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Subject: Mauritania: Report on Joint Committee meeting  
(Brussels, 17-18 March 1998)

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Delegations will find attached the declassified version of the above document.

The text of this document is identical to the previous version.

7343/98

RESTREINT

PECHE 132

**OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS**

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from: Working Party on External Fisheries Policy

dated: 19 and 20 March 1998

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No. prev. doc.: 5963/98 PECHE 47

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Subject : Mauritania: Report on Joint Committee meeting  
(Brussels, 17-18 March 1998)

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1. The Commission representative reported on the Joint Committee meeting with the Mauritanian authorities, which took place in Brussels on 17 and 18 March 1998. He reminded delegations that the existing derogation regime for cephalopods and black hake had been extended until the end of the current month. Although discussions had made some progress, they had been handicapped by the absence of a mandate for the Mauritanian side, whose inflexibility, particularly with regard to an extension of the current derogation, might be due to recent changes in the Mauritanian government and the appointment of a new Minister responsible for Fisheries. However, the Mauritanian authorities had proposed that a workshop be organized in Nouakchott in the second half of April, bringing together representatives of the EC and Mauritanian Administrations, of the respective fishing fleets and scientists with a view to seeking a solution to the whole issue of minimum sizes and tolerance levels, which could then be finalized in a Joint Committee meeting. The Commission had welcomed these proposals and would seek an extension of the current derogation until a definitive solution was found.
2. Finally, the Commission representative reviewed other items discussed at the last Joint Committee meeting where, *inter alia*, agreement on satellite pilot projects had been reached but not

formalized and arrangements made for a meeting of fishing representatives to take place in Mauritania towards the end of the year.

3. Whilst expressing support for the line taken by the Commission, the Spanish and Italian delegations were concerned that the problem of the derogation and questions relating to a margin of tolerance in respect of minimum sizes had not been solved. Together with the Portuguese delegation, these two delegations underlined the need to establish a longer extension of the derogation, taking into account that fishing licences for the next three months have to be applied for now and fishermen need to know precisely what fishing conditions to obtain for this period.
4. In conclusion, the Working Party agreed to return to this dossier in the light of future developments.

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