Common commercial policy: access by transfrontier products and services of the Union to the Japanese market

1995/0116(CNS) - 17/03/1999

At its meeting, the Committee adopted, with amendments, the report by Elly PLOOIJ-VAN GORSEL (ELDR, NL) on the amended proposal for a Council regulation on implementation by the Commission of a programme of specific measures and actions to improve access of EU goods and cross-border services to Japan. The proposal for a regulation aims to assist Union firms in competing successfully in the Japanese market. It will consist of two principal measures and actions: -the "Executive Training Programme", which is meant to build up a pool of European executives able to communicate and operate in the Japanese business environment; -the "Gateway to Japan" campaign, aiming at allowing European enterprises, mainly SMEs, to participate in actions in Japan designed to improve their presence on the market. In addition, various activities in the sector of EU-Japan relations can be financed under the proposed regulation, including: .studies of EU-Japan relations and general market studies; .conferences and seminars; .measures aimed at establishing direct contact between European and Japanese industrialists; .measures aimed at enhancing the visibility of the EU in Japan, as well as at collecting information on specific regulatory issues. The proposal by the Commission was first introduced in 1995 but discussions in the 113 Committee soon were blocked, essentially by the reluctance of the Member States to recognize the full extent of the Union's competence with regard to export promotion activities. Following the judgement by the European Court of Justice in Case C-106/98, however, the need for a specific legal base for export promotion activities to Japan became an urgent priority; the present modified proposal aims therefore at permitting the continuation of existing Japan programmes. It should be noted, however, that the proposal is time-limited (to end-2001) and that a new proposal for action after this date will have to be tabled in due time by the Commission. The Committee is proposing that Parliament support the programmes, bearing in mind that present legal and institutional problems will have to be solved on a more stable basis if the programmes are to run beyond the duration of the proposed regulation.