Recommendations to the Commission on negociations within the WTO framework on the built-in agenda

2001/2028(INI) - 27/02/2001

The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Konrad SCHWAIGER (EPP-ED, D) containing its recommendations to the Commission on trade questions relating to agriculture, services, protection of intellectual property and institutional aspects. It stressed the need for greater transparency in the forthcoming WTO negotiations and said that particular attention should be given to greater transparency in the preparation and conduct of ministerial meetings and to improved parliamentary scrutiny of the WTO, for example, through the creation of a parliamentary dimension to the WTO itself. With regard to the agricultural negotiations, the committee stressed the need for a comprehensive negotiating round with a view to safeguarding the "European agricultural model", based on multifunctionality. It also insisted that the public·s demands regarding food safety, environmental protection, food quality and animal welfare must be taken into account. The committee gave the Commission a clear, precise mandate on the use of the precautionary principle in the WTO. It also mentioned the need for "fair competition" to help safeguard food quality, which involved opening up markets by eliminating distortions of competition while nevertheless encouraging the preservation of traditional expertise. With reference to the liberalisation of trade in services the committee gave the Commission the green light to push for further gradual liberalisation. It added that progress in this direction should not neglect the principle of sustainable development.