Racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism

1996/2016(COS) - 09/05/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Adopting the report by Mr Arie OOSTLANDER (PPE, NL), the European Parliament approved the Commission communication as a comprehensive response to the problems of racism and xenophobia. The report endorsed the establishment of a European monitoring centre for racism and xenophobia, as proposed in the final report of the Consultative Commission on Racism and Xenophobia for the Cannes European Council and hoped that this monitoring centre would work closely with the Council of Europe and draw up concrete policies which could be pursued by local authorities, national government and the Union. It also proposed that the Community institutions place great importance on the protection of minorities, particularly in countries applying for membership of the EU, while stressing the importance of coordinating activities in this field with the Council of Europe. In addition, the European Parliament: - called on politicians and opinion-formers to refrain from exploiting xenophobic instincts and to condemn all forms of intolerance and racist statements in their actions and policies; - reiterated the part that civil society has to play in combatting racism and supported the Commission's proposal to set up a social policy forum, while stressing the importance of dialogue between the Commission and representatives of the main religious faiths in Europe so as to develop an anti-discriminatory policy in fields such as health care, education, etc. and lay down anti-discriminatory rules valid throughout the Union; - supported the Commission's idea of including a general anti-discrimination provision in the Treaties and giving the Community specific powers to combat racism; - stressed the importance of cross-border judicial cooperation, particularly as regards publications, racist demonstrations and the information highway; - called for a ban on denial of the Holocaust to be included in the legislation of all Member States; - supported the idea of allowing third country nationals who have the right to reside in a Member State of the European Union the possibility of acquiring citizenship of that country; - supported the Commission proposal to abolish checks at internal frontiers and allow the free movement of third country nationals; - called on the Commission to investigate the specific problems facing the 3 to 4 million persons resident illegally in the EU; - called for special measures to assist particular groups, such as migrants and gypsies; - recognized the role of education in combating racist and xenophobic attitudes, while calling for measures to improve education concerning the historical significance of the Second World War and greater recognition of the role of religious and philosophical education in developing people's consciences. The report also called for the training of civil servants with regard to racism and xenophobia; - appreciated the role which journalists are able to play in combating racism and xenophobia and supported the idea of a media prize in this sector.