Relations EU/Ukraine: common strategy

2000/2116(COS) - 27/02/2001

The committee adopted the report on Ukraine by Paavo VÄYRYNEN (ELDR, FIN). It felt that the adoption of the EU's common strategy on Ukraine was "highly appropriate" and that priority should be given to supporting that country's efforts to carry out internal reforms. Noting that the transition process had largely failed, the committee pointed out that the EU had a role to play in facilitating an economic upturn in Ukraine. The current pace of reform, at the very least, must be maintained and the authorities should regard the creation of an economic and political framework favourable to private enterprise and domestic investment as an absolute priority. The report deplored the fact that the rule of law had not been properly established in Ukraine and that the last parliamentary and presidential elections were not up to international standards. The committee also voiced deep concern at the murder of the journalist Georgiy Gongadze. It felt the main focuses of the TACIS programme to be appropriate but called for more attention to be devoted to the development of civil society, the promotion of independent media and to twinning and exchange programmes. The report welcomed the final closure of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, supported the granting of the Euratom K2R4 loan and urged the Commission to agree on a complete energy plan with the Ukrainian government. The Commission was also asked to provide aid for the establishment of a national system for monitoring greenhouse gases in Ukraine. The committee said that the EU could not for the time being agree to visa-free entry into its territory for Ukrainian citizens, but it wanted visas to be granted fairly easily. It also wanted the EU to help Ukraine improve its border control system and in particular to look at ways of combating trafficking in women more effectively. Lastly, the report pointed out that any European country was entitled to join the EU if it met the economic and political criteria and added that the EU should pay more attention to the non-candidate countries of eastern Europe.