2009 disharge: Clean Sky Joint Undertaking

2010/2189(DEC) - 21/03/2011

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Georgios STAVRAKAKIS (S&D, EL) on discharge to be granted to the Executive Director of the Clean Sky Joint Undertaking in respect of the implementation of the Undertaking's budget for the financial year 2009.

Noting that the Undertaking's annual accounts for the financial year 2009 are reliable, and the underlying transactions are legal and regular, MEPs approve the closure of the Undertaking's accounts. However, they make a number of recommendations that need to be taken into account when the discharge is granted, in addition to the general recommendations that appear in the draft resolution on financial management and control of EU agencies (see DEC/2010/2271):

- **implementation of the budget:** Members note that the Joint Undertaking's final 2009 budget included commitment appropriations of EUR 91 million and payment appropriations of EUR 60 million and that the utilisation rates for commitment and payment appropriations were 98 % and less than 1%, respectively. Although the Joint Undertaking is still in a start-up period; Members are concerned, nevertheless, that the research activities pre-financed by the Commission in 2008 on its behalf were not fully implemented during 2009 and that, as a result of delays in the projects, only EUR 8.7 million or 65% of the EUR 13.6 million pre-financing was used. Members are particularly concerned that the adoption, structure and presentation of the approved budget of the Joint Undertaking for 2009 were not in line with Regulation (EC) No 71/2008 setting up the Clean Sky Joint Undertaking, or with the Financial Rules of the Joint Undertaking. They therefore urge the Joint undertaking to rapidly remedy this grave deficiency;
- **Members' contributions:** Members call on the Joint Undertaking to harmonise the presentation of members' contributions in the Accounts under the guidance of the Commission;
- **internal control systems**: Members urge the Joint Undertaking to complete the implementation of its internal controls and financial information system. They invite it to include in its Financial Rules a specific reference to the powers of the Internal Audit Service of the Commission as its internal auditor. They consider that the role of the Commission as internal auditor should be to advise the Joint Undertaking on dealing with risks, by issuing independent opinions on the quality of management and control systems and by issuing recommendations for improving the conditions of implementation of operations and promoting sound financial management. They also consider it essential that the Joint Undertaking submit to the discharge authority a report drawn up by its director summarising the number and the type of internal audits conducted by the internal auditor. In view of the size of its budget and the complexity of its tasks, the Joint Undertaking should consider establishing an audit committee, reporting directly to the Administrative Board;
- **lack of host agreement:** Members urge the Joint Undertaking to rapidly conclude a host agreement with Belgium.