European Community's development policy

2000/2141(COS) - 12/02/2001

The committee adopted the report by Vitalino GEMELLI (EPP-ED, I) on the Commission communication. The report was fairly critical of the Commission, saying that, in the EU today, there was a lack of long-term vision and as a result the policies it was implementing were partial and contingent. It advocated a different approach, consisting of a development policy strategy which would require that resources be used more rationally and would demand more appropriate investment. However, it supported the Commission's approach of ensuring that development policy focused on eradicating poverty in the general context of the EU's external relations and stressed that effective poverty eradication strategies must give equal attention to the strengthening of social and health infrastructures and of the productive capacities of the poor, i.e. access to land, technology, education, credits, etc. As part of long-term planning, it was also necessary to help developing countries with the task of institutional capacity-building, good governance and administration, including the control of the use of public funds. The committee felt that the EU and the Member States ought to wield greater political influence within international development aid organisations. It also stressed that globalisation had led to further imbalances in world trade by marginalising the developing countries and that NGOs and representatives of civil society must be involved in the planning and implementation of development policy.