Annual report on progress in the field of common foreign and security policy (Article J.7, Treaty on European Union)

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The Committee on Foreign Affairs, Common Security and Defence Policy adopted the report by Mr MATUTES on progress with the implementation of the Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (November 1993 - December 1994). In the first part of his report, Mr MATUTES urges the Council to inform the European Parliament of developments in the area of the CFSP and to consult it on the main aspects and basic options of this new policy. Similarly, he calls on the Commission to make greater use of its right to present proposals in this area. Mr. MATUTES calls for an interinstitutional agreement on the application of Article J.7 of the Treaty and the problem of funding the CFSP to be concluded quickly so that better account can be taken of Parliament's demands in this area. Parliament states that it is prepared to make a flexible and efficient contribution to foreign policy and security decisions. As regards progress with the CFSP since November 1993, the report highlights a number of defects, mainly due to the intergovernmental nature of the policy and the need for unanimity before any action is taken. In particular, the report stresses that the CFSP still falls well below public expectations, as the harrowing examples of the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda illustrate. In Mr MATUTES's opinion, the CFSP will suffer as the result of the lack of a common perception of the security interests of the Union. The European Parliament therefore proposes that the Union set up an analysis and evaluation centre to carry out an on-going assessment of risks and threats to the Union. As regards the definition of the concept of the "security interest of the Union", the report calls on the Council to make use of the historical and political experience of the Member States in order to define a "European" policy of prevention, security, stability, disarmament and cooperation with the CEECs and the Mediterranean basin. In the second part of his report, Mr MATUTES addresses the problem of the definition of common security, calling for the 1996 intergovernmental conference to reiterate the principle of solidarity between the Member States and insert a mutual assistance clause in the Treaty, especially where the borders of Member States are violated. With regard to defence, the report calls on the intergovernmental conference to address the future of the WEO and a practical definition of European defence. In particular, it finds the fact that the Member States of the WEO have differing status to be unsatisfactory and feels that the European Parliament should be able to play a part in drawing up and controlling the defence policy of Europe. With regard to the development of joint actions, the report stresses that the scope of these actions should be enlarged when the Treaty is revised and that the unanimity rule should be severely curtailed. In the last part of his report, Mr MATUTES reviews the main geographical zones with which the European Union should strengthen ties: Asia and the Pacific, the continent of South America, the Mediterranean basin (with which Europe must strengthen relations without fail, especially given the rise in fundamentalism), the Middle East/Caucasus zone and the Baltic states. Finally, in the diplomatic area, the Union should have its own diplomatic machinery: Mr MATUTES specifically raises the option of promoting Commission delegations in third countries to the rank of European Union embassies. Similarly, the Union should be able to set up its own information collection resources (with its own system of satellites).