Energy Charter and Protocol on energy efficiency and related environmental aspects

1995/0237(AVC) - 17/02/1997

While stressing that the EU’s dependence on imported energy could increase from the current figure of 50% to around 75% by 2015, the rapporteur recalled the approach which had led to the signing, in September 1995, of the Energy Charter Treaty and Protocol. According to the rapporteur, the Protocol formed a good basis for more exacting environmental protection. However, she regretted that the Treaty and Protocol had no legally binding provisions on environmental protection. She called for new projects and measures to be implemented under the Treaty to be preceded by a compulsory Environmental Impact Assessment. Commissioner Wulf-Mathies pointed out that the Energy Charter was a political declaration of intent without any legally binding force. Indicating that 49 countries (excluding the United States of America) plus the European Union had signed the Treaty to date, the Commissioner highlighted the importance of the Charter’s ratification as, within the European Union, only nine Member States had completed the ratification procedure. Against this background, she highlighted the positive role which the Charter would play in promoting cooperation between East and West in the energy sector.