European aerospace industry meeting the global challenge

1997/2223(COS) - 19/11/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Karsten HOPPENSTEDT (PPE, D), the European Parliament welcomed the Franco-German-UK declaration of 9 December 1997 expressing a desire for a European-level restructuring of the military and civil aerospace industry, and the letter of intent signed on 6 June 1998 by the Ministers of Defence of these countries, Spain, Italy and Sweden encouraging the consolidation of their respective defence industries. Stressing that Europe needed powerful integrated industrial groupings, it endorsed the transformation of Airbus Industrie into a single corporate entity. It pointed out the importance of the joint development of the next generation of military airframes. It expressed its concern that the Commission was failing to tackle the disastrous decline in industrial employment, which was likely to amount to 13% by 2010, and called on the Commission to present strategies for protecting jobs, thereby shouldering the responsibility for employment which it shared with Member States. However, it regretted the absence of any significant European prime contractors in communications satellite groupings and the lack of political will for Europe to produce a global navigation satellite system (GNSS). In the social field, it recalled the importance of the industry in terms of jobs and urged European aerospace companies to set up European works councils. The European Parliament called on the Commission to establish a framework of incentives for joint transnational research and development activities.