Strategy for partnership EU/India

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There was support for a strong EU-India relationship in the Committee when it adopted the report by Anne Andre-Leonard (ELDR, B) on the communication from the Commission on an enhanced EU-India partnership. The Agreement is one of the new generation of agreements which seek to redefine the EU's external action by giving it a clearer identity and political consistency. India's economic reform programmes and the stable general conditions, despite the Asian economic crisis, have facilitated development of the EU-India partnership. However the Committee condemned the nuclear tests conducted both by India and Pakistan last year and called on India to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It also concluded that all states in the region, including China and Pakistan, should remove all nuclear threats in the region. There were other concerns about the tensions between religious castes and ethnic groups and a number of amendments were passed that urged the Indian government to take all necessary steps to protect religious freedoms. Other worries existed about the exploitation of children who are denied education opportunities by being forced into work, the need to improve health care in the country, and the importance of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.