Human rights in the world. Annual report 1995-1996

1996/2122(COS) - 12/12/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mrs Catherine LALUMIERE (ARE, F) on human rights in the world 1995/1996 Parliament wished to constrain the Union to take practical action to ensure respect for human rights. Parliament noted, despite the efforts of the Union, an upsurge in the most barbarous forms of violence and a resurgence of ethnic regional conflicts. Apart from the weakness of the CFSP, Parliament noted the difficulty of incorporating a moral component in international relations. As a result the EU should as a matter of urgency establish a human rights doctrine and provide itself with the necessary funds to implement it. Parliament considered that the Union should promote effective international cooperation for the fulfilment of the right to development and the elimination of obstacles to development. It also called for the Union to define minimum social clauses (child labour, forced labour) to determine the legality of trade transactions in the framework of the WTO. According to Parliament the fundamental rule for any agreement between the European Union and third countries must be that the human rights situation met the Union's requirements on this matter and a procedure should enable binding steps to be taken in the event of a violation. The Union should provide itself with the necessary means to take action in humanitarian and peacekeeping missions. The CFSP should therefore specify what was meant by the right of intervention, the forms of this intervention and all the instruments with which it was to be provided. Any type of military intervention could take place only as part of a United Nations mandate and under the control of the competent UN bodies. Action must also be taken in other areas such as support for democratization and reconstruction, which would mean: political and financial support for the current international criminal tribunals with the aim of converting them into a genuine international criminal court, launching programmes for reconciliation of the civilian population, the rehabilitation of the victims of torture, etc. and special protection for less-favoured groups. Parliament therefore called on the IGC to give the Union in the new treaty the legal powers that it needed with regard to human rights since this was essential to allow the Union to accede directly to the international legal instruments such as the Council of Europe's Convention on Human Rights.