1998 discharge: follow-up. Report

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PURPOSE: to present a follow-up report from the Commission on the 1998 financial year. CONTENT: The objective of the Commission's follow-up report is to set out the measures it has taken in response to the observations accompanying the decisions giving discharge and other observations by the European Parliament concerning the implementation of expenditure, and to the comments accompanying the recommendations on discharge adopted by the Council. The report is divided into several parts. Part One of this report is addressed to the Council, following its recommendation with a view to the European Parliament's vote on discharge. The aim here is to set out the measurs it has taken in response to the observations by the European Parliament concerning the implementation of expenditure, and to the comments accompanying the recommendations on discharge adopted by the Council. In addition, there are two annexes. The first annex, addressed to the Council, is a response to its Recommendation with a view to the European Parliament's vote on discharge. It has been drafted against the general background of the implementation of Agenda 2000 and the reforms at the Commission and therefore places special emphasis on measures already taken and projects under consideration. Also, for the first time, the report includes a Commission Action Plan, which has been welcomed by the Council. The second annex of the report sets out the Member States' replies to the observations in the Court of Auditors' annual report for 1998, in accordance with Article 274 of the Treaty, as amended by the Amsterdam Treaty. The quality of these replies varies. One factor detracting from their quality is that they generally relate to specific points and do not cover all of the Court's observations. Thus, certain Member States have failed to reply to observations on structural measures or fraud prevention. In some cases, the Member States contest the Court's remarks.