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#### LEGISLATIVE ACTS AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS

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Subject: RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE JOINT IMPLEMENTATION  
COMMITTEE established pursuant to Article 18 of the Voluntary  
Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Socialist  
Republic of Viet Nam on forest law enforcement, governance and trade

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RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE JOINT IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

established pursuant to Article 18 of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement  
between the European Union and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam  
on forest law enforcement, governance and trade ('the Agreement')

*Article 1*

*Composition and Chairs*

1. The Joint Implementation Committee ('JIC') is composed as provided for in Article 18 of the Agreement.
2. The JIC shall be jointly chaired by the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam on behalf of the European Union and by the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development on behalf of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

*Article 2*

*Representation*

Each Party shall inform the other of the intended composition of its delegation in advance of all JIC meetings.

*Article 3*  
*Observers and experts*

The Chairs of the JIC, in agreement with the Parties, may invite experts and observers to attend JIC meetings in order to provide information on specific subjects and, as useful, to assist in the implementation of the Agreement.

*Article 4*  
*Working groups and subsidiary bodies*

The Parties may by mutual agreement establish working groups or other subsidiary bodies, including:

- (i) joint expert groups to support the work of the JIC on a technical level and to explore technical issues, as deemed necessary;
- (ii) any other bodies deemed appropriate by the JIC.

*Article 5*  
*Secretariat*

An official of the Delegation of the European Union to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and an official of the Administration of Forestry under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam shall jointly act as the Secretariat of the JIC in order to provide administrative support to the JIC and the bodies that it decides to establish.

*Article 6*  
*Correspondence*

1. In accordance with Article 20 of the Agreement, the representatives of the Parties responsible for official communications concerning the implementation of the Agreement shall be the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.
2. All correspondence addressed to the JIC shall be directed to the JIC Secretariat.
3. The JIC Secretariat shall ensure that correspondence addressed to the JIC is forwarded to the two Chairs of the JIC and, where appropriate, circulated in accordance with Article 9 of these Rules of Procedure to all other members of the JIC.
4. Correspondence from either of the Chairs of the JIC shall be sent to the recipients by the JIC Secretariat and, where appropriate, circulated in accordance with Article 9 of these Rules of Procedure to all other members of the JIC.

*Article 7*  
*Meetings*

1. The JIC shall meet at least twice a year in the first two years and once per year thereafter, on a date and with an agenda agreed in advance by the Parties.

2. Additional meetings may take place, if the Parties so agree, at the request of either Party whenever circumstances so require. Such additional meetings may be held in person or by video conference if mutually agreed by the Parties.
3. The meetings of the JIC shall be convened by the JIC Secretariat.

#### *Article 8*

##### *Agenda for the meetings*

1. A provisional agenda for each JIC meeting shall be drafted by the JIC Secretariat on the basis of proposals made by the Parties. It shall be forwarded to the Chairs and members of the JIC no later than fifteen (15) working days before the beginning of the meeting.
2. Additions or changes to the agenda must be received by the JIC Secretariat no later than ten (10) working days before the beginning of the meeting, although such items will not be included in the provisional agenda unless the relevant supporting documents have been received by the Secretariat no later than ten (10) working days before the meeting.
3. The agenda shall be adopted by the JIC at the beginning of each meeting. Any item other than those appearing on the provisional agenda may be placed on the agenda if the Parties mutually agree.
4. With the agreement of the Parties, the JIC Secretariat may shorten the time limits specified in paragraph 1 in order to take account of the circumstances of a particular case.

*Article 9*  
*Documents*

Each Party shall send all relevant documents to the JIC Secretariat at least ten (10) working days prior to the next JIC meeting. Documents that will not necessarily affect the deliberations of the JIC may be sent at any time before the next JIC meeting.

*Article 10*  
*Decisions and recommendations*

1. Where empowered to do so under the Agreement, the JIC shall adopt decisions and recommendations by consensus.
2. In the period between meetings, the JIC may adopt decisions or recommendations by written procedure if both Parties so agree. A written procedure shall consist of an exchange of notes between the Parties. The Chairs of the JIC shall have the power to exchange such notes and to confirm the agreement on any decision, as necessary.
3. Decisions and recommendations of the JIC shall be entitled ‘Decision’ and ‘Recommendation’, respectively, and followed by a serial number, the date of their adoption and a description of their subject. Each decision shall provide for the date of its entry into force.

4. Decisions and recommendations adopted by the JIC shall be authenticated by the representative of the European Union in the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development on behalf of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.
5. Decisions and recommendations shall be forwarded to each of the Chairs of the JIC.

#### *Article 11*

##### *Minutes of meetings*

1. Both Parties shall jointly prepare minutes at the conclusion of each JIC meeting. The minutes of each meeting shall be signed and made public.
2. The minutes of each meeting shall include any statement or decision that either Party has requested to include.
3. The minutes of each meeting shall be prepared in both English and Vietnamese.

#### *Article 12*

##### *Field missions*

If either Party requests to conduct a joint field mission related to the Agreement, both Parties shall mutually agree on the terms of reference and timeframe for the mission.

*Article 13*

*Languages*

1. The working languages of the JIC shall be English and Vietnamese.
2. The JIC shall base its deliberations and adopt decisions and recommendations on documentation and proposals prepared in English and Vietnamese.

*Article 14*

*Expenses*

Each Party shall meet any expenses it incurs as a result of participating in the meetings of the JIC, both with regard to staff, travel and subsistence expenditure and with regard to postal and telecommunications expenditure.

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