2011 discharge: European Joint Undertaking for ITER and the Development of Fusion Energy (Fusion for Energy)

2012/2215(DEC) - 21/03/2013 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Gerben-Jan GERBRANDY (ADLE, NL) on discharge to be granted to the Director of the European Joint Undertaking for ITER and the Development of Fusion Energy in respect of the implementation of the Joint Undertaking's budget for the financial year 2011.

Noting that the Court of Auditors stated that it has obtained reasonable assurances that the annual accounts of the Joint Undertaking for the financial year 2011 are reliable and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Members 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 performance, financial management and control of EU agencies:

- **Financing, budget and financial management**: Members recall that at the creation of the Joint Undertaking the indicative total resources deemed necessary for the period 2007 to 2014 were EUR 9.653 million.
- **Implementation rate of appropriations and carryovers**: Members note that the utilisation rates for the available commitment and payment appropriations were 99.7% and 85.7% respectively and that out of the EUR 611 000 000 of commitment appropriations available for operational activities, 42 % were implemented through direct individual commitments while the remaining 58% was implemented through global commitments.

The report notes that the Joint Undertaking needs to enhance its efforts to increase competition as the number of offers received for the operational procurement procedures signed in 2011 was still low and amounted to two on average while for grants the average number of proposals received was only one per call. **Members reiterate that the Joint Undertaking must find value for money in all possible acquisitions**.

Members also made a series of observations as regards the Undertaking's procurement procedures, its internal control standards, intellectual property rights and industrial policy, the Union's contribution to ITER construction phase.

Lastly, Members reiterate the invitation for the Court of Auditors to provide, within a reasonable deadline, a special report to Parliament on common issues which occur due to the nature of the joint undertakings in order to ensure their **added value and efficient execution of Union research, technological development and demonstration programmes. They further note that the same report should include an assessment of the effectiveness of the joint undertakings' establishment and structure**.