Community aid to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Special report 2/2000, Court of Auditors

2000/2131(COS) - 16/01/2001 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The report by Mr Bart STAES (Greens/EFA, B) on the management of the Court of Auditors' report on EU aid to Bosnia-Herzegovina has been adopted by the Parliament. The resolution calls for lessons to be learned, particularly as regards support to new local or international organisations and cofinancing with other international institutions such as the UN and OSCE. Parliament broadly supports the Commission's approach in Bosnia-Herzegovenia, which seems to have solved the problem of late payments. It is impressed with the measures adopted by the Office of the High Representative (OHR) since March 1999 to put an end to the abuses, waste and irregularities mentioned by the Court of Auditors. It observes that considerable savings have been made on the OHR budget, although it still needs to be drafted and implemented more transparently. In this context, the Commission is encouraged to concern itself more with the administration of the OHR. Nevertheless, Parliament is concerned about delays in making funding available for human rights organisations and regrets that the efficiency of the OHR anti-fraud unit is impaired by the fact that staff are recruited for a maximum of 12 months. The EUR 2 million fund spent on equipment to help the media is also questioned and both OHR and the Commission are called upon to respond to criticisms made by the Court of Auditors. Parliament also recommends that civil society be promoted by means of more purposeful policies and clear priorities for the Balkans. It welcomes the 'Road Map' drawn up by the Commission in March 2000 as a set of specific measures, which the EU wishes Bosnia-Herzegovina to carry out in the short term. However, such measures towards developing a democratic system should be properly monitored in order to be more effective. Lastly, Parliament stresses the need for continuing aid to the country, in particular to help with reconstruction, the return of refugees and mine clearance. The Commission is asked to report before 1 July 2001 whether, and to what extent, corruption has jeopardised financial support for the reconstruction in Bosnia-Herzegovenia and the financial interests of the EU.