



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 07.04.1998  
COM(1998) 218 final

**PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL DECISION  
ON THE POSITION TO BE TAKEN BY THE COMMUNITY  
WITHIN THE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL  
ESTABLISHED BY THE EUROPE AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES AND THEIR MEMBER STATES,  
OF THE ONE PART, AND THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA,  
OF THE OTHER PART, WITH REGARD TO  
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
BY THE EU-BULGARIA ASSOCIATION COUNCIL**

(presented by the Commission)



## **EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

1. **The Europe Agreement establishing an Association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Bulgaria, of the other part, which entered into force on 1 February 1995, provides, in the article 110 thereof, that the Association Council may decide to set up any other special committee or body that can assist it in carrying out its duties.**
2. **The Joint Declaration N° 17 of the Europe Agreement referring to Article 110 agreed "that the Association Council will examine the creation of a consultative mechanism composed of members of the Economic and Social Committee of the Community and the corresponding partners of Bulgaria." This has been confirmed at the last meeting of the EU/Bulgaria Association Committee on 27/28 October 1997.**
3. **The Commission proposes therefore that a Joint Consultative Committee representing the social and economic interest groups of both parties be set up by the Association Council in support of the keen interest expressed, in this respect, by the social partners from both sides, represented by the Economic and Social Committee, on the part of the Community, and by the Bulgarian economic and social partners on the part of Bulgaria.**
4. **The proposed Joint Consultative Committee is intended to constitute a forum for dialogue between the social partners of both sides which would be equally beneficial to the Bulgarian social partners, who will familiarize themselves with the process of consultation taking place within the Economic and Social Committee and with the dialogue between the social partners in the European Union in general, and to the social partners of the European Union who will familiarize themselves with the social dimension of the reforms of the economic and social structures taking place in Bulgaria. The Association Council may also consult the proposed Joint Consultative Committee before taking decisions in areas of obvious social interest. Consultation of the committee, remains, however, at the discretion of the Association Council.**
5. **The establishment of the proposed Joint Consultative Committee does not have any financial impact on the Community budget, the Bulgarian participants being responsible for their own expenses and the expenses on the Community side being covered by the budget of the Economic and Social Committee.**
6. **The text of the proposal for a Council decision on the position to be taken by the Community in the Association Council, as provided for by Article 2(1) of the Council and the Commission decision of 19.12.1994 on the conclusion of the aforementioned Europe Agreement, is attached hereto. The Council is asked to adopt this text.**

**PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL DECISION  
ON THE POSITION TO BE TAKEN BY THE COMMUNITY  
WITHIN THE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL  
ESTABLISHED BY THE EUROPE AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES AND THEIR MEMBER STATES,  
OF THE ONE PART, AND THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA,  
OF THE OTHER PART, WITH REGARD TO  
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
BY THE EU-BULGARIA ASSOCIATION COUNCIL**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing a European Community, the Treaty establishing a European Coal and Steel Community and the Treaty establishing a European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom),

Having regard to Article 2(1) of the Council and Commission Decision of 19.12.1994 on the conclusion of the Europe Agreement establishing an Association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Bulgaria, of the other part,

Having regard to the Commission proposal,

Whereas Article 110 of the said Europe Agreement provides that the Association Council may decide to set up any special committee or body that can assist it in carrying out its duties,

Whereas dialogue and co-operation between economic and social interest groups in the European Union and Bulgaria can make a major contribution to the full implementation of the Europe Agreement,

Whereas it seems appropriate that such co-operation should be between the members of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities and Bulgaria's economic and social partners,

**HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:**

The position to be adopted by the Community within the Association Council established by the Europe Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Bulgaria, of the other part, in relation to the establishment of a Joint Consultative Committee shall be based on the draft decision of the said Association Council which is annexed to the present decision.

Done at Brussels,

For the Council

**DRAFT**  
**DECISION No ...../98**  
**of the Association Council**  
**Association between the European Communities and**  
**their Member States, of the one part,**  
**and the Republic of Bulgaria, of the other part,**  
**of ..... 1998**  
**on the setting-up of a**  
**Joint Consultative Committee**

**The Association Council**

*having regard to* the Europe Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Bulgaria, of the other part, and in particular Article 110 thereof,

*whereas* dialogue and cooperation between economic and social interest groups in the European Union and Bulgaria can make a major contribution to the development of EU/Bulgaria's relations,

*whereas* it seems appropriate that such cooperation should be between the members of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities and Bulgaria's economic and social partners,

has adopted the following decision:

**Article 1**

A Joint Consultative Committee is hereby established with the task of promoting dialogue and cooperation between the economic and social interest groups in the European Union and Bulgaria. Such dialogue and cooperation shall encompass all economic and social aspects of relations between the European Union and Bulgaria, as they arise in the context of the implementation of the Europe Agreement. The Joint Consultative Committee shall express its views on questions arising in these areas.

**Article 2**

The Joint Consultative Committee shall comprise six representatives of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities and six representatives of Bulgaria's economic and social interest groups.

The Joint Consultative Committee shall carry out its activities on the basis of consultation by the Association Council or on its own initiative.

Members shall be chosen to ensure that the Joint Consultative Committee is as faithful a reflection as possible of the various economic and social interest groups in both the European Union and Bulgaria.

The Joint Consultative Committee shall be co-chaired by a member of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities and a Bulgarian member.

The Joint Consultative Committee shall adopt its own Rules of Procedure.

### **Article 3**

The Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities, on the one hand, and the Bulgarian economic and social interest groups, on the other hand, shall each defray the expenses they incur by reason of their participation in the meetings for the Committee and of its working groups with regard to staff, travel and subsistence expenditure and to postal and telecommunications expenditure.

Expenditure in connection with interpreting at meetings, translation and reproduction of documents shall be born by the Economic and Social Committee, with the exception of Bulgarian expenditure in connection with interpreting or translation into or from Bulgarian, which shall be born by the Bulgarian economic and social interest groups.

Other expenditure relating to the material organization of meetings shall be born by the Party which hosts the meetings.

Done at Brussels,

For the Association Council

The President



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