Humanitarian aid

1995/0119(SYN) - 20/05/1996

The rapporteur, Mrs SAUQUILLO PEREZ DEL ARCO (PSE, E), recommended voting in favour of the common position of the Council, with three amendments that were aimed at exempting from taxes, levies and customs duties those activities that provided humanitarian aid and at strengthening relations with aid organisations. According to the rapporteur, this regulation would be effective and would also enable humanitarian aid to be delivered quickly. Commissioner Bonino agreed with those Members who had called for a greater level of preventive diplomacy, the right of humanitarian intervention and actions to clear anti-personnel mines. However, she said that given current EU powers in this area emergency aid was in need of a legal basis. As regards the amendments, the Commission was prepared to accept No 1, but in respect of Amendment No 2 on comitology the Commission could, in emergency cases, assume its responsibilities in accordance with the compromise agreed in the common position; finally, the Commission was unable to include Amendment No 3 in the Council Regulation as it stood, though was prepared to make a political statement designed to strengthen the process of consultation with NGOs, in accordance with the spirit of the amendment.