Baltic region: initiative to inforce the regional cooperation

1996/2099(COS) - 26/05/1997

With the unanimous adoption, less one abstentio of the report of Staffan BURENSTAM LINDER (EPP, S) on the political aspects of economic and security cooperation in the Baltic region, the committee called for swift ratification of the European agreements signed in June 1995 with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. These countries must increase cooperation with each other but also with the other countries in the region, including Russia, in order to strengthen their common position with a view to their joining the EU. The Commission is asked to improve the quality of aid provided to the Baltic countries in order to support their reform effort. Their membership of the EU will ensure greater political stability in the region, increase security for Europe as a whole and economic advantages both for the EU and for the countries in question. Additional measures are also necessary to improve regional infrastructure, to combat pollution in the Baltic region more effectively and to secure a level of nuclear safety, particularly in Lithuania and the Russian Federation, in line with Western standards. The Council is requested to use its influence with Russia to facilitate the conclusion of an agreement between her and Estonia on their borders. The Commission is urged to cooperate with the Baltic Sea Council and with other international organisations (OSCE, Council of Europe, Barents Sea Council) so as to promote stability in the region. Meetings between the European Parliament and the parliaments of the countries bordering the Baltic would be useful in strengthening political cooperation and preparing for economic integration in the EU.