Development cooperation: democracy and the rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms

1997/0191A(SYN) - 22/01/1999 - Modified legislative proposal

Of the amendments put forward by the Parliament in its first reading (37 in total), the Commission took up a number of them in their entirety or in their spirit. Three groups of amendments can be distinguished : 1) amendments seeking greater precision in the proposal : these regard the replacement of the regulatory committee by a consultative committee, the removal of the limitation of the duration of the applicability of the Regulation (31.12.2004), the removal of all references to financial amounts in the text of the proposal, the reference to 'administrative and technical assistance tasks for the mutual advantage of the Commission and the beneficiary'. All of these amendments were accepted in their entirety by the Commission, with the exception of the amendment relating to comitology and the provision of information to the Parliament on the work of the committee or the selection of projects. These amendments go beyond the information possible under the current comitology procedures. On the other hand, the Commission fully agreed with the Parliament regarding urgent interventions, the visibility of Community action, initiatives with respect to the abolition of the death penalty, small-scale actions favouring grass roots democracy or aimed at disseminating and respecting democratic or human rights principles. 2) amendments relating to the management and implementation competences of the Commission. These amendments are, by their very principle, unacceptable to the Commission : this regards an amendment seeking for the establishment of an inter-institutional working group consulted systematically and in advance on the measures that fall within the competences of the committee, and an amendment calling into question the procedure governing urgent interventions. The Commission also refused any reference to displaced persons and refugees who are the subject of other aid instruments. 3) amendments that are for the most part acceptable in their essence but are poorly formulated and in need of re-drafting. This relates in particular to amendments regarding : - the programming of actions, - the evaluation of the actions as a whole, - the means of co-ordination of actions between the Member States, the Commission and the European Parliament, - the emphasis placed on small-sized organisations lacking experience, - the concept of good governance. These amendments were taken up in the modified proposal in a different form in order to respect the objectives of the initial proposal.