II

(Non-legislative acts)

INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

COUNCIL DECISION (EU) 2022/1974

of 13 October 2022

on the signing, on behalf of the Union, of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Cooperative Republic of Guyana on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the European Union

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 207(4), first subparagraph, in conjunction with Article 218(5) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Whereas:

(1) On 21 May 2003, the Commission adopted a communication to the Council and the European Parliament entitled 'Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT): Proposal for an EU Action Plan'. The Action Plan set out in that communication ('the FLEGT Action Plan') called for measures to address illegal logging by developing voluntary partnership agreements with timber-producing countries. The Council adopted its conclusions on the FLEGT Action Plan on 13 October 2003 and the European Parliament adopted its resolution on the subject on 11 July 2005.

(2) On 5 December 2005, the Council authorised the Commission to open negotiations with timber-producing countries on partnership agreements to implement the FLEGT Action Plan.

(3) On 20 December 2005, the Council adopted Regulation (EC) No 2173/2005 ([1]) which established a FLEGT licensing scheme for imports of timber into the Union from countries with which the Union has concluded voluntary partnership agreements.

(4) The negotiations with the Cooperative Republic of Guyana in view of the conclusion of a Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Cooperative Republic of Guyana on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the European Union ('the Agreement') were successfully concluded with the initialling of the Agreement on 23 November 2018.

(5) The Agreement should be signed, subject to its conclusion at a later date,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The signing on behalf of the Union of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Cooperative Republic of Guyana on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the European Union is hereby authorised, subject to the conclusion of the said Agreement ([2]).

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 2173/2005 of 20 December 2005 on the establishment of a FLEGT licensing scheme for imports of timber into the European Community (OJ L 347, 30.12.2005, p. 1).

([2]) The text of the Agreement will be published together with the decision on its conclusion.

Article 2

The President of the Council is hereby authorised to designate the person(s) empowered to sign the Agreement on behalf of the Union.

Article 3

This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.

Done at Luxembourg, 13 October 2022.

For the Council
The President
P. BLAŽEK