Cooperation with Eastern Europe and the CIS, energy and nuclear safety policy

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In unanimously adopting the draft resolution on East-West cooperation in the area of energy and nuclear security (report by Gordon ADAM, PSE, UK), the Committee on Research, Technological Development and Energy raised a number of questions concerning the security of the EU's energy supplies from the CEE and CIS. It called, among other things, for specific measures to be introduced under the PHARE and TACIS programmes to promote the restoration of existing heat and power stations and to develop co-generation. For its part, the Commission was called on to set up a working group for monitoring developments in the natural gas industry, in view of the rapid increase in imports from the West and the dependence of the eastern countries on this sector, particularly that of the former Soviet Union. It was also proposed that a Joint Oil-Gas Centre be established in Moscow. As far as conditions for nuclear safety were concerned, the Committee on Research and Energy called for the creation of a legal reference framework, to be supported by international conventions and standards laid down by the International Atomic Energy Agency, in order that funding should be granted exclusively for the purpose of nuclear safety, as well as for the processing of nuclear waste and the treatment of contaminated zones, particularly the Chernobyl area. As regards the Energy Charter Treaty, the draft resolution stressed that these measures should be implemented by all signatories as a matter of urgency and advocated that the same text should include a binding social clause for all signatories, with regard to the obligations laid down in the ILO conventions. Finally, hopes were expressed for an improvement in the Commission's internal organisation in the energy sector.