Development policy: complementarity between the Community policy and the policies of the Member States

1995/2065(COS) - 21/02/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Michael McGOWAN (PSE, UK) Parliament considered that the European Union's inability to achieve complementarity between the Member States' and the Union's policies was a political failure on the part of the European Union. It considered that this inability was primarily due to the absence of political will and that it was caused by the difficulty of making progress in the CFSP and by neglect of the objectives of development cooperation. It considered that the values of development policy confer on the EU a real identity and recognition on the world stage and therefore was in favour of an improvement in coordination not only with regard to coordination of the Union's actions but also their implementation at national level in order to ensure overall coordination of the Union's external action. As democratic control of expenditure requires entry of the EDF in the budget, Parliament stressed that the Community nature of aid should have a higher profile, in particular as the Community is (by far) the largest donor of development aid in the world. It considered that this coordination is essential to reduce the world's arms trade. It also stressed the need for closer coordination between the Member States and the Union on aid so as to avoid duplication of effort at national and Community level. Lastly, it considered that it is necessary to seek more political and public support in Europe and proposes various institutional initiatives such as: - invitation to members of the Council to meetings of the European Parliament's Committee on Development, - provision for a debate in this committee before and after each Development Council, - provision for observer status for the Committee on Development at each meeting of the Development Council, - provision for a question and answer session with both Council and Commission at each meeting of Parliament's committee, - invitation to members of national parliaments to certain committee meetings, - provision for half an hour at the beginning of each sitting of the committee for hearing the views of the NGOs.