

AMENDMENT FORM

Title VIII: The Union and its immediate environment

Suggestion for amendment of Article : I-59 bis (New): Associate Membership

By Members: Mr Andrew Duff, Mr Lamberto Dini, Mr Paul Helminger, Mr Rein Lang, Lord MacLennan

Article 59 bis (New) Associate membership

1. Any Member State may notify the Commission of its intention to become an associate member of the Union. The Union shall negotiate with that state and the Council shall conclude an agreement, acting by a qualified majority, after obtaining the assent of the European Parliament.

2. Associate members shall cooperate closely with the Union. They shall respect its values, principles and objectives.

3. Associate membership agreements will set out the modalities of the close cooperation, the scope of coordination and the reciprocal rights and obligations.

Explanation:

The Constitution makes a greater imposition on Member States, and some might not be able or willing to make the leap. That being so it makes sense to permit a Member State to choose a looser partnership in preference to full membership.

Such a category of privileged partnership would allow for the nexus of (mostly economic) relationships that had built up with the Union during the period of membership to be conserved in a functional form.

The category would also be more useful for the current members of the European Economic Area.

See Mr Duff's contribution CONV 764/03 on this subject.