The environment, security and Foreign Affairs

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The Committee adopted the report by Ms THEORIN by a large majority. The report starts from two assumptions: firstly, comprehensive disarmament in the military field in general, and in nuclear weapons in particular, has released substantial military resources; secondly, the risk of catastrophic damage to the environment has not significantly diminished, in particular because an entire arsenal of nuclear weapons is still in existence. The committee says that atmospheric and underground nuclear tests have caused considerable environmental damage in the test areas. It therefore calls on the military to end all activities which contribute to damaging the environment and argues that the "polluter-pays" principle should apply to military activities. The report also proposes practical measures, such as using military-related resources for environmental protection to make up for the lack of resources available for dealing with environmental problems, for example by establishing a European environmental protection brigade. The committee calls on the Member States to develop environmentally-sound technology for the destruction of weapons, a problem which is particularly acute in the case of biological and chemical weapons. Finally, the report draws attention to the worrying situation in Russia, where the deteriorating condition of stocks of nuclear arms and material makes the conclusion of an agreement to continue eliminating such weapons more urgent than ever.