General authorizations and individual licences in the field of telecommunications services (common framework)

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The rapporteur, Mr VAN VELZEN (EPP, NL), called for the setting-up of a European framework regulation, since the Community telecommunications market would be largely opened up in the majority of Member States by 1 January 1998. After this date common rules would apply to all telecommunications services and infrastructures. The rapporteur wanted to see the authorisation schemes include rules for both telecommunications services and infrastructures, but he regretted that the deadlines proposed by the Commission were set so far ahead. Mr van Velzen was also keen to see a European regulatory authority that would more effectively discharge the supervisory functions entrusted to the Commission and to the national authorities. Finally, he wanted to see the conditions accompanying the general authorisations being published in the official journal of the Member States as well as in the Official Journal of the European Communities. Commissioner Bangemann declared that the current regulations did not prohibit the implementation of a set of rules for the Community telecommunications sector. It was not a matter of codifying all the different sets of legislation but rather of drawing up a framework legislation that would incorporate the main principles (universal service, competition, etc.) and in which each directive, along with any amendments that might prove necessary, would find its own place. Mr Bangemann said that he supported the creation of a European body that would be responsible for taking the most important practical decisions. Finally, he declared that he was unable to accept those amendments that might cause confusion because they were inconsistent with the text put forward by the Commission; the amendments rejected included Amendments Nos 1, 2, 8, 10, 26 and 27.