Agreements EC/third countries: respect for democratic principles and human rights

1995/2081(COS) - 20/09/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Carlos CARNERO GONZALES (GUE/NGL,E) on the Communication from the Commission on the inclusion of respect for democratic principles and human rights in agreements between the Community and third countries, Parliament affirmed that it was incumbent on the Union to give concrete expression to the human rights clause in the Treaty and to draw up objective criteria for its application. The individual 'must be the centre of all political activity' and protection of his/her rights must be guaranteed. Therefore the IGC must incorporate in the new Treaty a stipulation that any external agreement must contain a 'human rights clause'. But it is also necessary to draw up an objective method of application in cases of flagrant violation of human rights and social rights. Hence the call on the Commission to formulate 'criteria, procedures, forms of sanctions, and their method of application', and the proposal for the Union to act in concert with the other international organizations. According to the report 'the Council should act on the basis of a qualified majority rather than on unanimity' in deciding whether to suspend an agreement. Parliament, for its part, should be consulted about the suspension of an accord and should have the power 'to recommend the application of the human rights clause'. In addition, when the Commission makes a proposal for suspension it should transmit it at the same time to the Council and Parliament. The EP called for the proposed CFSP analysis unit to take due account of the resolutions of the European Parliament and to allow it access to the human rights assessments of the Unit.