European Union and the external dimension of human rights policy: from Rome to Maastricht beyond

1995/2309(COS) - 17/12/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report drafted by Mr. Yannis ROUBATIS (PES, GR) on the external dimension of human rights policy, the European Parliament welcomed Article 6 and 7 of the Amsterdam Treaty which reinforce the previous provisions on human rights; however, it stressed that Council decisions concerning action in the field of human rights should be taken by a qualified majority to allow a swifter and more effective response. The Parliament also called for: - the Commission's decision-making and management structures to be organised as one unit to ensure a coherent and consistent human rights policy; - the establishment of a Human Rights Forum, empowered to make recommendations on the human rights dimension of EU policies and to evaluate the EU's human rights related activities; - the establishment of a Parliament and Commission Working Party on Human Rights, as foreseen in the 1998 budget, in order to improve inter-institutional co-operation on activities for human rights and democracy; - the establishment of a comprehensive human rights impact assessment and monitoring system, which should be drawn up before an initiative is implemented, with due regard for consistency, proportionality and coherence, and which should subsequently be used as a basis for monitoring the human rights situation. The Parliament also recommended the regular attendance of the CFSP Representative at meetings of the EP's Committee on Foreign Affairs, Security and Defence Policy, and Question Time during plenary sessions. It reiterated its call for improved transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in the selection, implementation and monitoring of projects geared to the promotion of human rights.