Union policy against corruption

1997/2116(COS) - 06/10/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Rinaldo BONTEMPI (PSE, I), the European Parliament fully endorsed the Commission's call in its communication for practical and coordinated measures against corruption to be worked out as part of an overall project. Parliament called on the Council, the Commission and the Member States to assign priority to the following aspects in the context of their respective competencies: - preventing corruption: transparency, simplification, reduction of the bureaucracy connected with important administrative decisions, audits, codes of conduct for the public administration and the private sector; - penalties for all forms of corruption (active and passive in the public and private sectors, at home and abroad, committed by a natural or legal person): in addition to criminal-law provisions, greater use should be made of administrative, civil and disciplinary penalties; in particular, compensation should be payable for damage caused to the public purse; - the establishment of the principles of responsible government, transparency and judicial independence as a condition for concluding trade and cooperation agreements with third countries. More particularly, the Commission was called upon to: - submit legislative proposals to clarify the conditions for access by bidders to public procurement procedures, in order to exclude those convicted of corruption; - draw up practical measures to prevent corruption in other sectors (e.g. audit Directive); - work out training programmes and public awareness programmes; - (once the Amsterdam Treaty has entered into force), make use of its right of initiative in the field of police and judicial cooperation; - submit specific proposals for combating corruption within the Community institutions; - apply, in the context of its policy on cooperation with third countries, the essential principle of proper administration by making a general practice of including specific anti-corruption clauses in contracts; - adopt measures, possibly in the form of legislative proposals, for abolishing the tax-deductibility of bribes paid to foreign officials. The Commission should submit a timetable for each measure by the end of 1999. Parliament called on the Member States to: - eliminate immediately and completely from their legal systems and fiscal practices all scope for tax- deductibility of bribes, without linking the abandonment of this practice to judicial conviction of either of the parties to corruption; - speed up the Council of Europe negotiations on the convention against corruption, to enable it to be signed in 1998. The Council was called upon to implement by the end of 1998 the anti-corruption guidelines contained in the action programme against organised crime adopted by the Amsterdam European Council on 17/06/1997. Parliament called on all political institutions to ensure that politicians could not abuse their immunity to evade prosecution if suspected of corruption.