Community Tobacco Fund: transfer of tobacco aid (2008 and 2009) and financing of the Fund

2008/0020(CNS) - 17/04/2008

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development adopted the report by Sergio **BERLATO** (UEN, IT) amending the proposal for a Council regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1782/2003 as regards the transfer of tobacco aid to the Community Tobacco Fund for the years 2008 and 2009 and Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 with regard to financing of the Community Tobacco Fund.

The European Commission proposes to extend the financing of the Community Tobacco Fund for the next two harvest years (2008 and 2009, budget years 2009 and 2010), in order to bring it in line with Article 110j of Council Regulation (EC) No 1782/2003. In practice, it is planned to transfer an amount equal to 5% of the tobacco aid granted for the calendar years 2008 and 2009 to the Community Tobacco Fund, in order to finance actions of information to improve public awareness of the negative effects of tobacco consumption.

MEPs believe that the proposal to make an unscheduled deduction in the aid for the calendar year 2008 could give rise to a plethora of legal actions or, at any event, to a dispute, which would ultimately cause grave prejudice to farmers alone. The Community Tobacco Fund must continue to receive support and be revitalised, according to the report.

Consequently, the Committee on Agriculture proposes to extend the financing of the Community Tobacco Fund **until the harvest year 2012** and to increase the percentage rate of the deduction for the Fund to **6%**. MEPs believe that these two elements could constitute a financial contribution of EUR 81 million, which would be enough to cover actions under the Community Tobacco Fund until the year 2013.