

AMENDMENT FORM

Suggestion for amendment to Article III-222

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Status : - Member

Article III-222

1. Agreements between the Union and third states or international organisations shall be negotiated and concluded in accordance with the following procedure.
2. The Council shall authorise negotiations to be opened, adopt negotiating directives, **authorise the signing of agreements** and conclude agreements.
3. The Commission, or the Union's Minister for Foreign Affairs where the agreement exclusively or principally relates to the common foreign and security policy, shall submit recommendations to the Council, which shall authorise the opening of negotiations.
4. In connection with the decision authorising negotiations, depending on the subject of the future agreement, the Council shall nominate the negotiator or leader of the Union's negotiating team.
5. Without prejudice to the specific provisions laid down in Article 24, the Council may address negotiating directives to the negotiator of the agreement and may designate a special committee in consultation with which the negotiations must be held.
6. On a proposal from the agreement negotiator, the Council shall decide on the signing and, if necessary, provisional application of agreements before entry into force.
7. The Council shall conclude agreements on the proposal of the agreement negotiator **after the assent of the European Parliament has been obtained**. ~~Except where agreements relate exclusively to the common foreign and security policy, the Council shall not conclude any agreement until the European Parliament has been consulted. The Parliament shall deliver its opinion within a time-limit which the Council may lay down according to the urgency of the matter. In the absence of an opinion within that time-limit, the Council may act. The European Parliament's assent shall be required for association agreements, for Union accession to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and for agreements establishing a specific institutional framework by organising cooperation procedures, agreements with important budgetary implications for the Union and agreements covering fields to which the legislative procedure applies. The Council and the European Parliament may,~~

in an urgent situation, agree upon a time- limit for the assent. **In the absence of an assent within that time-limit, the Council may act.**

8. When concluding an agreement, the Council may, by way of derogation from the foregoing, authorise the negotiator of the agreement to approve modifications on the Union's behalf where the agreement provides for them to be adopted by a simplified procedure or by a body set up by the agreement; it may attach specific conditions to such authorisation.
9. The Council shall act by a qualified majority throughout the procedure **unless otherwise provided for in the Constitution**. However, it shall act unanimously when the agreement covers a field for which unanimity is required for the adoption of a Union act as well as for association agreements and for Union accession to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.
10. The Council, on a proposal from the Union's Minister for Foreign Affairs or the Commission, shall decide to suspend the application of an agreement, and shall establish the positions to be adopted on the Union's behalf in a body set up by an agreement, when that body is called upon to adopt decisions having legal effects, with the exception of decisions supplementing or amending the institutional framework of the agreement.
11. The European Parliament shall be immediately and fully informed of all the stages of the procedure.
12. A Member State, the European Parliament, the Council or the Commission may obtain the opinion of the Court of Justice as to whether an agreement envisaged is compatible with the provisions of the Constitution. Where the opinion of the Court of Justice is adverse, the agreement envisaged may not enter into force unless the Constitution is revised in accordance with the procedure laid down in [Article [N]].

Explanation :

In para. 2 the authorisation to be given by the Council for the signing of agreements referred to in para. 6 should be mentioned as a separate step in the process.

Para. 7 must reflect the right of the European Parliament to give its assent to all agreements to be concluded by the Union.

In para. 9 care needs to be taken of the fact that other articles of the Constitution, e.g. Art. III-212 para. 4 on common commercial policy, provide for cases in which the Council acts unanimously when deciding on the conclusion of agreements.