The progress achieved by the European Union. Report 1995

1996/2110(COS) - 20/11/1996

The committee (chairman: Mr BERTHU (NI, F)) unanimously adopted (with one abstention) the own initiative resolution by Mr José Luis VALVERDE (PPE, E) on the report by the European Council on the progress achieved in the European Union in 1995. The committee regretted deeply that the Council text was merely a formal enumeration of the activities undertaken during the year. As the European Council was not the same institution as the Council of the European Union, its report should in future include a political assessment of the progress achieved and the problems which have arisen. Mr VALVERDE noted in his report that 1995 marked a step backwards in the implementation of the CFSP, "especially as the Union was particular active in the external field". The common positions and joint actions were fewer in number and less substantial than in 1994. The rapporteur also drew attention to the main objectives which Parliament had set in areas such as employment, action to combat fraud, transparency, citizenship, the third pillar or simplification of the legislative procedures. With regard to the IGC, the committee deplored the lack of goodwill thus far manifested by the negotiators and reaffirmed that there could be no enlargement without "far-reaching institutional reform of the Union" and categorically rejected any attempt to defer what was really at stake in the IGC until a subsequent reform. Without doubt, everyone considered that the enlargement of the Union was an unprecedented opportunity to unify Europe politically; however, candidate countries needed to be aware of the fact that the European Union was not simply a single market, it was also a process of political, economic and monetary unity.