Human rights in the world. Annual report 1995-1996

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Compelling the EU to take specific action to enforce human rights is the stated objective of the rapporteur on human rights in the world in 1995-1996, Mrs Catherine LALUMIERE (ERA, F). Unanimously adopted by the committee (chairman: Gerardo FERNANDEZ-ALBOR (EPP,E)), the report records, despite the efforts of the EU, 'an upsurge in the most barbarous forms of violence' and a 'resurgence of ethnic regional conflicts such as those in the former Yugoslavia, Chechnya, Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire, that affecting the Kurdish people, etc. Any agreements concluded between the EU and third countries must include a human rights clause. It was essential to adopt 'a procedure which would enable binding steps to be taken in the event of human rights violations.' Each specific local situation' should be monitored closely. However, more than this was required: the EU should 'equip itself with the necessary means to take action in humanitarian and peace-keeping missions.' To this end, the CFSP must spell out the forms of such intervention, and all the instruments with which it intends to equip itself. Should there be a need for 'military intervention', this should only take place as part of a 'United Nations mandate and under the control of the competent UN bodies.' Other priorities, include unconditional political backing, including funding for existing international criminal tribunals with the aim of transforming them into a permanent International Criminal Court, launching programmes for reconciliation of the civilian population and rehabilitation of victims of torture, rape and psychological trauma. There should be a Commissioner responsible for human rights, and the Commission is also called on to upgrade its specialised departments and ensure that they work together with their counterparts in Parliament. The Commission should submit to Parliament a document listing all the appropriations earmarked for human rights. The committee is calling on the IGC to spell out in the new Treaty 'the legal powers that it needs with regard to human rights' since these powers were necessary for the EU to accede directly to international legal instruments.