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European Union

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LEGISLATIVE ACTS AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS

Subject: COUNCIL DECISION on the position to be adopted, on behalf of the European Union, within the Association Committee established by the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an Association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, of the other part, as regards a temporary amendment to Protocol 3 to that Agreement concerning the definition of the concept of 'originating products' and methods of administrative cooperation as a response in favour of the refugees fleeing the conflict in Syria

COUNCIL DECISION (EU) 2016/...

of...

**on the position to be adopted, on behalf of the European Union,
within the Association Committee established by the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement
establishing an Association between the European Communities
and their Member States, of the one part,
and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, of the other part,
as regards a temporary amendment to Protocol 3 to that Agreement
concerning the definition of the concept of 'originating products' and methods
of administrative cooperation as a response
in favour of the refugees fleeing the conflict in Syria**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular the first subparagraph of Article 207(4), in conjunction with Article 218(9) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Whereas:

- (1) The Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an Association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, of the other part¹ ('the Agreement') entered into force on 1 May 2002. Pursuant to Article 89 of the Agreement, an Association Council was established to examine any major issues arising within the framework of the Agreement and any other bilateral or international issues of mutual interest.
- (2) Pursuant to Article 92 of the Agreement, an Association Committee was established with responsibility for the implementation of the Agreement and to which the Association Council may delegate, in full or in part, any of its powers.
- (3) Pursuant to Article 94(1) of the Agreement, the Association Committee is to have the power to take decisions for the management of the Agreement as well as in areas where the Association Council has delegated its powers to it.
- (4) Pursuant to Article 2 of Council and Commission Decision 2002/357/EC, ECSC², the position to be taken by the Union within the Association Committee is to be laid down by the Council on a proposal by the Commission.

¹ OJ L 129, 15.5.2002, p. 3.

² Council and Commission Decision 2002/357/EC, ECSC of 26 March 2002 on the conclusion of the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an Association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, of the other part (OJ L 129, 15.5.2002, p. 1).

- (5) Pursuant to Article 39 of Protocol 3 to the Agreement, as amended by Decision No 1/2006 of the EU Jordan Association Council¹, the Association Committee may decide to amend the provisions of that Protocol.
- (6) The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan ('Jordan') submitted proposals to the international community for a holistic approach for an economic response to the Syrian refugee crisis.
- (7) In the framework of the International Conference on Supporting Syria and the Region, held in London on 4 February 2016, Jordan declared its intention to permit Syrian refugees to participate in the formal labour market in Jordan and set out a number of steps it would take towards that end, in particular with a view to creating approximately 200 000 job opportunities for Syrian refugees.
- (8) In relation to that initiative, Jordan made a specific request on 12 December 2015 for a temporary relaxation of the rules of origin to be made available under the Agreement so as to enhance Jordan's exports to the Union and create additional employment opportunities, especially for Syrian refugees.

¹ Decision No 1/2006 of the EU-Jordan Association Council of 15 June 2006 amending Protocol 3 to the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement, concerning the definition of the concept of originating products and methods of administrative cooperation (OJ L 209, 31.7.2006, p. 30).

- (9) As a result of the examination of Jordan's request, the Council, on behalf of the Union, considers it justified to agree to additional rules of origin that, under the conditions specified in the Annex to the draft Decision of the Association Committee attached to this Decision ('the draft Decision of the Association Committee '), in particular as regards relevant products, production zones and the creation of additional employment for Syrian refugees, should be made available as an alternative to those laid down in Annex II to Protocol 3 of the Agreement for exports from Jordan and should be those applied by the Union to imports from least-developed countries under the Generalised Scheme of Preferences / Everything But Arms initiative.
- (10) The Annex to the draft Decision of the Association Committee should apply until 31 December 2026 and a mid-term review should be undertaken allowing the parties to make adjustments through a decision of the Association Committee, if necessary.
- (11) The achievement by Jordan of its objective of creating around 200 000 job opportunities for Syrian refugees would represent a significant milestone also in respect of the implementation of the draft Decision of the Association Committee. Accordingly, once that objective is achieved, the Union and Jordan will consider further simplifying the conditions for producers in Jordan to benefit from the Decision of the Association Committee.
- (12) The application of the Annex to the Decision of the Association Committee should be accompanied by appropriate monitoring and reporting obligations and it should be possible to suspend the application of the Annex to the Decision of the Association Committee if the conditions for its application are no longer fulfilled or if the conditions for safeguard measures are met,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

1. The position to be adopted on behalf of the European Union in the EU-Jordan Association Committee established in accordance with Article 92 of the Agreement, as regards a temporary amendment to Protocol 3 to that Agreement concerning the definition of the concept of 'originating products' and methods of administrative cooperation, shall be based on the draft Decision of that Association Committee, attached to this Decision.
2. Minor technical corrections to the draft Decision of the Association Committee may be agreed to by the representatives of the Union in the Association Committee without further decision of the Council.

Article 2

After its adoption, the Decision of the Association Committee shall be published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

Article 3

This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.

Done at Brussels,

For the Council
The President
