EC/Turkey relations: special financial cooperation measures

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The rapporteur, Mr SCHWAIGER, welcomed the many projects that had been undertaken: providing greater support for the correct functioning of the administrative services, for the promotion of democracy under the rule of law and for promoting the role of women. Turkey would moreover introduce a programme of reforms that had been approved by the international financial institutions. The Commission would then provide Parliament with an annual report on the implementation of the aid programme and, along with the EIB, would assess the main projects undertaken. However, the rapporteur was not satisfied with two points, which he considered were of essential importance: the Council's refusal to take a majority-based decision on suspending aid in the event that a violation of human rights or of the rule of law were to be observed, and the absence of any formal consultation of Parliament in the event of the aid in question being suspended. For this reason the process of consultation with the Council should be continued. Commissioner van den Broek said that he was ready to act as Parliament's spokesman to the Council in order to inform the latter of the Members' demands. In addition, in the event of a human rights violation the Commission was willing to provide Parliament with the details of its proposal for suspending cooperation with Turkey. In such a case the Commissioner said that he was almost certain that the Council would unanimously approve the proposal for suspension; besides, this was what had happened when cooperation with Niger was suspended. The Council's representative had been absent from the meeting throughout the debate, when Mr Falconer (PSE, UK), Mr Dankaert (PSE, NL) and others had repeatedly called for Council intervention.