



**2015/0229(NLE)**

17.3.2016

## **OPINION**

of the Committee on Development

for the Committee on Fisheries

on the proposal for a Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania for a period of four years  
(12773/2015 – C8-0354/2015 – 2015/0229(NLE))

Rapporteur: Ignazio Corrao

PA\_Leg\_Consent

## SHORT JUSTIFICATION

Mauritania is one of the poorest, least developed countries in the world, ranking 161 out of 187 on the Human Development Index 2014. 42% of the population is living below the poverty line (USAID).

The economy remains weak. Mauritania suffers from a structural food deficit whereby farmland is prone to desertification and the means of production are limited, leaving only 0.5% of land available for agriculture. The economy is therefore centred on mining activity and fisheries, with fishing providing around 5%-10 % of annual GDP. The country has some of the world's most fish-abundant waters, yet the opportunity to develop the economy through this natural resource is underexploited, with very few catches being unloaded in Mauritanian ports or processed locally.

Thirty percent of the population (42.9% of youths) remain unemployed. The Protocol's requirement to hire Mauritanian fishermen (60% of the crew for shrimp vessels and pelagic trawlers) is therefore welcomed.

In early 2015 some 20%-30% of the population suffered from high food insecurity (UN World Food Programme). The 2012 Sahel food crisis left 1/3 of the Mauritanian population (around 1 million) at risk of severe, acute malnutrition. The presence of over 66,000 Malian refugees in Mauritania continues to affect the food security situation due to increased pressure on local food stocks and resources. In this respect, the Protocol sets out an obligation to distribute of 2% of pelagic catches to people in need.

The Protocol is set to last for a period of four years from 2015 to 2019. It is a multi-species agreement. The financial contribution amounts to: 55.000.000 EUR/year regarding access and an additional 4.125.000/year to support the promotion of sustainable fisheries.

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The Committee on Development calls on the Committee on Fisheries, as the committee responsible, to recommend that Parliament give its consent to the proposal for a Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania for a period of four years.

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	15.3.2016
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+ : 19 - : 2 0 : 2
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Louis Aliot, Nicolas Bay, Ignazio Corrao, Doru-Claudian Frunzulică, Nathan Gill, Maria Heubuch, Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Linda McAvan, Norbert Neuser, Maurice Ponga, Cristian Dan Preda, Lola Sánchez Caldentey, Elly Schlein, Pedro Silva Pereira, Eleni Theodorou, Paavo Väyrynen, Bogdan Brunon Wenta
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Louis-Joseph Manscour, Paul Rübig, Jan Zahradil, Joachim Zeller
<b>Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote</b>	Michèle Rivasi, Estefanía Torres Martínez