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**NEGOTIATING POSITION  
ON CHAPTER 17  
SCIENCE AND RESEARCH**

***OVERALL POSITION***

The Republic of Bulgaria accepts and will implement in full the *acquis* in the field of Science and Research.

As a working hypothesis, the Bulgarian Government considers that Bulgaria will become a member of the EU on 01.01.2007.

No derogations or transitional periods in this area will be requested.

***ACQUIS ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION***

Through Association Council Decision 4/1999 of 30.07.1999 adopting the terms and conditions for the participation of Bulgaria in Community programmes in the field of research, technological development and demonstration, and in Programmes for research and training activities (1998-2002), the relevant *acquis* was incorporated into the national legislation.

Bulgaria commits itself to adhere to the existing agreements between the EU and third countries as of the date of accession.

Bulgaria is also a member of the EU Programme for Cooperation in the Field of Scientific and Technical Research - COST.

Following the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria of 20 May 1999 and the exchange of letters between Bulgaria and EU, the country has opened up its national science and research programmes and activities, corresponding to these of the Community Fifth Framework Programme, to the participation of research entities established in the Community.

On the basis of a number of agreements on bilateral scientific, technological and technical co-operation with EU member-states and third parties, scientific programmes and projects in all fields of science are being implemented. Currently Bulgaria is a member of more than 30 international and European scientific organisations and takes part in the management bodies of many of them.

All institutional infrastructures necessary for the implementation of the EU legislation in the area of Science and research are in place and will be functioning in full compliance with the *acquis* by the date of accession of Bulgaria to the EU.

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The Bulgarian government proposes the negotiations on this chapter to be provisionally closed on the basis of the existing *acquis*.

Should new elements of the *acquis* make it necessary, Bulgaria recognizes the possibility of opening supplementary negotiations before the end of the Intergovernmental conference.