EC/China relations: implementing the 1998 communication, measures to strenghten the Community policy

2001/2045(COS) - 26/02/2002

The committee adopted the report by Vasco GRAÇA MOURA (EPP-ED, P) on the Commission communication. Starting from the belief that enhanced cooperation was needed between the EU and China, the report focused on three main issues: trade, the Taiwan question and protection of human rights, especially in Tibet. While welcoming Beijing's support for the international fight against terrorism, it emphasised that this could in no way justify abuses of human rights and the rule of law. The report congratulated China on its recent accession to the WTO and expressed support for the economic and social reforms under way, while pointing out, nevertheless, that further progress was needed. The Commission was asked to bring forward proposals for an updated and more consistent partnership agreement. The committee also said that environmental issues and the question of sustainable development must not be neglected by the Chinese authorities. On the subject of Taiwan, the report highlighted the EU's support for the one-China policy, while stressing its commitment to a peaceful resolution of the dispute through dialogue and mutual confidence-building between Beijing and Taipei. Acknowledging the democratic process under way in Taiwan, MEPs urged the two sides to engage in talks as soon as possible. While not overlooking the progress made on human rights, the committee urged China to achieve tangible results, in particular by implementing without delay the UN Conventions that Beijing had ratified. In response to the growing number of executions, the use of torture, the trafficking in human body parts - often taken from prisoners - and restrictions on the media, the report called for the abolition of the death penalty and speedier reform of the justice system. The committee believed that the 2008 Olympic Games would provide an opportunity for China to move in the right direction and wanted an international monitoring procedure to be put in place to observe the run-up to this event. On the question of Tibet, the committee expressed concern about imprisoned monks and stressed that the rights and specificity of religious and ethnic minorities should be fully respected. In conclusion, it reiterated Parliament's demand for Tibet to be granted autonomy within the Republic of China and called on the Chinese Government to resume direct negotiations with the Dalaï Lama.