



Plenary sitting

A8-0304/2018

2.10.2018

RECOMMENDATION

on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the Union, of the Agreement between the European Union and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas amending the Agreement between the European Community and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas on the short-stay visa waiver (12389/2017 – C8-0173/2018 – 2017/0169(NLE))

Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

Rapporteur: Emilian Pavel

Symbols for procedures

- * Consultation procedure
- *** Consent procedure
- ***I Ordinary legislative procedure (first reading)
- ***II Ordinary legislative procedure (second reading)
- ***III Ordinary legislative procedure (third reading)

(The type of procedure depends on the legal basis proposed by the draft act.)

CONTENTS

	Page
DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION.....	5
EXPLANATORY STATEMENT.....	6
PROCEDURE – COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE.....	8
FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE.....	9

DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the Union, of the Agreement between the European Union and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas amending the Agreement between the European Community and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas on the short-stay visa waiver (12389/2017 – C8-0173/2018 – 2017/0169(NLE))

(Consent)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the draft Council decision (12389/2017),
 - having regard to the draft agreement between the European Union and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas amending the Agreement between the European Community and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas on the short-stay visa waiver (12388/2017),
 - having regard to the request for consent submitted by the Council in accordance with Article 77(2), point (a), and Article 218(6), second subparagraph, point (a)(v), of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (C8-0173/2018),
 - having regard to Rule 99(1) and (4) and Rule 108(7) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the recommendation of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (A8-0304/2018),
1. Gives its consent to conclusion of the agreement;
 2. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States and of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

This agreement on the waiver of short-stay visas constitutes simultaneously represents a culmination of the deepening of relations between the European Union and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, which is politically highly significant in the context of the Cotonou Agreement. The amending agreement ensures legal coherence as well as harmonisation among Member States, by adhering to the new definition of short-stay as is provided by the Schengen Borders Code amendment, which provides a clearer interpretation of 'short-stay'.

The Bahamas is a member of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, Association of Caribbean States, Caribbean Community (though not the CARICOM Single Market and Economy), Non-Aligned Movement, Organization of American States and United Nations.

The Bahamas is among the wealthiest countries in the Caribbean region; it is now a significant financial centre and ship registry, among the largest in the world in terms of gross tonnage registered.

Politically speaking the Bahamas is a constitutional monarchy recognising Queen Elizabeth II as head of state. A Governor-General chosen on the advice of the cabinet represents the Queen. The country is a parliamentary democracy with a bicameral legislature.

The EU's political dialogue with the various ACP countries and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas in particular is gradually increasing. This agreement may allow us the continuation of our partnership under a clear legal framework. The amending visa exemption will continue sending out a positive message of support for the country and the efforts it is making.

Furthermore, the rapporteur would stress the by no means negligible impact, which the visa waiver will have on rapprochement between the peoples of Europe and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas. The new visa waiver agreement will enable citizens not only to derive full benefit from the ACP-EU partnership but continuing to participate in it by travelling at a reduced, economical and practical cost under a clearer and more coherent legal framework.

In this context, the rapporteur welcomes the role played by members of the ACP-EU Parliamentary Assembly, who did much to contribute to the conclusion of this agreement, which, in addition, will facilitate their attendance at meetings of the ACP-EU JPA.

Specific provisions

The specific situation of the United Kingdom and Ireland is taken into account in the preamble. Thus the United Kingdom and Ireland will not participate in the agreement which has been concluded and are not subject to its provisions.

The close involvement of Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Liechtenstein with the implementation, application and development of the Schengen acquis is likewise reflected in a joint declaration annexed to the Agreement. The declaration encourages the authorities of those countries to conclude as quickly as possible with the Commonwealth of the Bahamas bilateral agreements on the short-stay visa waiver in terms similar to those of this Agreement.

**

Finally, the rapporteur recommends that the members of Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs support this report and that the European Parliament give its consent.

PROCEDURE – COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

Title	Agreement between the European Union and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas amending the Agreement between the European Community and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas on the short-stay visa waiver		
References	12389/2017 – C8-0173/2018 – COM(2017)0394 – 2017/0169(NLE)		
Date of consultation / request for consent	30.4.2018		
Committee responsible Date announced in plenary	LIBE 28.5.2018		
Rapporteurs Date appointed	Emilian Pavel 25.9.2017		
Discussed in committee	21.11.2017	20.2.2018	27.9.2018
Date adopted	27.9.2018		
Result of final vote	+: -: 0:	34 1 0	
Members present for the final vote	Asim Ademov, Caterina Chinnici, Daniel Dalton, Rachida Dati, Tanja Fajon, Ana Gomes, Nathalie Griesbeck, Sylvie Guillaume, Kinga Gál, Barbara Kudrycka, Cécile Kashetu Kyenge, Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Péter Niedermüller, Ivari Padar, Judith Sargentini, Birgit Sippel, Helga Stevens, Csaba Sógor, Traian Ungureanu, Bodil Valero, Marie-Christine Vergiat, Cecilia Wikström, Auke Zijlstra, Sophia in 't Veld		
Substitutes present for the final vote	Carlos Coelho, Pál Csáky, Jeroen Lenaers, Innocenzo Leontini, Andrejs Mamikins, Emilian Pavel, John Procter, Róza Gräfin von Thun und Hohenstein		
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Georg Mayer, Sabine Verheyen		
Date tabled	2.10.2018		

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

34	+
ALDE	Nathalie Griesbeck, Sophia in 't Veld, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Cecilia Wikström
ECR	Daniel Dalton, John Procter, Helga Stevens
ENF	Georg Mayer
GUE/NGL	Marie-Christine Vergiat
PPE	Asim Ademov, Carlos Coelho, Pál Csáky, Rachida Dati, Kinga Gál, Barbara Kudrycka, Jeroen Lenaers, Innocenzo Leontini, Csaba Sógor, Róza Gräfin von Thun und Hohenstein, Traian Ungureanu, Sabine Verheyen
S&D	Caterina Chinnici, Tanja Fajon, Ana Gomes, Sylvie Guillaume, Cécile Kashetu Kyenge, Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Andrejs Mamikins, Péter Niedermüller, Ivari Padar, Emilian Pavel, Birgit Sippel
VERTS/ALE	Judith Sargentini, Bodil Valero

1	-
ENF	Auke Zijlstra

0	0

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention