Progress achieved in implementing the Common Foreign and security policy CFSP (Article 21 TEU)

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report by its chairman, Elmar BROK (EPP-ED, D), on the Council's annual report on progress made in implementing the common foreign and security policy (CFSP). The committee stressed that the EU must stand for a comprehensive notion of security, using a range of instruments including aid, trade and diplomacy, and make conflict prevention the guiding principle of its foreign policy. The events of 11 September 2001, it said, had speeded up the development of the CFSP and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), as well as their implementation in multilateral crisis management. The EU had thereby strengthened its historic partnership with the United States, in particular within the strategic quartet whose other members are Russia and the United Nations. On the Middle East, MEPs were convinced that the EU could exert influence in the peace process only in cooperation with the quartet and the other countries concerned. They also called for an international peace conference to be convened, based on the principle of the peaceful coexistence of two states - Israel and Palestine. The report also welcomed recent statements by some EU Foreign Ministers against military intervention in Iraq, while deploring the fact that the Council, the only decision-taking body of the EU in the area of CFSP, had remained silent on the international events of this summer, thereby giving the United States a free hand and paving the way for unilateral action by the Member States. MEPs repeated their view that the tasks of the High Representative and the Commissioner for External Relations should be merged within the Commission and that this new office should be answerable to the European Parliament . In due course this should lead to the shaping of a common European diplomacy. With regard to the ESDP, the committee argued that priority should be given to reaching agreement between the EU and NATO on access to the latter's military facilities and capabilities. In this connection it regarded the attitude of Turkey as unacceptable. The committee also wanted the EU to be in a position to carry out peace enforcement operations. In addition there was a call for a European Armaments Agency to be set up and for Member States to further rationalise their military capabilities, while at the same time increasing their military spending. Elsewhere MEPs called for the joint costs of military operations to be funded from the Community budget. A constructive dialogue with the United States was strongly advocated and the report welcomed the entry into force of the Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court. The committee called on Washington to come back to a multilateral decision-making process in accordance with its role as major global player. Other foreign policy areas covered in the resolution included Kosovo and the Mediterranean and Asian countries. Lastly, the committee believed that particular attention should be focused on the at times worrying situation regarding human rights, democracy, good governance and the rule of law in some of the EU partner countries.