EC/Azerbaijan agreement: partnership and cooperation agreement

1994/2182(INI) - 13/03/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted the report by Mr Konrad SCHWAIGER (PPE, D) on the economic and commercial aspects of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Azerbaijan. The report considered that it was imperative and essential for the EU to step up its presence in this region, and in Azerbaijan in particular. Noting that democratization and the application of the principles of social market economy were being pursued in this country, the report called on Azerbaijan to continue with the political and economic reforms which had been set in motion. The report regretted, however, that part of the territory of Azerbaijan was being occupied and that the country was imposing an economic blockade on Armenia and took the view that this would not promote the harmonious development of these two countries, but would only be an obstacle to the economic development of the entire region. It stressed that EU action in this region should be based on a global policy which included economic, political and financial elements as well as humanitarian factors. Conscious of the strategic importance of the Transcaucasian region from the point of view of energy supply, the report called for suitable conditions to be applied for the transit and export of oil and energy products and for the development of investment projects (improvement and modernisation of oil and gas pipelines). Taking the view that the development of the entire region would be achieved primarily by developing good relations and by establishing mutual trust and cooperation, Parliament called on the EU to put in place a system of partnership agreements with these countries as quickly as possible. In this respect it believed that the development of transport and communications was absolutely vital and that projects of this type should be devised in such a way that they bring together all the countries of the region. In this same connection it proposed examining all possibilities for creating, improving and developing the transport and energy infrastructure networks, while at the same time respecting the criteria of financial viability and environmental compatibility. This included the entire network of land, sea and combined land-sea routes: - in the south of the region: the land route through Armenia, Nakhichevan and Turkey and the combined land and sea route through Georgia, the Black Sea, Turkey and the Bosphorus; - in the centre of the region: the land-sea route through Georgia, the Black Sea, Bulgaria, and Greece and the land-sea route through Georgia, the Black Sea, the Danube and the Rhein-Main-Danube canal (mainly for processed goods); - in the north of the region: the land-sea route through Russia, the Ukraine, Hungary, Austria, etc. The implementation of these initiatives first depended on settling local conflicts and on establishing real cooperation between the countries of the region. Parliament emphasized in this respect that the agreement on economic cooperation in the Black Sea region, which was set up in 1992, could contribute towards the stabilisation of the region and the establishment of peace in the area. Lastly, taking the view that the development of Azerbaijan was inseparably linked to that of the other countries of the Transcaucasus region, Parliament called for the agreements concluded with the three countries concerned (Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan) to be approved simultaneously.