Human rights: activities of the European Union in 1996. Annual memorandum

1998/2006(INI) - 17/12/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted its tenth report on human rights in the world and the EU's human rights policy, drafted by Mr. José BARROS MOURA (PES, E). The report recalls a number of principles and positions adopted by the Parliament. These include : - respect for freedom of expression; - the complete abolition of the death penalty; - equitable and humane policies with respect to asyslum seekers and refugees in the EU; - improved recognition and protection of the rights of communities, minorities and indigenous populations; - need for actions to combat sex tourism and to pursue persons involved in the sexual exploitation of children; - elimination of children labour and introduction of just social standards; - recognition that rape in time of war should constitute a war crime; - introduction of legal reforms with respect to inheritance and rights of succession. The Parliament called for a reform of the international financial institutions and the adoption of a code of conduct for companies working in developing countries. It also reaffirmed its support for the creation of a 'Social Label'. It also called for the speedy adoption of the Council Regulation concerning the legal basis for the promotion of human rights and democracy by the European Union and the establishment of a Human Rights Forum. The Forum would be empowered to make recommendations on the human rights dimension of EU policies and to evaluate the EU's human rights related activities; the Forum should include experts from international organisations, NGOs and the academic world, as well as representative of the Parliament, Commission and Council. Another important plea from the Parliament's point of view was to the Council, Commission and Member States to withhold assistance to regimes which devote excessive resources to military hardware.