The impact of international developments on the Community's textile and clothing sector

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The Committee on External Economic Relations unanimously adopted the report by Mr MONIZ on the impact of international developments on the Community's textile and clothing sector. The Community textile industry was in a difficult situation as the result of internal problems and international competition but the committee considered that the sector still had a future. It needed to become more competitive and the WTO needed to create conditions on an international scale for fair and genuine competition. Such modernization should promote diversification, conversion of production capacities, training for employees and greater ecological acceptability of products and production methods. In the event that the timetable for integration of the textile sector into the WTO system was not met, the Community's textile sector must not be "sacrificed" to other sectors. The proposal for a resolution recommended greater coordination of national research to limit massive relocation and improve the sector's competitiveness and for a more effective campaign to be conducted against fraud and trade irregularities. The committee recognized that non-compliance with environmental requirements and minimum social standards was a factor in distorting competition and called on the Singapore Conference to examine the links between international trade and minimum social standards.