1994 discharge: 6th EDF

1996/2050(DEC) - 17/04/1996

In adopting the report by Mr Terence WYNN (PSE, RU), Parliament noted that the difficulties characterizing financial management of the EDF could in large part be attributed to the fact that they are not managed in accordance with regular budgetary provisions, and refused discharge to the Commission in respect of the management of the sixth EDF for the 1994 financial year. Parliament considered it anomalous that it was called upon to reach an annual discharge decision for the EDF, without at the same time possessing either the corresponding budgetary or legislative powers. It considered that democratic accountability for the expenditure carried out was seriously compromised and that this situation could no longer be tolerated. It refused from now on to be implicated in providing any illusion of accountability whereby it might assume responsibility for a system for which it could not legislate. It called again for the integration of EDF funds into the development cooperation section of the general budget of the European Communities and reminded the Member States of their prime responsibility in creating this unsatisfactory situation. Whilst recognizing the Commission's attempts to improve EDF financial management within the existing legal framework, Parliament affirmed its total disagreement with the Commission's decision to use public funds totalling ECU 738.606 to wind up the ACP's Cultural Foundation, pay off its creditors and meet its related staff costs. It noted furthermore that the Commission was under no legal obligation to reach this decision, which was of an exclusively political nature. It believed that the Commission was able to behave as it did in this matter because the procedures did not ensure transparency or accountability in respect of the discharge authority.