EC/South Korea agreement : framework agreement for trade and cooperation

1996/0098(CNS) - 25/11/1998

The Committee decided unanimously to propose to the plenary the approval of the Framework Agreement for Trade and Cooperation between the EU and the Republic of Korea, as recommended by the rapporteur Mr PORTO (PPE,P) . The Framework Agreement was signed in October 1996 and Parliament was consulted by the Council in February 1997. However, in April of that year, in the wake of the labour unrest in Korea and its suppression by the government, the Foreign Affairs Committee asked the Committee on External Economic Relations, as the committee responsible, to "delay drawing up its report on the Framework Agreement" and called on the committees concerned to "monitor the development of the revision of the labour laws in South Korea".The rapporteur feels that, following the reforms on market access, transparency, good governance, fair competition and human and labour rights, which the Korean government was forced to undertake due to the East Asia crisis, the European Parliament should give a positive signal by approving the draft Framework Agreement on the basis of the following considerations:- the Framework Agreement contains supplementary commitments by Korea with regard to such points of friction as intellectual property and shipbuilding,the human rights clause ensures that the Korean internal situation can be closely monitored, the Committee on External Economic Relations expects the Commission to report back, at regular intervals, on the "sensitive issues", and in particular on intellectual property, shipbuilding and market access.