Repercussions in the case of the MED programmes

1998/2139(INI) - 29/10/1998

The Committee adopted (with one vote against and one abstention) the report by Juan Manuel FABRA VALLES (EPP, E) on the repercussions of the MED programme affair. This issue was one of the factors which led Parliament to defer granting the discharge to the Commission on March 31st. The MED programmes are the decentralised cooperation programmes with the Mediterranean countries which ran up to 1996. In the implementation of these programmes, incorrectly made payments have been identified to the value of ECU 10 million over the period 1993-96. The committee has reaffirmed its position to the effect that it is up to national judicial authorities to decide on any criminal sanctions. The report calls on the Commission for the third and final time to forward the entire MED file, including the new additional facts on irregularities, to the Belgian, French and Italian authorities by 1st December 1998. Should the Commission fail to respond to this demand, the committee proposes that Parliament consider whether to forward all the documents in its possession relating to this matter to the judicial authorities and to bring an action against the Commission for failure to act, pursuant to Article 175 of the Treaty. The committee believes the Commission has undermined its own credibility on the disciplinary front and calls on it to face up to its responsibilities.