preferential regime has been renewed for four years. The parties will have to reconsider the situation before deciding what regime is to apply thereafter. A specific clause stipulates that the agricultural trade situation is to be reviewed from 01.01.2000 with a view to determining new reciprocal concessions and attaining greater liberalization; -provisions on freedom of establishment and freedom to provide services: the Association Council will be asked to make recommendations in this field. Meanwhile the parties will consult together with the aim of ensuring completely

free movement of capital. The agreement also provides for Community competition rules to apply to Tunisian businesses; -economic cooperation: the existing economic cooperation will be stepped up on the widest possible basis and will be the subject of regular dialogue. Intra-Maghreb integration will be a particular aim. The fields of cooperation particularly include regional cooperation, education and training, scientific cooperation, environment, industrial cooperation, promotion of investment, standardization, approximation of legislation, financial services, agriculture and fisheries, transport and energy, tourism, money laundering and combating drug use and trafficking; -social cooperation: a regular dialogue will be launched on all social topics of common interest. It will also concern cultural aspects of cooperation; -financial cooperation is also provided for, using appropriate arrangements and funding. An Association Council and an Association Committee with powers of decision are to be set up to implement the agreement. Cooperation between the European Parliament and its Tunisian counterpart will also be facilitated. ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE AGREEMENT: 01.03.1998. It will replace the cooperation agreement and the agreement on ECSC products signed in 1976.?