1992 discharge: follow-up

1996/2008(DEC) - 17/04/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Adopting the report by Mr Petrus CORNELISSEN (PPE, NL), the European Parliament confirmed that the first tranche of the monies owed by three Member States for failure to apply milk quotas had been received and took note of the Commission's assurance that the quota scheme was now being applied correctly by the Member States. However, it observed that the Commission had done nothing to take account of Parliament's request concerning the recovery of ECU 340 million and regretted that the Commission had not even attempted to justify its failure to act. It therefore reiterated Parliament's request that this sum, which was disbursed in contravention of current legislation, be recovered and credited to the Community budget. Parliament considered that the milk quotas affair highlighted a fundamental shortcoming in the procedure for clearing the accounts which had not been remedied during recent reforms (facility for the Commission to apply financial corrections to Member States on the basis of factors other than an objective evaluation of non-eligible expenditure). Similarly, it noted that the milk quotas affair had highlighted the failure of the Commission's financial controller to carry out his duties correctly. It called on the Commission to ensure that the financial controller acted totally independently and to report on the state of progress in enquiries being conducted in the Member States into the presumed case of fraud in the tobacco sector. While noting a recent improvement in how the Commission dealt with cases of presumed fraud in its services, the European Parliament repeated nonetheless that it expected all these cases to be submitted to the anti-fraud unit (UCLAF), which needed to be independent of the other Commission services.