Shipbuilding: world situation. 6th report

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report drawn up by Jaime VALDIVIELSO DE CUÉ (EPP-ED, E) in response to the Commission·s 6th report on the situation in world shipbuilding. MEPs attacked the subsidies handed out to South Korean shipyards which, they said, had resulted in unfair competition and a decline in the European shipbuilding industry. They pointed to the fact that the EU·s share of the shipbuilding market had declined from 19% in 2000 to only 10% in the first half of 2002. In the report, MEPs expressed support for the Commission, which had lodged a complaint against South Korea with the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The committee also urged the Commission and the Member States to speed up the investigations into the damage being done by South Korean shipyards to categories of vessel not included in the temporary defence mechanism that had been introduced for the construction of container vessels, chemical tankers and oil tankers in the EU. Moreover, the report said that it was necessary to ensure that the temporary defence mechanism was applied swiftly and flexibly, with the possibility of providing indirect aid, within the established limit of 6%. In a separate point on safety and in the wake of the ·Prestige· and ·Erika· accidents, the committee called for heavier grades of oil to be transported only in double-hulled tankers and urged the Commission to prevent tankers which do not have such hulls from transporting crude oil in European waters. It also called for special mechanisms to be introduced to encourage Community shipowners to renew their fleets. Lastly, in the interests of encouraging industrial cooperation, the report called on the Commission and the Member States to establish a European shipbuilding consortium which would ensure production levels, quality standards and suitable levels of technological development in this sector.