Economic globalisation: social governance, core labour standards

2002/2070(COS) - 19/06/2002

The committee adopted the report by Marie-Hélène GILLIG (PES, F) welcoming the Commission communication. It approved the Commission's proposals for a range of measures to achieve a better balance in the world system of governance and made a number of recommendations. MEPs argued that Member States and the candidate countries must ratify the ILO conventions and that third countries should also be urged to sign up to them. The Commission and Council were asked to help the ILO enhance the effectiveness of the instruments at its disposal, in particular as regards monitoring in the case of violations of core labour standards (CLS). The committee also called on the Commission to consider setting up a monitoring system on the application of CLS and to publish the results of the ILO monitoring procedure on CLS. While supporting the Commission's idea of an integrated approach in EU policies, the committee nevertheless called on it to provide a clearer definition for targeted measures in the context of development cooperation programmes. The development of fundamental social standards should be a clearly identified issue in any initiatives to support democracy and human rights. A clause on respect for CLS should be incorporated in all agreements with third countries. In addition the human rights clause, which is part of all agreements signed by the EU with third countries, should be improved. MEPs noted the difficulties in tackling the problem of fundamental social standards in the current framework of the WTO. They therefore called on the Commission, the Council and the Member States, in consultation with employers and employees, to define a common position and strategy on fundamental social standards, particularly in the run-up to the new round of multilateral WTO negotiations.