Implementation of Council Regulation (EEC) No 3911/92 on the export of cultural goods and Council Directive 93/7/EEC on the return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a Member State

2000/2246(COS) - 11/04/2001

The committee adopted the report by Pedro APARICIO SÁNCHEZ (PES, E) on the Commission report. The committee pointed out that illegal trade in cultural goods was continually worsening. It felt that the Council directive and regulation were inadequate for tackling the problem and called for them to be tightened up, for example by making the granting of a licence conditional on a preliminary application to the state of origin and introducing a mandatory accompanying document. The report also called for more police activity and greater judicial cooperation between Member States and between the relevant institutional bodies of the EU. The commissioners for the internal market and justice and home affairs should also coordinate their activities so as to use all the instruments at the Community's disposal. The Commission should conduct a public awareness campaign in Member States about the adverse effects of illegal trade in cultural goods. The committee also reiterated its call for a Commission Green Paper on the issue by the end of 2001. The document should include more analysis of the effects of the regulation and directive and a comparison of Member States' national laws. The committee suggested that standard multilingual forms be established containing descriptions and pictures of unlawfully removed objects and that this information be put on an Internet site and made freely accessible. Lastly, it called for the possibility of the EU acceding to the 1995 Unidroit Convention on the recovery of stolen artefacts to be assessed.