European Union's relations with the New Independent States of central Asia

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The Committee voted to endorse the report by Peter Truscott (PES, UK) on the Commission's communication on developing a strategy for relations with the independent states of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). Mr Truscott's resolution recognises the role that the EU's Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, which are expected to come into force this year, will play. He stresses the great economic potential of the region with substantial oil and gas resources and also its political importance, and wants the move towards market economies to be encouraged. However he expresses concern about the problems over the "appalling human rights record" of the region, and calls for the Commission to raise the issue in all meetings of the PCA bodies in Central Asia and to report back regularly on the situation in the five states concerned. He also calls for the EU to develop its economic and political relations with the Central Asian republics and to encourage the growth of efficient social market economies and democratic government.