Asylum and migration: plans for origin and transit countries (Afghanistan, Albania, Iraq, Morocco, Somalia, Sri Lanka)

1999/2096(COS) - 24/02/2000

The committee adopted the report by Jorge Salvador HERNÁNDEZ MOLLAR (EPP/ED, E) on asylum-seekers and migrants, dealing specifically with action plans for countries of origin or transit. The main aim of the plans was to analyse the political, economic and human rights situation in the countries concerned (Afghanistan, Albania, Morocco, Somalia, Sri Lanka and Iraq) and the root causes of flight or migration. The committee stressed the importance of formulating a European asylum policy based on strict application of the Geneva Convention to underpin relations between the Union and third countries, with particular regard to the most important countries and regions of origin. It also drew attention to the need for further efforts to introduce at the earliest opportunity an effective and fair European temporary protection system for displaced persons, together with solidarity in respect of the reception and accommodation of such persons. It wanted to harmonise the forms of protection that were additional to refugee status, on the basis of the experience and rules of those Member States which had the highest humanitarian standards. As regards immigration, since this was a complex phenomenon involving political, historical, social and economic factors, the report argued that illegal immigrants could not be considered to be criminals in the same way as persons guilty of serious offences linked to organised crime. Cooperation with countries of origin should include offering that the EU act as intermediary in peace talks with opposition and dissident groups in cases of internal conflicts, the provision of assistance to target countries in establishing or reforming administrative structures, action to combat corruption and increased development aid for the countries in question.