



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



11911/07 (Presse 170)

PRESS RELEASE

2816th Council meeting

General Affairs and External Relations

General Affairs

Brussels, 23 July 2007

President

Mr Luís AMADO

Minister of State, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Portugal

* The 2817th meeting on External Relations is the subject of a separate press release (11914/07).

P R E S S

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11911/07 (Presse 170)

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Main results of the Council

*The Council approved the signing of an agreement with the **United States** on the processing and transfer by airlines to the US department of homeland security of **passenger name record** data.*

*It approved a draft framework for a Community **marine environmental policy**, aimed at ensuring the preservation of the marine environment, the prevention of its deterioration and, where practicable, its restoration.*

*In the margins of the Council, member state representatives met for the formal opening of an **intergovernmental conference on a draft reform treaty** to amend the EU treaties, in line with a mandate set at the June meeting of the European Council. The aim is to conclude the negotiations in October and to sign the new treaty in December, so as to allow for ratification in time for the European Parliament elections in June 2009.*

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 - Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

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PARTICIPANTS

The Governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Karel DE GUCHT
Mr Didier DONFUT

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary for European Affairs, attached to the
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Bulgaria:

Mr Ivailo KALFIN

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs

Czech Republic:

Mr Alexandr VONDRA

Deputy Prime Minister with responsibility for European
Affairs

Mr Karel SCHWARZENBERG
Mr Martin ŘÍMAN

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Industry and Trade

Denmark:

Mr Michael ZILMER-JOHNS

State Secretary, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Germany:

Mr Frank-Walter STEINMEIER

Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs

Estonia:

Mr Urmas PAET

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Ireland:

Mr Dermot AHERN
Mr Dick ROCHE

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister of State with special responsibility for European
Affairs at the Department of the Taoiseach and at the
Department of Foreign Affairs

Greece:

Ms Dora BAKOYANNI

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Spain:

Mr Miguel Ángel MORATINOS

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation

France:

Mr Bernard KOUCHNER
Mr Jean-Pierre JOUYET
Mr Hervé NOVELLI

Minister for Foreign and European Affairs
Minister of State for European Affairs
Minister of State with responsibility for Enterprise and
Foreign Trade

Italy:

Mr Massimo D'ALEMA
Ms Emma BONINO

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for European Policy and International Trade

Cyprus:

Ms Erato KOZAKOU-MARCOULLIS

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Latvia:

Mr Normans PENKE

Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Lithuania:

Mr Petras VAITIEKŪNAS

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Luxembourg:

Mr Jean ASSELBORN

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister with responsibility for
Foreign Affairs and Immigration

Hungary:

Ms Kinga GÖNCZ

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Malta:

Mr Michael FRENDO

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Netherlands:

Mr Tom de BRUIJN

Permanent Representative

Austria:

Ms Ursula PLASSNIK

Federal Minister for European and International Affairs

Poland:

Ms Anna Elżbieta FOTYGA

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Portugal:

Mr Luís AMADO

Mr Manuel LOBO ANTUNES

Ministro de Estado, Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary for European Affairs, attached to the
Minister for Foreign Affairs**Romania:**

Mr Adrian CIOROIANU

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Slovenia:

Mr Dimitrij RUPEL

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Slovakia:

Mr Ján KUBIŠ

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Finland:

Mr Ilkka KANERVA

Ms Astrid THORS

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Migration and European Affairs**Sweden:**

Mr Carl BILDT

Ms Cecilia MALMSTRÖM

Mr Sten TOLGFORS

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for European Affairs
Minister for Trade**United Kingdom:**

Mr David MILIBAND

Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

Commission:

Ms Danuta HÜBNER

Member

General Secretariat of the Council:

Mr Javier SOLANA

Secretary-General/High Representative for the CFSP

ITEMS DEBATED**COHESION POLICY - REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION**

The Council took note of the presentation by commissioner Danuta Hübner of the Commission's fourth three-yearly report on progress made on economic and social cohesion in the EU. It held an exchange of views.

The report provides an update on the situation and outlook for EU cohesion policy and an analysis of its impact at national and EU level. Particular emphasis is placed on:

- an initial assessment of the preparation of programming for the 2007-13 period;
- an analysis of new challenges for cohesion policy in the future, such as demography, climate change, social exclusion and energy.

The report poses a number of questions to be debated at a "cohesion forum" to be held on 27-28 September.

EVENTS IN THE MARGINS OF THE COUNCIL

In the margins of the Council, representatives of the member states met for the formal opening of an intergovernmental conference (IGC) on a draft reform treaty to amend the EU treaties, in line with a mandate set by the European Council at its meeting on 21 and 22 June (11218/07).

As agreed by the European Council, the IGC will be conducted under the responsibility of heads of state/government, assisted by ministers of foreign affairs. The aim is to conclude the negotiations at an informal meeting of heads of state/government in Lisbon on 18 and 19 October and to sign the reform treaty in December. This will allow sufficient time for the treaty to be ratified by the member states before the European Parliament elections scheduled for June 2009.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Kosovo - EU planning team

The Council adopted a joint action amending and extending until 30 November 2007 the mandate of the planning team (EUPT Kosovo) for a possible EU mission in Kosovo in the framework of the European security and defence policy to deal with the rule of law and other areas (11411/07).

Joint action 2006/304/CFSP is thus amended in order to take into account the need to recruit and to train core personnel for the possible operation before the adoption of a new United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) to replace UNSCR 1244.

In parallel, the EU is also preparing for a possible international civilian office in Kosovo, including an EU special representative component.

International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia – Visa ban

The Council adopted a decision to implement common position 2004/293/CFSP on the renewal of measures in support of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), amending the list of persons to whom a visa ban should apply (11586/07).

Following the transfer of Mr Vlastimir Djordjevic to ICTY custody, certain individuals connected with him are removed from the list to which common position 2004/293/CFSP applies. One person is added to the list.

Common position 2004/293/CFSP provides for measures to prevent the entry into the EU of individuals engaged in activities which help persons at large to continue to evade justice for crimes for which they have been indicted by the ICTY, or who are otherwise acting in a manner which could obstruct the effective implementation of the ICTY's mandate.

The modified list contains 42 names.

Liberia - Restrictive measures

The Council adopted a regulation amending regulation 234/2004 on restrictive measures against Liberia in accordance with UN Security Council resolution 1731 (2006) (11094/07).

Under the regulation, measures on arms will not apply to supplies of non-lethal military equipment intended solely for use by Liberian police and security forces. The measures are also amended as regards the identification of competent authorities.

The regulation will apply retroactively with effect from 21 December 2006.

Restrictions on the use of conventional weapons

The Council adopted a joint action in support of the United Nations convention on prohibitions and other restrictions on the use of certain conventional weapons (CCW) (10163/07).

The CCW regulates the use in armed conflicts of certain conventional arms deemed to cause excessive suffering to combatants or indiscriminate harm to civilian populations.

Within the framework of the European security strategy, the joint action is aimed at promoting the universality of the CCW and supporting its implementation by means of:

- the organisation of regional seminars aimed at increasing the membership of the CCW;
- a financial contribution to the CCW sponsorship programme, which was adopted by the parties to the CCW to allow enhanced participation at meetings and a better understanding of the convention.

EU/Chile agreement - EU enlargement

The Council adopted a decision authorising the signing and provisional application of a protocol to the EU/Chile association agreement in order to take account of the accession to the EU of Bulgaria and Romania on 1 January 2007.

Algeria - Euro-Mediterranean agreement - EU enlargement

The Council adopted a decision authorising the conclusion of a protocol to the Euro-Mediterranean agreement with Algeria in order to take account of the accession to the EU of ten new member states in May 2004 (11763/07).

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION**Togo – Consultations under the ACP-EU agreement**

The Council approved a draft letter to be co-signed by the Commission and sent to the President of Togo, reaffirming the EU's support for the democratic transition process in Togo, in accordance with commitments entered into during consultations under article 96 of the ACP-EU partnership agreement and under the Ouagadougou global political agreement of August 2006.

The EU reaffirms its support for the democratic transition process in Togo and, in particular, for the holding of free and transparent parliamentary elections within the legal deadlines. It also welcomes the progress made by the Togolese authorities in their implementation of the commitments made during the consultations.

Since April 2004, the Togolese Republic has been subject to the procedure provided for in Article 96 of the Cotonou agreement. Development cooperation was re-established in 2007 to support the organisation of elections, justice reform and the protection of human rights.

TRADE POLICY**Anti-dumping measures on products from Japan, Pakistan and Russia**

The Council adopted regulations:

- amending regulation 397/2004 imposing a definitive anti-dumping duty on imports of cotton-type bed linen originating in Pakistan (11604/07);

- terminating the interim review of anti-dumping measures imposed by regulation 1910/2006 on imports of television camera systems originating in Japan and repealing the anti-dumping measures imposed by regulation 1910/2006 (11369/07);
- repealing the anti-dumping duty on imports of urea originating in Russia, following an expiry review pursuant to article 11(2) of regulation 384/96, and terminating the partial interim reviews pursuant to article 11(3) of such imports originating in Russia (11527/07).

Switzerland - Re-importation of products and proofs of origin

The Council adopted a decision establishing the position to be adopted by the Community within the EU-Switzerland joint committee on the re-importation of originating products and on the acceptance by the contracting parties of simplified proofs of origin made out by approved exporters (11171/07).

GENERAL AFFAIRS

Proceedings in the Council's different configurations

The Council took note of a report from the presidency on proceedings in its different configurations (11714/07).

Bulgaria and Romania - Mechanism on cooperation and verification - *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"Reaffirming its Conclusions of 17 October 2006, the Council takes careful note of the Commission Reports on Bulgaria's and Romania's progress on accompanying measures following Accession, and commends the Commission for its balanced and objective analysis. The Council appreciates that the Mechanism on Cooperation and Verification is working well and is contributing positively to the results achieved so far.

The Council notes with appreciation the progress made by the two Member States, in particular with regard to the adoption of legislation and the setting up of administrative structures. As set out in the Reports, there is, however, still further work to be done, notably with regard to implementation, in order to ensure consolidated progress.

Emphasising the commitment of Bulgaria and Romania to fully address all outstanding issues, the Council encourages the two Member States to continue sustained efforts in this regard, and to submit action plans, as referred to in the Reports, for the implementation of the necessary measures. The Council fully supports the Commission in its important work ahead and looks forward to its next reports."

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

Agreement with the United States - Passenger name record data

The Council adopted a decision approving the signing of an agreement with the United States on the processing and the transfer by air carriers to the United States department of homeland security of passenger name record data (2007 PNR Agreement) (11596/07 and 11595/07).

(See joint press release

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/misc/95438.pdf)

Accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the Europol convention

The Council adopted a decision enabling the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the Europol convention (European Police Office) and its amending protocols (11617/07).

EU programme on drug prevention and information

The Council adopted a common position on a draft decision for the establishment of a specific programme "Drug prevention and information" for the 2007-2013 period, as part of the EU's general programme "Fundamental rights and justice" (8698/07 + ADD1).

The specific programme is aimed at attaining targets identified by the EU's 2005-2012 drugs strategy and 2005-2008 and 2009-2012 drugs action plans, by supporting projects aimed at preventing drug use, including by addressing the reduction of drug-related harm and treatment methods, and taking into account the latest scientific knowledge.

The 2005-2012 drugs strategy, endorsed by the European Council in December 2004, covers all EU drug-related activities and sets specific targets. These targets include the attainment of a high level of health protection, well-being and social cohesion by preventing and reducing drug use, dependence and drug-related harm to health and society.

The Council adopted the action plan (2005-2008) as an instrument for transposing the drugs strategy into concrete actions. The ultimate aim of the action plan is to reduce significantly the prevalence of drug use among the population and to reduce the social harm and damage to health caused by the use of and trade in illicit drugs.

Adoption of the common position follows a political agreement reached by the Council at its meeting on 19 and 20 April.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

Implementation of mid-term processes on the structural funds - *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted the following conclusions on the Court of Auditors' special report No 1/2007 (10442/07), concerning the implementation of the mid-term processes of the EU's structural funds for the 2000-2006 period:

"THE COUNCIL

- WELCOMES the Court of Auditors report and NOTES the recommendations made therein.

- ACKNOWLEDGES that there is a large degree of agreement between the Court of Auditors and the Commission on the issues set out in the report.
- SHARES most of the recommendations made by the Court of Auditors;
- NOTES with regret that it was not possible to present the report before the conclusion of the negotiations on the cohesion policy legislative package, UNDERLINES that many of the proposed changes were already introduced in the Cohesion policy legislative package for the period 2007-2013 which proves their great relevance.
- SUPPORTS, in particular, the recommendation for simplification and streamlining of procedures and deadlines which would contribute to an even more efficient implementation of the cohesion policy;
- and BELIEVES that the above recommendation has already been reflected in the new procedures adopted for ongoing evaluation in 2007-2013.
- NOTES with interest the recommendation to further improve the monitoring system and ensure that appropriate indicators are monitored in the new programme period and ACKNOWLEDGES with satisfaction that the Commission will devote attention to this.
- SHARES the Court's opinion on the automatic decommitment rule; STRESSES that the budgetary allocations must take due account of general principles, rules and objectives set out in the appropriate legislation on the Funds."

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

Bulgaria and Romania - Participation in the European Economic Area

The Council adopted a decision authorising the signing and the provisional application of an agreement on the participation of Bulgaria and Romania in the European Economic Area, following their accession to the EU on 1 January 2007 (*10834/1/07 and 10833/1/07*).

The agreement is due to be signed on 25 July.

Amendments to the EEA agreement

The Council approved two draft decisions, to be adopted by the European Economic Area (EEA) joint committee, amending the EEA agreement on cooperation in the following fields:

- a decision aimed at extending cooperation to the EU's civil protection financial instrument (10574/07);
- a decision aimed at extending cooperation in telecommunication services (10434/07).

INTERNAL MARKET

Approval of motor vehicles

The Council adopted a directive establishing a framework for the approval of motor vehicles and their trailers, and of systems, components and separate technical units intended for such vehicles, accepting all amendments voted by the European Parliament in second reading (3622/07).

The directive establishes a harmonised framework containing administrative provisions and general technical requirements for the approval of new vehicles and of systems, components and separate technical units intended for those vehicles, with a view to facilitating their registration, sale and entry into service within the Community.

It also establishes provisions for the sale and entry into service of vehicle parts and equipment.

The main aim of EU legislation on the approval of vehicles is to ensure that new vehicles, components and technical units put on the market provide a high level of safety and environmental protection.

The member states will have 18 months after entry into force of the directive to adapt their national legislation in order to comply with the substantive amendments of the directive. The directive will enter into force twenty days after its publication in the EU Official Journal.

CUSTOMS UNION

Paperless environment for customs and trade

The Council adopted a common position on a draft decision aimed at promoting interoperable and accessible automated customs systems, coordinating processes and services (8520/07 +ADD1). The common position will be forwarded to the European Parliament for a second reading under the Parliament-Council co-decision procedure.

The draft decision is aimed at creating a paperless environment for customs and trade by the time the modernised EU's customs code, currently under reform, enters into force.

The system will be designed to meet the following objectives:

- facilitating import and export procedures;
- reducing compliance and administrative costs and improving clearance times;
- coordinating a common approach to the control of goods;
- helping to ensure the proper collection of customs duties and other charges;
- providing and receiving rapid and relevant information with regard to the international supply chain;
- enabling the seamless flow of data between the authorities of exporting and importing countries as well as between customs authorities and economic operators, allowing data entered in the system to be re-used.

ENVIRONMENT

Marine environmental policy*

The Council adopted a common position on a draft directive establishing a framework for Community action in the field of marine environmental policy (9388/07 + 11440/07 ADD 1). The text will be sent to the European Parliament for the second reading under the Parliament-Council co-decision procedure.

The main role of the proposed directive, which is intended to serve as the environmental pillar of a future EU maritime policy, is to establish a framework for the preservation of the marine environment, the prevention of its deterioration and, where practicable, the restoration of that environment where it has been adversely affected.

This will be done through the development and implementation by the member states of marine strategies aimed at achieving or maintaining good environmental status by 2021 at the latest.

Furthermore, the directive will contribute to coherence between, and will ensure the integration of environmental concerns into different policies, agreements and legislative measures that have an impact on the marine environment.

Cooperation at regional level will be essential to the successful implementation of the directive, which will contribute to enhancing action at international level, in particular in the context of regional seas conventions for the protection of the marine environment.

UN convention to combat desertification - *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"STRESSING the urgency of continuous, enhanced and vigorous efforts at all levels to achieve the global target of accomplishing the Millennium Development Goals and to significantly reduce the expansion of areas affected by desertification; BEARING IN MIND those European countries affected by desertification, drought and land degradation as included within annexes IV and V of the Convention; EMPHASISING the need for the UNCCD to focus on effective implementation;

UNDERLINING the European Union's strong commitment to a successful outcome of the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 8) of the UNCCD in September 2007;

RECALLING the ACP-EC joint declaration of the 21st May 2007 on combating drought and desertification in support of the reform of the UNCCD;

HIGHLIGHTING the following EU priorities, to be complemented with detailed positions on the whole range of issues to be addressed at COP 8 in due course;

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION:

1. CALLS FOR stronger mutual support among desertification, climate change and biodiversity policies, building on their great potential for synergies; REAFFIRMS that when implementing the UNCCD the most appropriate means of eradicating poverty and improving the environment are taken into account.
2. UNDERLINES the importance of the work of the Intersessional Intergovernmental Working Group (IIWG) to foster the development of the Convention and its proposal for a “Ten-Year Strategic Plan and Framework to Enhance the Implementation of the UNCCD”; STRESSES that consideration and final adoption by COP 8 of the Ten-Year Strategic Plan and the subsequent comprehensive implementation of the Plan will decisively contribute towards achieving the UNCCD objectives.
3. EMPHASIZES the importance of ensuring that the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) review takes place at COP8 and is fully consistent with the outcome of the IIWG process.
4. REGARDS it essential that COP 8 addresses the relationship between poverty and desertification by defining the specific contribution the UNCCD should make to combating poverty in the affected countries in close co-operation with other relevant global and regional processes, such as on sustainable forest management, access to water and migration.
5. EMPHASISES the need to strengthen the knowledge base of the UNCCD via the Committee of Science and Technology (CST) to facilitate more informed decision making.
6. HIGHLIGHTS the importance of rapid and full implementation of the UNCCD making progress in the promotion of an improved monitoring system and establishment of standards for conservation, management and sustainable use of drylands, as well as through the exchange of experience and best practices between existing and new networks.
7. RECOGNISES the need to review financing from existing instruments and to tap new funding sources; HOLDS THAT the effective management and financing of initiatives to combat desertification will be of vital importance.
8. STRESSES that an efficient and effective UNCCD Secretariat and a sound budget affordable and acceptable to all parties are preconditions for ensuring a sound administrative and financial management for the UNCCD.

9. BELIEVES that civil society has a key role to play in the enhanced implementation of the Strategic Plan, especially at local level, where it is most needed; in this context ENCOURAGES the improved participation of all civil society actors in the UNCCD process.
10. CONSIDERS as essential the creation or promotion of policy and institutional frameworks conducive to viable solutions for combating desertification and land degradation and mitigating the effects of drought."

Europe ministerial conference - *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council of the European Union:

1. TAKES NOTE of the communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on the Commission's cooperation with the Environment for Europe Process (EfE) after the 2007 Ministerial Conference in Belgrade ¹;
2. UNDERLINES the importance of the Environment for Europe (EfE) process to enhance the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements and national environmental policies throughout the pan-European region and advance the objectives of sustainable development; SUPPORTS the continuation of a focussed and needs driven process after the 2007 Belgrade Conference, and WILL BE LOOKING FORWARD to a mid-term evaluation of progress by the end of 2009;
3. ACKNOWLEDGES that the European Union's cooperation with Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) and South-Eastern European States will, to a great extent, be covered by the accession and pre-accession processes and by special bilateral partnerships or mechanisms; CONSIDERS that developments in EECCA States and sub-regions do not follow a common pattern and that therefore an approach based on specific needs and priorities should be taken. Furthermore, synergies should be created between the different existing instruments, processes and programmes in the region;
4. UNDERLINES that the political dimension of the EfE process should be kept open for all interested countries of the UNECE region and to pan-European issues for which the process can provide added value;

¹ 9800/07.

5. STRESSES, however, that, in the light of the considerable changes since 1991, future project-related activities and capacity building measures within the process should be based on major environmental and development needs with a concentration of efforts on those areas that are not entirely addressed by existing instruments, processes or programmes;
6. SHARES the Commission's view that overall progress made in EECCA countries after the Kiev EfE Conference with regard to environmental reform still needs to meet earlier expectations and IS OF THE VIEW that the EECCA countries should be encouraged to more actively contribute to and accelerate the reform process in the respective regions; furthermore NOTES the need for additional efforts to implement existing UNECE environmental Multilateral Environmental Agreements and to continue the drafting of Environmental Performance Reviews;
7. STRESSES that the EfE process should be continued in a leaner and more effective manner and, to this end, BELIEVES that the secretariat function for the preparation of the EfE Ministerial Conferences should be performed by the UNECE Secretariat unit already in charge of the Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP); IS OF THE VIEW that CEP should review the progress made between EfE Conferences on a regular basis and provide input to the process as needed;
8. RECALLS the Kiev Ministerial Declaration (para. 71) in which Ministers decided to "consider opportunities to relocate the EAP Task Force Secretariat functions to Eastern Europe, the Caucasus or Central Asia" and therefore CONSIDERS that concrete steps should be taken to transfer EAP Task Force activities to the Regional Environmental Centers in EECCA (EECCA RECs) to encourage more proactive action and commitment on the side of EECCA countries;
9. EXPECTS that in the next four years, focused efforts by the respective EECCA countries, the EAP Task Force and the EECCA RECs will be made to enable the RECs to operate more independently and to take over these functions from the EAP; WILL CONSIDER this matter again after a mid-term review by the UNECE-CEP two years prior to the next EfE Ministerial Conference;
10. CONSIDERS the EAP Task Force functions as an important means to support capacity building in the region – besides others contributing to the institutional strengthening of EECCA-RECs - and INVITES the Commission to further support financially the work of the Task Force, using the European Community's new funding mechanisms for a transitional period;
11. CALLS UPON all interested participants in the EfE Process to support actively, including financially, the work of both the EAP Task Force and the EECCA RECs in order to facilitate the transfer of functions between these organisations."

Stockholm convention on persistent organic pollutants - Endosulfan

The Council adopted a decision authorising the Commission to propose the inclusion of endosulfan in the list of persistent organic pollutants cited by the Stockholm Convention (11785/07).

HEALTH

Medical devices

The Council adopted a directive amending directive 90/385/EEC on active implantable medical devices, directive 93/42/EEC on medical devices and directive 98/8/EC on the placing of biocidal products on the market, accepting all amendments proposed by the European Parliament at first reading (PE-CONS 3612/07).

The draft directive is aimed at clarifying the existing legislation and at creating a basis for a general review by the Commission of legislation on medical devices.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

World Intellectual Property Organisation - Ratification of treaties

The Council agreed on guiding principles for the ratification of the 1996 World Intellectual Property Organisation treaties (11517/07).

FISHERIES

Partnership agreement with Kiribati

The Council adopted a regulation approving the conclusion of a fisheries partnership agreement with the Republic of Kiribati (9284/07).

The agreement contains a protocol setting out, for the period from 16 September 2006 to 15 September 2012, fishing opportunities for EU vessels in Kiribati waters (9283/07).

The fishing opportunities set out in the protocol will be allocated as follows:

- purse seine vessels: Spain and France (73% and 27% of available licences respectively);
- long-liners: Portugal and Spain (six vessels each).

Under the agreement, the EU will grant an annual contribution of EUR 416 000, equivalent to a reference tonnage of 6400 tonnes per year, plus EUR 62 400 per year for initiatives taken to support Kiribati fisheries policy.

Agreement with São Tomé and Príncipe

The Council adopted a regulation approving the conclusion of a fisheries partnership agreement with the Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe providing fishing opportunities for EU vessels in São Toméan waters (8870/07).

The agreement contains a protocol allocating the fishing opportunities as follows:

- freezer tuna seiners: 25 vessels for France and Spain;
- surface longliners: 18 vessels for Portugal and Spain.

The EU will provide an annual contribution of EUR 552 500, equivalent to a reference tonnage of 8 500 tonnes per year, plus EUR 110 500 per year to support São Tomé and Príncipe's fisheries policy.

The agreement will run until 31 May 2010 and may be renewed for additional periods of four years.

The Council also adopted a decision applying the terms of the agreement retroactively as from 1 June 2006, in order to guarantee the pursuit of fishing activities between the date of expiry of a previous protocol and the entry into force of the new one (8777/07).

APPOINTMENTS

European Economic and Social Committee

The Council adopted a decision appointing Ms Sinne ALSING CONAN as member of the European Economic and Social Committee in place of Mr Henrik FALLESEN for the remainder of his term of office, which ends on 20 September 2010.
