



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Committee on Foreign Affairs

2010/0125(NLE)

13.12.2011

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

on the Proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion of a Protocol to the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Kingdom of Morocco, of the other part, on a framework agreement between the European Union and the Kingdom of Morocco on the general principles for the participation of Kingdom of Morocco in Union programmes (12712/2010 – C7-0430/2010 – 2010/0125(NLE))

Committee on Foreign Affairs

Rapporteur: Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck

Symbols for procedures

- * Consultation procedure
- *** Consent procedure
- ***I Ordinary legislative procedure (first reading)
- ***II Ordinary legislative procedure (second reading)
- ***III Ordinary legislative procedure (third reading)

(The type of procedure depends on the legal basis proposed by the draft act.)

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DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

**on the Proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion of a Protocol to the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Kingdom of Morocco, of the other part, on a framework agreement between the European Union and the Kingdom of Morocco on the general principles for the participation of Kingdom of Morocco in Union programmes
(12712/2010 – C7-0430/2010 – 2010/0125(NLE))**

(Consent)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the draft Council decision (12712/2010),
 - having regard to the Protocol to the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Kingdom of Morocco, of the other part, on a framework agreement between the European Union and the Kingdom of Morocco on the general principles for the participation of Morocco in Union programmes (12711/2010),
 - having regard to the request for consent submitted by the Council in accordance with Article 217 and point (a) of Article 218(6) and the second subparagraph of Article 218(8) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (C7-0430/2010),
 - having regard to Rules 81 and 90(7) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the recommendation of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (A7-0000/2011),
1. Consents to conclusion of the protocol;
 2. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States and of the Kingdom of Morocco.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The 'Joint EU-Morocco document on establishing Morocco's advanced status in its relations with the EU was adopted by the European Union and the Kingdom of Morocco on the occasion of the Association Council of 13 October 2008. This document confirmed the objectives of the Advanced Status granted by the EU in response to Morocco's desire to deepen its partnership with the EU. These objectives are based around two main points: taking both parties' respective strategic priorities into better account, and Morocco's gradual integration into the internal market.

With the profound changes taking place in the southern Mediterranean since the Tunisian revolution and subsequent events in neighbouring countries, it is important that the EU supports the aspirations of people in these countries even more, now that these aspirations are shared by their leaders.

The Kingdom of Morocco committed itself to a global process of political, economic and social reform several years ago and the EU has constantly supported Morocco in its efforts to implement its reform programme. The Advanced Status reflects a common desire to support a process of home-grown reform, accompanied by a structured and frank dialogue in which human rights is one vital element. This dialogue needs to be continued and intensified through the EU-Morocco summits, the Association Councils and the Subcommittee on Human Rights, Democratisation and Governance.

Henceforth, Morocco's Advanced Status will extend bilateral cooperation to spheres that were not envisaged in the Association Agreement signed in 1996 under the Barcelona Process. From this new viewpoint, the political and strategic dialogue established for the bilateral EU-Morocco summits and other ad-hoc bilateral meetings, is an expression of the political importance both parties attach to their relationship. Political and strategic cooperation is also backed up by moves to deepen economic and financial cooperation, in line with the objectives of the European neighbourhood policy.

The general principles of the ENP and the neighbourhood policy action plan, adopted by both parties in July 2005, ushered in a new stage in bilateral relations by offering Morocco the opportunity to move gradually into the EU's internal market. The Advanced Status confirms this policy option; it opens up the possibility of taking part in the work of the Community's agencies and in Community programmes, and envisages financial support at a level appropriate to the breadth and ambitious nature of this plan. In this regard, the EU will pay particular attention to ensuring that all of Morocco's policies benefit all of the country's regions, as well as Western Sahara.

The Protocol to the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement between the EU and Morocco, covering the general principles for the Kingdom of Morocco's participation in Union programmes, marks a decisive stage in bilateral relations. It gives Morocco the right to take part in those current and future Community programmes open to it. This new prospect is consistent with the objectives of the EU's new neighbourhood policy.

Through the Protocol, the EU is supporting and strongly encouraging Morocco in its efforts to

intensify its reforms and to initiate future ones, while guaranteeing that its citizens will play a real role therein. The legislative elections being held on 25 December 2011 in conditions favourable to a high turnout should be a major stage in the constitutional and democratic reform process to which Morocco is committed.