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COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 3.12.2008
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RECOMMENDATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL

authorising the Commission to open negotiations on behalf of the Community with a view to concluding a Fisheries Partnership Agreement with the Republic of Guinea

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1. EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

On 28 March 1983 the Community and the Republic of Guinea concluded a Fisheries Agreement on fishing off the Guinean coast¹; the most recent Protocol² thereto, which entered into force on 26 April 2004, defining the fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for in the Agreement, is due to expire on 31 December 2008.

The Commission proposes negotiating a new Protocol which is more in line with the opportunities and recognised requirements of Member States' fleets, in accordance with the 2004 Council Conclusions on Fisheries Partnership Agreements. Initialling a new Protocol before the date of expiry of the existing Protocol would allow fishing activities to continue without interruption.

In addition, in order to take account of the 2004 Council Conclusions on Fisheries Partnership Agreements, a new Fisheries Partnership Agreement should be negotiated to replace the existing Fisheries Agreement with the Republic of Guinea.

The Council is accordingly requested to approve the negotiating instructions in the Annex hereto.

2. RECOMMENDATION

In the light of the above, the Commission consequently recommends that:

- the Council authorise the Commission to open and conduct negotiations with a view to concluding a Fisheries Partnership Agreement with the Republic of Guinea;
- the Commission conduct those negotiations in accordance with the Treaty establishing the European Community;
- the Council approve the negotiating instructions in the Annex hereto.

¹ Council Regulation (EC) No 971/83 of 28 March 1983 (OJ L 111, 27.4.1983, p. 1).

² Council Regulation (EC) No 830/2004 of 26 April 2004 on the conclusion of the Protocol defining for the period 1 January 2004 to 31 December 2008 the fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for in the Agreement between the European Economic Community and the Government of the Republic of Guinea on fishing off the Guinean coast (OJ L 127, 29.4.2004, p. 31).

Done at Brussels,

For the Commission

Member of the Commission

ANNEX

Negotiating instructions

The negotiations are aimed at concluding a Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the Community and the Republic of Guinea in accordance with the Council Conclusions of 15 July 2004 based on the Commission Communication of 23 December 2002.

With a view to promoting responsible fishing and sustainable fisheries through that Partnership Agreement, the Commission will base those negotiations on the following objectives:

- define fishing opportunities for Community vessels, taking account of the use actually made of fishing opportunities by operators under the existing Protocol, the future prospects for fishing activities, the state of resources and the Republic of Guinea's capacity for implementing a sustainable resource management policy;
- take account of the best available scientific advice;
- reinforce the dialogue on sectoral policy in order to encourage the implementation of a responsible fisheries policy, in keeping with the country's development objectives, particularly as regards fisheries control and surveillance, resource management and improving the health and hygiene conditions of fishery products.