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THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council  
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Subject: Council Decision to authorise the Commission to open negotiations on behalf  
of the European Union for a new Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership  
Agreement with the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe  
- Adoption

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**Statement by the Commission**

The Commission does not consider it necessary that a Council Decision authorising the opening of negotiations indicates a substantive legal basis.

## **Statement by the Netherlands and the United Kingdom**

The Netherlands and the United Kingdom are of the view that the ex post evaluation of the current protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement with the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe raises concerns for the negotiation of a new protocol, which is why they cannot support this. These delegations wish, in particular, to express their concern about the level of shark fishing in the waters of the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe. It would appear that there is no clear management system in force to provide for the necessary protection of these species. Also, the ex post evaluation raises doubts that the protocol provides sufficient benefits to the local fishing industry. Furthermore, the economic return for the European Union does not appear to represent good value for money.

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