San Jose Dialog between the European Union and Central America

1995/2317(COS) - 16/01/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Carlos CARNERO GONZALEZ (E, GUE/NGL) Parliament pointed out the extent to which action against poverty and in support of the re-establishment of justice are and remain key problems for Central America. While noting the importance of the Florence Declaration of March 1996 which set new objectives for cooperation between the Union and Central America, it advocated a rapid implementation of this new cooperation and expressed its satisfaction at the progress achieved since the San José dialogue process was institutionalised in 1985. It was, however, in favour of extending the political dialogue to other topics such as social issues, the rules for applying the democracy clause, human rights, decentralization, trade policy and macro-economic policies. It called for a comprehensive, highly specific, well-defined and adequately funded CFSP action programme for Central America to be drawn up. The Union must extend its cooperation, in particular by strengthening regional cooperation, in order to satisfy the new aspirations of these countries for balanced, consistent relations between the European Union and Central America which exclude any kind of double standard. In particular it called for: - the creation of an institutional framework to strengthen regional cooperation, - support for regional policy coordination in the areas of agriculture, industry, trade, energy, services and customs, - support for regional compensatory funds to rectify social imbalances, - measures to promote cross-border cooperation. It attached priority to measures designed to consolidate the rule of law through the creation of an independent judiciary and the modernization of the state, decentralization and municipal development, the promotion of concerted action between governments and the general public, equal treatment of men and women and fiscal reform and education and health care. It reaffirmed its support for action against impunity and urged all bodies in Central America to support the efforts of the United Nations 'Truth Commission' which resolutely opposes any impunity for serious human rights abuses. Similarly, it called on the Commission to devote particular attention to impunity and suggested the drawing up of a proposal for an international convention against impunity. Budgetary resources should be increased and the cooperation framework agreement should be accompanied by a financial protocol, both for the agreement and for future agreements of the same type. This action should be accompanied by another, namely the remission, at least in part, of the external debt. Other areas to be considered were the extension to Central America of the new Generalized System of Preferences for industrial products, of which the Andean Pact countries are already beneficiaries. Lastly it called for a consultative forum with the civil society to be set up , for example within the framework of the Civilian Initiative for Central American Integration (ICIC).