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**A5-0387/2001**

8 November 2001

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

on the proposal for a Council decision on the signature of a Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement between the European Community and its Member States and the Arab Republic of Egypt  
(8220/2001 – COM(2001) 184 – C5-0381/2001 – 2001/0092(AVC))

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy

Rapporteur: Hugues Martin

### ***Symbols for procedures***

- \* Consultation procedure  
*majority of the votes cast*
- \*\*I Cooperation procedure (first reading)  
*majority of the votes cast*
- \*\*II Cooperation procedure (second reading)  
*majority of the votes cast, to approve the common position*  
*majority of Parliament's component Members, to reject or amend*  
*the common position*
- \*\*\* Assent procedure  
*majority of Parliament's component Members except in cases*  
*covered by Articles 105, 107, 161 and 300 of the EC Treaty and*  
*Article 7 of the EU Treaty*
- \*\*\*I Codecision procedure (first reading)  
*majority of the votes cast*
- \*\*\*II Codecision procedure (second reading)  
*majority of the votes cast, to approve the common position*  
*majority of Parliament's component Members, to reject or amend*  
*the common position*
- \*\*\*III Codecision procedure (third reading)  
*majority of the votes cast, to approve the joint text*

(The type of procedure depends on the legal basis proposed by the Commission)

### ***Amendments to a legislative text***

In amendments by Parliament, amended text is highlighted in ***bold italics***. Highlighting in *normal italics* is an indication for the relevant departments showing parts of the legislative text for which a correction is proposed, to assist preparation of the final text (for instance, obvious errors or omissions in a given language version). These suggested corrections are subject to the agreement of the departments concerned.

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## PROCEDURAL PAGE

By letter of 12 July 2001 the Council requested Parliament's assent pursuant to Article 300(3), second subparagraph, in conjunction with Article 310 of the EC Treaty on the proposal for a Council decision on the signature of a Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement between the European Community and its Member States and the Arab Republic of Egypt (8220/2001 – COM(2001) 184 – 2001/0092(AVC)).

At the sitting of 3 September 2001 the President of Parliament announced that she had referred the proposal to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy as the committee responsible and the Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy, the Committee on Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs and all other interested committees for their opinions (C5-0381/2001).

The Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy had appointed Hugues Martin rapporteur at its meeting of 23 September 1999.

It considered the proposal for a Council decision and the draft recommendation at its meetings of 16 October and 6 November 2001.

At the latter meeting it adopted the draft legislative resolution unanimously.

The following were present for the vote: Elmar Brok, chairman; Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne, vice-chairman; Catherine Lalumière, vice-chairman; Hugues Martin, rapporteur; Alexandros Baltas, Bastiaan Belder, Andre Brie, John Walls Cushnahan, Rosa M. Díez González, Robert J.E. Evans (for Jan Marinus Wiersma, pursuant to Rule 153(2)), Giovanni Claudio Fava (for Klaus Hänsch), Per Gahrton, Alfred Gomolka, Bertel Haarder, Glenys E. Kinnock (for Magdalene Hoff), Cecilia Malmström (for Pere Esteve), Pedro Marset Campos, Linda McAvan, Philippe Morillon, Sami Naïr, Arie M. Oostlander, Reino Kalervo Paasilinna (for Emilio Menéndez del Valle), Doris Pack (for The Lord Bethell), Hans-Gert Poettering, Jacques F. Poos, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Jacques Santer, Amalia Sartori, Elisabeth Schroedter, Patsy Sørensen (for Daniel Marc Cohn-Bendit), Ioannis Soulidakis, Hannes Swoboda, Geoffrey Van Orden, Demetrio Volcic (for Pasqualina Napoletano), Matti Wuori and Christos Zacharakis.

The opinion of the Committee on Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs is attached. The Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy decided on 20 June 2001 not to deliver an opinion.

The recommendation was tabled on 8 November 2001.

## **DRAFT LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION**

**European Parliament legislative resolution on the signature of a Euro-Mediterranean agreement between the European Community and its Member States and the Arab Republic of Egypt (8220/2001 – COM(2001) 184 – C5-0381/2001 – 2001/0092(AVC))**

**(Assent procedure)**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the proposal for Council and Commission decisions (COM(2001) 184<sup>1</sup>),
  - having regard to the draft Euro-Mediterranean agreement between the European Community and its Member States and the Arab Republic of Egypt (8220/2001),
  - having regard to the Council's request for Parliament's assent pursuant to Article 300(3), second subparagraph, in conjunction with Article 310 of the EC Treaty (C5-0381/2001),
  - having regard to Rules 86 and 97(7) of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the recommendation of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy and the opinion of the Committee on Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs (A5-0387/2001),
1. Gives its assent to conclusion of the agreement;
  2. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council and Commission, and the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the Arab Republic of Egypt.

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<sup>1</sup> Not yet published in OJ.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

### 1. Introduction

In geopolitical terms, Egypt should be considered primarily as a friendly country in the ever-turbulent region of the Middle East. It signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1979 and was the first Arab country to establish diplomatic relations with Israel, in January 1982. Moreover, Egypt has continued since then to act as a mediator in the peace process in the region. Egypt has been independent since 1922 and has approximately 58 million inhabitants, which makes it one of the largest markets in the Mediterranean area. The Constitution of 11 September 1971, promulgated under President Sadat (1970-1981), proclaims the Arab Republic of Egypt as a 'democratic socialist State'. Islam is the State religion and Arabic is the official language. Islamic law (sharia) is the 'principal source of legislation' (Article 2). The Constitution states that sovereignty belongs to the people, who are described as belonging to the 'Arab nation'. Egypt has a two-chamber parliament, made up of the lower chamber, the People's Assembly, and the upper chamber, the Shura (Consultative Council). The parliament has very limited powers, particularly with regard to national security. The emergency law which is currently in force allows the President to disregard parliament. The government continues to act under the state of emergency which was declared in 1981, when Sadat was assassinated. The state of emergency allows the government to prevent the formation of new political parties, limit their activities and censor the opposition press.

### 2. A favoured partnership

Euro-Egyptian relations have one of the longest histories in the area, as the first cooperation agreement between the Community and Egypt dates from 1972. The EU is Egypt's principal trading partner and accounts for 32% of its exports and 42% of its imports. Egypt was the first recipient of funds allocated under the MEDA I programme, with EUR 686 million for the period 1996 – 1999 (commitment appropriations), and this favoured position continued under the MEDA II programme, since the association agreement came into force. Egypt is a vital partner for Europe for the development of political, economic and social stability in the Middle East.

### 3. The negotiations

The Council adopted its negotiating guidelines in December 1994, nearly seven years ago. The Commission formally began negotiations in January 1995. The negotiations lasted four and a half years, the text was revised ten times and a final package closing the negotiations was approved by the General Affairs Council on 21 June 1999. The Egyptian side, however, took 18 months to decide to initial the agreement, because of disagreement within the government. The final draft was initialled by both sides on 26 January 2001 and formally signed in Luxembourg on 25 June 2001.

### 4. The Association Agreement

The new agreement will come into force after ratification by the fifteen EU Member States and the Arab Republic of Egypt. It is one of a *new generation of association agreements* and, like all the bilateral association agreements negotiated since 1995 with Mediterranean partners, it is the true heart of the system set up by the Barcelona process. Within a single instrument, it contains:

- the various aspects of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation which have already been covered by agreements, such as trade, financial assistance and institutional cooperation;
- new aspects under the Barcelona process which are essential for true partnership: political dialogue and policies on social affairs, culture and migration.

### ***The political aspect***

Affirmation of the political dimension is undoubtedly the key element of the new Euro-Mediterranean agreements. There are two main points. The first, as stated at Article 2, is concerned with including respect for human rights and democratic principles as an 'essential element' of the EU-Egypt agreement; the agreement can be suspended if they are infringed. The second concerns establishing regular political dialogue, primarily in the context of the Association Council. This dialogue covers all matters of common interest to both parties, which means, if there is the political will, that Europe can add substance to its Mediterranean policy with the essential role played by Egypt, and Egypt can reinforce its status as a favoured partner at both regional and international level. But, although Article 5(2) of the agreement states that 'there shall be a political dialogue between the European Parliament and the Egyptian People's Assembly', it is regrettable that there are no more precise references to institutions, and no reference at all to the role of civil society in relation to the agreement.

### ***The economic aspect***

The stated aim at the Barcelona conference in 1995 was gradually to establish an area of free trade in the Mediterranean, and this remains the long-term objective, covering all the association agreements in this area. A twelve-year transitional period is planned, which is the maximum allowed under WTO rules. It will include transitional phases, protection clauses and safeguard measures for specific cases such as infant industries or those undergoing restructuring. In contrast to previous agreements, this agreement makes provision for reciprocal concessions for industrial products and includes the service sector - in particular, the agreement covers the right of establishment and freedom to supply services - but the quota system remains for agricultural products. It should be noted that within the Association Council, the parties have the option of reaching agreement on reciprocal concessions on a case-by-case basis, and Article 15 provides for the situation to be reviewed during the third year of implementation with a view to further liberalisation. The agreement makes provision for financial and technical support for the essential reforms to be undertaken in Egypt in preparation for the impact of liberalisation of its economic relations with the EU. The main aim of cooperation in this area is to support modernisation of the economy (industrial cooperation, financial services, etc.), to upgrade institutional infrastructure, for instance by bringing laws, standards, statistics and customs services closer together and to promote investment. Cooperation and technical assistance are to be seen as accompanying measures. They will of course not replace the far-reaching reforms of the Egyptian economy, as only these will demonstrate a political will and the economic credibility needed to attract foreign investors.

### ***The Association Council and Association Committee***

The Association Agreement provides for these two bodies to be set up. The Association Council will meet at ministerial level at least once a year. It will be made up of members of the Council and Commission and of the Egyptian Government. It will have decision-making power and its decisions will be binding. It will provide the framework for regular political dialogue. Either of

the parties in any dispute relating to the interpretation or application of the agreement may refer the matter to it. In the event of disagreement, the dispute may be brought before a panel of three arbitrators, one appointed by the Association Council and one by each party. The Community and its Member States are considered a single party. The Association Committee will meet at official level to monitor implementation of the agreement and prepare the Association Council sessions.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

On the basis of the foregoing considerations, the rapporteur submits the following conclusions to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy:

1. The proposed association agreement between the European Union and Egypt is **exceptionally important** for two reasons. Firstly, it is one of the key links in the new Euro-Mediterranean partnership agreed in the Barcelona process. Secondly, the new agreement pursues objectives at Union level: institutionalised political dialogue and a mutual commitment to democracy and human rights; establishing the conditions for progressive liberalisation of the exchange of goods, services and capital; developing balanced economic and social relations between the parties; contributing to the economic and social development of Egypt; and encouraging regional cooperation and cooperation in other areas of mutual interest.
2. In contrast to the previous cooperation agreement of 18 January 1977, the new association agreement with Egypt includes a **democracy clause** (Article 3) which is one of its fundamental features. Nevertheless, in order to ensure appropriate and closer monitoring of respect for human rights in the EU and Egypt, the work of the Association Council and the Committee set up by the new agreement needs to **pay particular attention to this issue** and Parliament needs to be kept fully informed. In this context, an **annual report on human rights** needs to be drawn up, which could be considered in the interparliamentary framework described below.
3. With regard to the political aspects of the new agreement, the rapporteur recommends **strengthening bilateral political dialogue and broadening the scope of issues to be considered** in order to work towards full democratisation of the Egyptian political system. In particular, it is essential for the new political agenda to include other matters such as conflict prevention, reform of the United Nations system, the fight against terrorism, the promotion of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, environmental matters, questions concerning migration and cooperation in justice and home affairs etc.
4. It is regrettable that a joint parliamentary committee is not explicitly set up to guarantee **democratic scrutiny of the new agreement**. The rapporteur feels that a mere reference to political dialogue between the European Parliament and the People's Assembly of Egypt is nowhere near enough.
5. By the same token, it is regrettable that the instruments of political dialogue created by the agreement make **no reference to participation by civil society** (private organisations, trade unions, employers' federations, NGOs etc.).
6. Finally, respect for human rights, freedom of expression and freedom of conscience and of religion are just as important criteria as economic and technical cooperation and they should



be taken into consideration in any **evaluation of the association agreement**. The rapporteur notes that while the state religion is in effect Islam, the Arab Republic of Egypt has a substantial Coptic community several million strong who in practice do not enjoy the same rights as the rest of the population. The discrepancies are apparent in administrative, political, legal or military appointments, for example.

7. In the light of the foregoing, the rapporteur recommends that **assent** be given to the proposal for a Council decision on the signature of a Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement between the European Community and its Member States and the Arab Republic of Egypt.

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CITIZENS' FREEDOMS AND RIGHTS, JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS**

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy

on the proposal for a Council decision on the signature of a Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement between the European Communities and its Member States and the Arab Republic of Egypt on behalf of the European Community  
(8220/2001 - COM(2001) 184 – C5-0381/2001 – 2001/0092(AVC))

Draftsman: Jorge Salvador Hernández Mollar

### **PROCEDURE**

The Committee on Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs appointed Jorge Salvador Hernández Mollar draftsman at its meeting of 10 July 2001.

It considered the draft opinion at its meetings of 9 October 2001 and 22 October 2001.

At the latter meeting it adopted the following conclusions unanimously.

The following were present for the vote: Graham R. Watson, chairman; Robert J.E. Evans, vice-chairman; Bernd Posselt, vice-chairman; Jorge Salvador Hernández Mollar, draftsman; Niall Andrews, Alima Boumediene-Thiery, Marco Cappato, Michael Cashman, Charlotte Cederschiöld, Carmen Cerdeira Morterero (for Ozan Ceyhun), Carlos Coelho, Thierry Cornillet, Gérard M.J. Deprez, Giuseppe Di Lello Finuoli, Francesco Fiori (for Marcello Dell'Utri, pursuant to Rule 153(2)), Glyn Ford (for Adeline Hazan), Pernille Frahm, Evelyne Gebhardt (for Gerhard Schmid), Daniel J. Hannan, Anna Karamanou, Margot Keßler, Timothy Kirkhope, Eva Klamt, Baroness Sarah Ludford, Lucio Manisco (for Fodé Sylla), Luís Marinho (for Martin Schulz), Juan Andrés Naranjo Escobar (for Enrico Ferri), Hartmut Nassauer, Arie M. Oostlander (for Hubert Pirker), Elena Ornella Paciotti, Paolo Pastorelli, Martine Roure (for Sérgio Sousa Pinto), Agnes Schierhuber (for Mary Elizabeth Banotti, pursuant to Rule 153(2)), Patsy Sørensen, Anna Terrón i Cusí, Astrid Thors (for Jan-Kees Wiebenga, pursuant to Rule 153(2)), Maurizio Turco (for Frank Vanhecke), Anne E.M. Van Lancker (for Joke Swiebel), Gianni Vattimo and Christian Ulrik von Boetticher.

## **SHORT JUSTIFICATION**

### **I. THE CHALLENGES REPRESENTED BY THE EU'S POLICY IN RESPECT OF THE COUNTRIES OF THE SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN**

The Mediterranean remains, as it will for years to come, an area of potential turbulence, because instead of shrinking, the development level gap between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean is growing.

The challenges that European Union policy needs to tackle with regard to the countries of the Mediterranean basin are basically threefold in nature:

#### **(a) Cultural**

There can be no doubt whatever that the coexistence of the Judaeo-Christian world and the Arab-Islamic world has never been straightforward. Since the 1990s, however, things have got much more tense. Part of the Islamic world has succumbed to the temptation of adopting over-fundamentalist policies, and part of western opinion has followed a symmetrical path towards racism and xenophobia.

The emergence of these antagonistic developments threatens not only peace between nations, but civil peace and democracy.

#### **(b) Economic**

The southern Mediterranean countries have not been able to build an emergent economic region, unlike those in south-east Asia or certain Latin American countries. The Arab Maghreb Union created in 1989 has not fulfilled the hopes it raised. With the exception of Israel and Turkey, its economies have grown little, while birth rates are, by contrast, extremely high. This situation means enormous migratory pressure on Europe. It also means a significant potential market for the Community economy.

#### **(c) Security**

The region is plagued by inter-State conflicts in certain cases, and internecine conflicts in others. Some of these conflicts have existed since the end of the Second World War. Others are more recent. Iraq and Iran have emerged on the region's periphery as new powers; this affects the security of the southern Mediterranean countries, and consequently of Europe. The European Union has nonetheless consistently shown itself to be indifferent or impotent in respect of these conflicts.

### **II. THE NEW EURO-MEDITERRANEAN DIALOGUE**

From 1995, the EU's Mediterranean policy has changed dramatically; it is no longer to be the exclusive and individual concern of each of the individual European Mediterranean countries, but that of the Union as a whole; it should be equal in importance to the Union's policy in respect of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

The beginning of the new Euro-Mediterranean dialogue was unquestionably the Barcelona Declaration adopted by the First Euro-Mediterranean Conference, held in Barcelona on 27 and 28 November 1995.

This new dialogue is distinguished from all other attempts of a similar nature by its sheer geographical scope, since it includes the 15 EU Member States and 12 southern Mediterranean third countries. Neither Libya nor the Palestinian Authority is involved.

The Barcelona Declaration clearly defined the three essential facets or objectives of so-called 'global association' as a response to the current challenges.

(a) Politics and security

A 'common area of peace and security' should be set up by developing a large-scale programme covering both the domestic and foreign policies of the countries concerned, with particular stress being laid on the need for democratic governance and respect for human rights. There is talk of the long-term goal being a possible 'Euro-Mediterranean Pact'.

(b) Economics and finance

Here, there is a clean break with the previous policy of trade preferences, and 2010 has been set as the date for the creation of an area of industrial free trade. The goal is to achieve an integrated zone both in south-south and north-south terms. In order to cushion the economic and social impact, major development cooperation funding is envisaged to help the southern countries.

(c) The social, cultural and human aspect

The goal is to encourage understanding between cultures and exchanges between their respective civil societies, and cooperation aimed at reducing the pressures of migration.

### **III. THE ASSOCIATION AGREEMENTS**

The Union has devised two mechanisms to achieve these objectives:

- (a) Association agreements concluded between the Union and each of the southern Mediterranean countries, which should establish the programmed liberalisation of trade, organised bilateral cooperation and institutionalised political dialogue;
- (b) The technical and economic cooperation programme called MEDA, which is to fund and resolve the various problems which the establishment of a free trade area could bring with it.

The association agreements are to be the driving force for the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue. They should cover the whole of Community policy, whether on political dialogue, free trade or cooperation.

The agreements also constitute a flexibility factor, in that they enable each partner to advance at its own speed, and nonetheless enjoy the same quality in its bilateral relations with the Union.

The contents of the agreements have various aspects:

(a) Political

The political dialogue framework basically takes place within the Association Council which brings together the Foreign Affairs Ministers of the 27 countries (15 + 12) once a year. Each agreement also includes a suspensive clause stating that respect for human rights and

democratic principles is an essential condition, and that the agreement may be denounced and suspended should this condition be violated.

(b) Commercial

Abolition of customs tariffs, accompanied by investment, economic, social, cultural cooperation, etc. with a view to creating a free trade area.

(c) Institutional

This involves two bodies

- the Association Council, which meets at ministerial level once a year
- the Association Committee, at civil service level, responsible for following up the Agreement.

#### **IV. THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES AND THEIR MEMBER STATES AND THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT**

We can only deplore the fact that a balance sheet for the Euro-Mediterranean Agreements concluded to date is so unimpressive: only the Association Agreement with Tunisia has come into force; three have been signed with Israel, Morocco and Jordan, but are not in force, and three are under negotiation with Lebanon, Algeria and Syria.

The Agreement with Egypt, then, is a cause for rejoicing, not least in view of the size and importance of that country, whose role in the history of humankind has been so fundamental.

The Agreement follows the classic layout of the agreements inspired by the 1995 Barcelona Declaration, and consists of 92 articles grouped under 8 titles subdivided into chapters. There are five protocols and six annexes which form an integral part of the Agreement, and it is followed by six declarations.

Once it comes into force, this Agreement will replace the Cooperation Agreement between the Republic of Egypt and the European Communities signed in Brussels on 18 January 1977. The sheer scope of the Agreement's contents means that, as draftsman for the Committee on Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs, I have limited myself to those issues which directly concern our committee's remit.

In the first place, recital 3 highlights the importance of respect for human rights, democratic principles and political freedoms, which Article 2 enshrines as 'an essential element of this Agreement.

Article 55(2) provides for mutual assistance between the parties in the fight against drugs and money laundering.

Article 57 is entirely devoted to fighting money laundering, and Article 58 to the fight against drugs.

Article 59 refers to the fight against terrorism.

Article 63 establishes, *inter alia*, a dialogue on migrant communities' living and working

conditions, migration and illegal migration.

Paragraph 3(d) of Article 63 provides for the need for 'equal treatment between Egyptian and Community nationals' and the 'furthering of tolerance and removal of discrimination'.

Article 65 provides for measures to reduce migratory pressures and promote the role of women in economic and social development.

Chapter 2 of Title VI dedicates its Articles 68, 69 and 70 to regulating the requisite cooperation to prevent and control illegal immigration, and establishes the principle that either of the parties will readmit 'any of its nationals illegally present' on the territory of the other.

The content of these articles, which I view very positively, needs to be highlighted: one of the obstacles during the lengthy negotiation of this agreement since January 1995 was this very principle of readmission of nationals.

I therefore congratulate the negotiators who were able to overcome the difficulties, but I would criticise the fact that the issue of third country nationals has not been closed.

Indent 7 of Article 72 provides for financial cooperation on 'supplementary measures ... to prevent and control illegal immigration'.

Article 81 provides for 'all appropriate measures to facilitate cooperation and contacts between the European Parliament and the Egyptian People's Assembly', and Article 84 is devoted to preventing any discrimination against the nationals and companies of the Parties.

Finally, of the eight joint declarations annexed to the Agreement, I would highlight the first (fight against terrorism), the seventh (facilitation of visas) and the eighth (data protection).

These joint declarations possess significant political value, but do not constitute a legally binding link between the Parties since they do not form an integral part of the Agreement, unlike the five protocols and six annexes, as stated in Article 87.

I am therefore critical of the declarations on such important matters as fighting terrorism, facilitating visas and protecting data.

For the foregoing reasons, as the committee's draftsman I call on the Committee on Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs to adopt the following

## **CONCLUSIONS**

1. The Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, on the one hand, and the Republic of Egypt on the other hand, represents a major step forward for the European Union in its relations with this great country.
2. The Association Agreement represents fundamental progress in the general process of putting Union policy on a new and more balanced footing, and so constitutes one of the most significant features of the new Euro-Mediterranean strategy set out in the Barcelona

Declaration, adopted by the Conference held in that city on 27 and 28 November 1995.

3. Acknowledges the need for the measures provided for, and warmly welcomes the overall content of the Agreement.
4. Welcomes the fact that Article 2 includes the clause demanding that human rights and democratic principles be respected; but believes that much more effort and attention is needed to ensure that these are upheld in practice.
5. Asks the Commission and the Council to express the EU's serious concern to the Egyptian institutions regarding the arrest of 52 Egyptian citizens on grounds of their sexual orientation, to monitor closely the fate of these people, and to take progressive and proportional measures in order to have their fundamental rights respected in accordance with international human rights law.
6. States its unreserved support for the Agreement's welcome establishment of regular, permanent political dialogue.
7. Stresses the importance of the measures provided for in respect of preventing and controlling illegal immigration, including supplementary financial cooperation measures.
8. Takes a very positive view of the Agreement's inclusion of the principle that each of the Parties will readmit any of its nationals illegally present on the territory of the other.
9. Deplores the fact that no specific measures have been provided for in respect of readmitting nationals of third countries.
10. Warmly welcomes the provisions for fighting drugs and money laundering, but criticises the absence of specific measures for implementing these provisions.
11. Has every reason to question the operability of Joint Declaration 1 concerning political dialogue in the fight against terrorism, a problem whose solution is one of the greatest challenges facing humankind in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
12. Criticises likewise the inclusion of issues as important as data protection and the facilitating of visas in Joint Declarations 7 and 8, which are not legally binding.
13. Expects this Agreement to facilitate progress in the fight against discrimination on grounds of race, ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age and discrimination in the workplace, and stresses that particular attention must be paid to prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender.
14. Supports all the measures designed to promote the role of women in economic and social development.
15. Calls, therefore, on the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy, as the committee responsible, to state in its draft recommendation on the conclusion of a Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States of the one part and the Arab Republic of

Egypt, of the other part, its assent, pursuant to the provisions of Article 300 of the EC Treaty.