Expiry of the ECSC Treaty: financial activities

1997/2238(COS) - 08/10/1997 - Non-legislative basic document

OBJECTIVE: this communication seeks to define the arrangements for the succession of the ECSC and to identify the designation of the assets of this body in the light of the expiry of the ECSC Treaty in 2002. SUBSTANCE: Following an in-depth analysis, the Commission considers that the scenario chosen should make it possible to reconcile the actual need in terms of ECSC budget aid between now and 2002 and to respect the technical constraints connected with the performance guarantee for all ECSC budget and financial operations outstanding at that date. The scenario chosen has the following elements: 1) the assets of the ECSC (i.e. about ECU 1.3 billion in 2002, plus or minus the amounts generated in relation to ongoing business) in liquidation following expiry of the Treaty should revert to the Communities remaining, 2) administration of these assets (servicing of loans and borrowings and management of the reserves and possible debts) should be entrusted to the Communities remaining (represented by the Commission) and not by the Member States as would normally be the case, 3) all the net revenue (around ECU 40 million a year) from the management of the ECSC assets would constitute earmarked revenue under the general budget for financing research outside the framework programme, to be managed by the Commission and directed at sectors related to the coal and steel industries: - this mechanism would be set up for an indefinite period with the possibility of a revision (review of the situation accompanied by any appropriate proposals) which could be timed to coincide with the end of the sixth framework research programme, - research activities would carry on from the ECSC-funded programmes, with due allowance for the desire to open them up to other sectors as expressed in the Amsterdam European Council's resolution on growth and employment, - the procedures and implementation arrangements should be based broadly on the approach which has proved successful in the past, namely: . adoption of multiannual guidelines (every 5 years) by the Commission for new actions and publication of calls for proposals on the basis of these guidelines, . appraisal and selection of these proposals after consultation of two committees (steel research committee and coal research committee) made up of experts appointed by the Commission, . implementation by the Commission through the committees of experts bringing together the various sectors concerned (including representatives of the SMEs).