1998 discharge: EC general budget, Parliament

1999/2051(DEC) - 28/03/2000

The committee adopted the report by Helmut KUHNE (PES, D) proposing that Parliament's Secretary-General be granted a discharge for Parliament's 1998 budget. However, the committee stressed the need to ensure optimum use of resources in the area of calls for tender and said that use of the "direct treaty" procedure for granting contracts should remain the exception. On buildings policy, it deplored the Council's decision to oppose direct funding of the Altiero Spinelli building (D3), a decision which had left Parliament facing a number of problems. With regard to future buildings acquisitions, in particular the Louise Weiss building in Strasbourg, the President and Bureau of Parliament were asked to submit by 1 July 2000 a practical action and financing plan setting out various options as well as a legal assessment of those options. The report reiterated the request already made to the Commission for a legislative proposal to be submitted on a statute for European political parties and called on Parliament's competent committees to look at this issue as a matter of priority. It wanted the Bureau and Secretary-General to introduce complete transparency immediately regarding the use of budgetary appropriations and to indicate separately the appropriations allocated to European political parties. The Court of Auditors was asked to examine the finances of the political groups every two years. The committee would also like the Bureau, on a proposal from the Secretary-General, to draw up a long-term policy on appointments, in particular to high-level posts and for the recruitment of specialists to posts in financial control. In parallel to the Commission's reform process, the Secretary-General was asked to present a report by 30 June on Parliament's staff policy.