Relations EU/Canada

1996/2248(COS) - 02/10/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Antonio GRAZIANI (PPE, I) on relations between the European Union and Canada, Parliament welcomed the signing of the joint political declaration and the joint plan of action between the EU and Canada. It stated that there was an important trilateral dimension (EU, Canada, US) to cooperation in certain sectors covered by the Action Plan (with particular regard to the North Atlantic economic area). It was convinced, however, that a better balance was required in transatlantic relations. This should be more in keeping with the political and commercial interests of Europe, which did not always coincide with those of the United States. In this respect, Parliament recalled the joint interests of Canada and the EU concerning liberalizing trade, strengthening the role of the WTO and rejecting the use of unilateral measures (such as the Helms-Burton and d'Amato Acts). Parliament also called on the Commission to become involved with the work of the Arctic Council. Parliament stated that the existence of divergent opinions on issues such as fishing, leghold traps and trade in animal furs should not undermine the enhancement of bilateral relations. It rejected the extraterritorial provision of the Canadian Coastal Fisheries Protection Act. It hoped that the EU and Canada would work closely together to bring about a ban on anti-personnel mines, as provided for at the Ottawa Conference. It asked that cooperation on justice and home affairs be incorporated, as necessary, into a legally effective convention, through cooperation between Europol and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. It was also in favour of strengthening cooperation on applied research for advanced technologies, linguistic and cultural matters (cinema co-productions, creation of television networks, etc.), environmental protection - through the exchange of information - and, in particular, the preservation of fishery resources under NAFO. Parliament was convinced that resuming the parliamentary dimension in relations between the EU and Canada would strengthen bilateral relations and hoped to be kept fully informed about the evolution and implementation of the Action Plan between the two parties. Finally, Parliament was pleased with the extent to which the Canadian provinces were fully associated with the joint plan of action and the strengthening of transatlantic relations. It believed that the indigenous populations had a role to play in the implementation of environmentally sound development and should be involved in decisions relating to the exploitation of natural resources and the development of their territory.