Ukraine: action plan

1996/2262(COS) - 12/03/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Gary TITLEY (PSE, UK) on the action plan for Ukraine, the European Parliament expressed the view that the European Union should continue to support the democratic process in Ukraine by promoting the development of civil society, particularly by means of its TACIS programme for democracy. It welcomed the ratification by Ukraine of the European Convention on Human Rights. However, it hoped that Ukraine would soon ratify Protocol no 6, which provides for the abolition of capital punishment, and deplored the execution of thirteen prisoners in 1997. Observing that Ukraine did not meet the criteria to qualify as a safe third state, particularly because it had no legislation on the status of refugees, Parliament called on Ukraine to accede to international agreements on protecting migrants and to implement them without delay. Recognizing Ukraine's efforts to stabilize its economy, Parliament stressed the need to continue to support the economic transition by implementing all the available financial instruments (macro-financial aid, TACIS, etc.) and by developing joint undertakings with Ukraine in the industrial and commercial field (aeronautics, space, energy, transport, etc.). Parliament stressed the need to carry out radical structural reforms in the field of privatization, reorganization of the tax system and energy. Ukraine should also be involved in Community programmes in the fields of education, culture, the information society, science and environmental protection. Judicial cooperation should likewise be stepped up in order to combat international crime and illegal immigration effectively. Parliament recalled Ukraine's commitment to close down Chernobyl nuclear power station completely in the year 2000, insisted that this deadline must be adhered to and called on the Union and the G7 to support Ukraine in this undertaking by encouraging it to diversify its sources of energy, combat energy waste and increase the safety of its nuclear installations, whether still in use or decommissioned. The international community should finance the reconstruction of the sarcophagus housing the old reactor at Chernobyl (estimated cost: $750 m). The Member States and financial institutions should likewise cooperate with Ukraine's electricity industry with a view to ensuring more efficient energy use. The Commission should introduce effective energy saving programmes in all sectors of the Ukrainian economy. Parliament accordingly called on the Commission to develop legislative and financial frameworks geared to the establishment of industrial cooperation and joint undertakings in the energy sector. Parliament welcomed the increase in trade between the Community and Ukraine, but drew attention to the restrictions on access to the Ukrainian market for EU businesses. It called on the Commission to support Ukraine in its efforts to become integrated with the world economy, and hoped that Ukraine would soon join the WTO. Parliament took the view that the partnership agreement (which had been signed on 11 June 1994, but had not yet entered into force) was merely a stage in the development of closer association between Ukraine and the EU, and that when the conditions were right, talks on new instruments should be envisaged so as to permit such an association to be implemented. Meanwhile, it hoped that the possibilities afforded by the existing partnership agreement would be fully exploited. Parliament welcomed the agreement on long-distance air transport signed by the WEU and Ukraine on 30 June 1997, and considered that Ukraine should be associated, in the most appropriate fashion, with the activities of the WEU, starting with Petersberg-type missions. Parliament noted that such cooperation could also be developed with Russia and the other CIS states which were members of the Council of Europe.