Generalised tariff preferences: period from 1st January 2002 to 31 December 2004

2001/0131(CNS) - 14/11/2001 - Modified legislative proposal

The European Commission decided to amend its proposal on applying a scheme of generalised tariff preferences for the period 1 January 2002 to 31 December 2004, in order to include Pakistan in the list of beneficiary countries of the special arrangements to combat drug production and trafficking. In fact, as a consequence of the events of 11 September, Pakistan is facing problems which are particularly serious. The international community acknowledged this by agreeing on a number of programs and actions providing special assistance to this country. The European Union is called upon to join these efforts. One measure that would seem especially appropriate in this context is the inclusion of Pakistan in the list of beneficiary countries of the drug regime under the scheme of generalised tariff preferences. Pakistan has pursued a vigorous campaign to eradicate the production and transit of drugs in its territory. This campaign should be supported, particularly given the difficulties Pakistan will face when more and more refugees arrive from Afghanistan. Since the GSP drug regime was extended to the countries of the Andean Community and to those of the Central American Common Market, it provided an important incentive to allow for the substitution of illicit crops, enhance exports in order to create jobs not linked to drug production and trafficking and foster diversification. The problems which Pakistan is facing today, are similar. The GSP drug regime is therefore likely to stabilise its economic and social structures and thus consolidate the institutions that uphold the rule of law. The drug regime provides duty free access for all industrial products included in the GSP general arrangements, and for many agricultural products, some of which are not included in the general arrangements. The measure will benefit mainly the Pakistani clothing sector. For these reasons, the Commission decided to amend its proposal for a Council Regulation applying a scheme of generalised tariff preferences for the period 1 January 2002 to 31 December 2004 in order to include Pakistan in the list of beneficiary countries of the special arrangements to combat drug production and trafficking, in the following manner: - in Annex I of that Regulation, a cross shall be marked in the row corresponding to Pakistan and in the column listing the countries included in the special arrangements to combat drug production and trafficking referred to in Title IV.