Resolution on the Commission's 5-year strategic programme

2000/2514(RSP) - 17/02/2000 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The Parliament welcomes the strategic objectives set forth in the Commission's communication. It considers that this maiden global statement of the Commission's medium term vision, priorities and intentions represents an important step forward in the democratic accountability of the Commission to the people of Europe. It believes that these objectives need to be developed through setting priorities, timetables and benchmarks. It shares the Commission's analysis of the four main challenges facing the Union, but reminds the Commission that its first duty is to fulfil the expectations of Europe's citizens; it underlines, therefore, the special importance of economic, social, environmental and consumer protection issues and the over-riding significance of making a success of EU enlargement. It recognises, in addition to the need for political and financial programmes for the candidate countries, that special attention must be paid to the countries of South Eastern Europe, including those for which membership is not imminent. With respect to the promotion of new forms of governance, the Parliament, among other things, strongly endorses internal reform of the EU institutions as being essential to improve their efficiency, openness and transparency, but insists that the Commission, while becoming more transparent and focusing on core issues, must remain fully involved in the implementation and follow-up of EU policies. It also insists that a Charter of Fundamental Rights focusing on the relationship between citizens and the EU institutions must become an integral part of the new Treaty. In the light of the Treaties, the Parliament insists on a clear demonstration to citizens of the added value and efficiency of Union action in the establishment of core Commission objectives and activities and in this regard calls on the Commission to identify the policies and programmes which should be subject to review and possible repeal. The Parliament insists on the development of an area of justice including a common asylum and immigration policy and urges the Commission to present the 'scoreboard' with priorities, firm deadlines and the financial and human resources necessary for this task. It calls on the Commission, in view of the renewed threat of racism and intolerance, to strengthen its commitment to guaranteeing equal rights, equal opportunities and the protection of minorities throughout the Union, in order to ensure that all Europeans share in the benefits of growing prosperity, security and solidarity, which would sustain and support the development of a multi-ethnic, muti-cultural and diverse Europe. In relation to fostering effective cooperation with our immediate neighbours, it also calls on the Commission for a specific focus on strengthening the conflict-prevention capacities of the EU. It considers that the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy due to take place in 2002 should be mentioned in the 5 year working programme of the Commission. Parliament insists on the completion of the single market through the elaboration of a European framework for e-commerce, an efficient implementation of the publicprocurement directives, the creation of more efficient public utilities and a single European company statute, with particular reference to SMEs; this also requires additional objectives for the new economic and social agenda, including the improvement of the working environment, basic social protection, gender mainstreaming and economic and social cohesion.