Islam and the European Averroës Day

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The Committee has adopted the own-initiative report by Abdelkader MOHAMED (EUL/NGL, E) on Islam and European Averroës Day. Although the report was adopted by a large majority, the rapporteur himself abstained. The report proposes that the eighth centenary of the death of the philosopher Averroës, who sought to reconcile three bodies of teaching, Islamic theology, Koranic revelation and Aristotelian philosophy, should be taken as an opportunity to rethink the links of the EU and its Member States with Islam - as both a culture and a civilisation - and Muslims. The report puts forward a number of broad principles. It says that the Euro-Mediterranean partnership should not be limited to socio-economic and security matters but should also deal with cultural issues. It highlights questions such as secularisation, democratisation, recognition of the rule of law and respect for human rights, in particular those of linguistic, religious and ethnic minorities. A large part of the report is devoted to the fundamental issue of equality between men and women; it condemns all violations of the individual freedom and physical integrity of women. Above and beyond these broad principles, the report looks at practical matters to do with relations between the Member States and the Muslim communities living on their territory. These range from the importance of promoting knowledge of the civilisations and cultures of the Mediterranean basin through school syllabuses, including the learning of Arabic as a living language, through the idea of providing the Muslim population with appropriate premises for its religious and funerary rites, to the professional training of imams.