Relations EU/Canada

1996/2248(COS) - 14/04/1997

The committee adopted the report by Mr Antonio Graziani (PPE, I) on relations between the European Union and Canada. Recalling the political declaration and the joint action plan signed on 17 December 1996, the committee emphasized the need to redefine transatlantic relations so that Canada was accorded the importance which it deserved as a political and commercial partner of the European Union. Unless relations were better defined, the committee feared that Canada would start to look more towards the Pacific zone. However, the rapporteur considered that there were areas of common interest. First, both partners would benefit if trade were liberalized and the WTO strengthened. The report welcomed the convergent approach by Canada and the Union as far as the "unacceptable" nature of the Helms-Burton and Amato acts was concerned. However, the committee deplored the fact that a number of commercial sectoral problems continued to persist between the European Union and Canada and therefore called on Canada to review its present and future legislation in the fisheries sector, which contained provisions which violated international law. Another point of divergence was hunting and the trade in animal furs, which needed to be regulated through negotiation.