The European Union and the region of Kaliningrad

2001/2046(COS) - 23/04/2002

The committee unanimously adopted the report by Magdalene HOFF (PES, D) on the Commission communication. It reaffirmed that the Kaliningrad area is and will remain an inseparable part of the Russian Federation and that responsibility for the region therefore lies with Russia, but said that the EU should make every effort, under the partnership and cooperation agreement, to help create favourable conditions for the region's development. It therefore endorsed the intention of the Council and the Commission to find solutions that take account of the special situation of the Kaliningrad area. The committee also made a number of practical recommendations, which included urging the Commission to work together with the authorities of Kaliningrad to improve border crossing infrastructures and speed up customs and border formalities. In particular, the Russian border and customs authorities needed to ensure that their staff had a "modern attitude geared to the needs of citizens". The committee also called for consideration to be given to the idea of opening an EU consulate in Kaliningrad and added that the idea of setting up Russo-European frontier patrols along the eastern external borders should not be ruled out. Lastly, the committee said that cooperation with regard to Kaliningrad could only succeed if certain conditions were met, in particular "good governance", i.e. efficient administration, enforcement of laws and effective measures against corruption.