Resolution on the regulation applying a scheme of generalised tariff preferences

2010/2594(RSP) - 10/03/2010 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Following the debate during the sitting of 9 March 2010 concerning oral question O-0022/2010 on the Regulation applying a scheme of generalised tariff preferences (GSP), the European Parliament adopted by 349 votes to 255, with 61 abstentions, a resolution on the regulation applying the GSP (see CNS/2007/0289).

The text adopted in plenary had been tabled as a joint resolution by the EPP, S&D, ALDE, Greens/EFA, ECR and GUE/NGL political groups.

It notes that the current GSP regulation (Council Regulation (EC) No 732/2008) will expire on 31 December 2011, and therefore, taking into account the time necessary for the adoption of a new regulation under the ordinary legislative procedure (OLP), Parliament calls on the Commission to propose a revised GSP regulation to the European Parliament and the Council **by 1 June 2010**.

Parliament states that it recognises the importance of the GSP, which allows developed countries to offer non-reciprocal preferential treatment in respect of products originating in developing countries. The creation of the GSP by the European Community in 1971 was explained as being an instrument for resolving trade imbalances between developed and developing countries and was expected to contribute to their sustainable development. Members consider that it has been an EC and EU trade instrument to assist developing countries by generating revenue through international trade, thus contributing to their sustainable development and good governance.

They feel that the preferences granted under the GSP should be **targeted on the developing countries that need them most**, so that the new list of beneficiary countries should reflect the actual economic situation of developing countries. All countries benefiting from the GSP+ scheme should not only ratify but also **effectively implement all 27 ILO and UN conventions listed in Annex III to the GSP Regulation**. They stress the need for more transparency and democratic accountability on how the investigation processes are initiated and conducted, and ask to be involved at all the various stages of GSP and GSP+ procedures, including with regard to the Council proposal on the lists of beneficiary countries.

Parliament calls on the Commission to do the following:

- pursue a coherent policy on GSP+, particularly when addressing possible suspension of the scheme in the event of human rights violations, and to fully involve Parliament in the process;
- submit to the European Parliament and the Council - before the present regulation ceases to apply and in time for discussion of the next regulation - a report on the state of ratification and implementation of the 27 conventions by each country benefiting from the special incentive arrangements;
- define, in its revised GSP regulation, the monitoring bodies which are to recommend whether additional steps for the effective implementation of a convention should be taken by a specific country;
- evaluate the effectiveness of the special incentive arrangements in fulfilling their aim and recommend, where appropriate, revision of Annex III;

- make provision in its revised GSP regulation for a regular assessment of compliance by each beneficiary country with its commitments under GSP+, and thus ensure that none of the reasons set out in Article 15(1) and (2) and Article 16(1) and (2) for the temporary withdrawal of preferential arrangements applies;
- conduct an impact assessment of the effects of the GSP over the period from 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2009, before revision of the system, and to evaluate how its initial aims have been met as regards the specific socio-economic indicators relevant for each country, and, in particular, **poverty reduction**;
- ensure the results of the impact assessment are taken into consideration in the new regulation;
- submit the report and impact assessment to Parliament and Council.

Lastly, Parliament wants the Commission to closely monitor the situation in Sri Lanka and the human rights situation in Colombia and to report to Parliament.