Resolution on the Commission's annual legislative programme for 2000

2000/2515(RSP) - 16/03/2000 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The Parliament generally welcomes the Commission's work programme. It encourages the Commission to pursue its efforts to improve the legislative planning process and asks it to include in the annual work programme, for the sake of comprehensiveness and efficiency, all the proposals and actions proposed, the legislative proposals under way and the report on the implementation of the Commission programme for the previous year. It calls on the Commission to use its right of initiative not only to propose new initiatives but also to revitalise the legislative proposals pending before the Council and to keep Parliament informed of the reason for the impasse in each case. Parliament asks the Commission to review and identify non-military crisis-response tools such as humanitarian aid, monitoring of the democratic process, electoral follow-up, institution rehabilitation and public security, and to establish effective mechanisms for rapid coordination and deployment, bearing in mind the need to adapt decision-making processes, especially those involving financial decisions. It urges the Commission to prepare the creation of a special budget fund for civil crises intervention and to present a plan ensuring that sufficient amounts are available in future EU budgets to respond to civil crisis situations. It also urges the Commission to begin a comprehensive debate on the restructuring of the external representation of the EU which should respond efficiently to the needs of a future European foreign policy. In respect to enlargement, the Parliament demands to be informed regularly by the Commission of progress in negotiations for the accession of the twelve applicant countries. It calls on the Commission to develop a strategy which seeks to engender stability and development in countries which adjoin the enlarged EU, and, in particular, for cooperation with Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus and those of the Caucasus to be stepped up. With regard to economic and social cohesion, the Parliament insists on improved monitoring and coordination of economic and monetary policies and regrets, in this connection, that no new initiative has been proposed in the economic and financial sector. The Parliament urges a revision of the Directive on collective redundancies, which needs to be strengthened and instrumented by possible sanctions against companies infringing the Directive. The Commission is called upon to take all measures required to ensure that the principle of additionality is fully respected in the current programming and implementation process under the Structural Funds. It should also take a legislative initiative in order to implement the Treaty provisions relating to services of general economic interest. With regard to the single market, the Parliament considers that greater harmonisation of civil law has become essential and calls on the Commission to draw up a study in this area. It demands the rapid introduction of measures to counter piracy and counterfeiting in the internal market with a view to encouraging innovation, especially in the small business sector, and reminds the Commission that a European patentwhich is cheap and rapidly effective is still a matter of the utmost urgency. It insists that work on the simplification of the VAT system and its straightforward application to e-commerce should be speeded up. It invites the Commission to envisage new legislative initiatives with a view to combating harmful tax competition between Member States. In the area of agriculture, the EP asks the Commission to present without delay proposals aimed at simplifying Community legislation and implementation provisions within the CAP, in order to guarantee transparency and efficiency. It insists that financial obligations entered into by the EU under the CAP must be met in full and asks for solutions to be found to specific sectoral problems arising from the application of CAP; it urges the Commission to reconsider its intention of reducing expenditure under heading 1 by EUR 300 million. It welcomes the intention of the Commission to integrate environmental considerations more firmly into the CAP and calls upon the Commission to present specific legislative proposals to achieve this aim in the common agriculture and fisheries policies, including clear provisions for the precautionary principle. With respect to fisheries policy, it calls on the Commission to pat particular attention to preserving direct and indirect employment and to improving working conditions in

that sector. As regards the integration of environmental considerations in other sectors and policies, the EP calls on the Commission to be particularly vigilant with regard to Structural Fund projects, enlargement and trade. It asks the Commission to include in its programme proposals dealing with: - establishing maximum limits in respect of the flexibility mechanism provided for in the Kyoto Protocol (including the trading of contamination licences), - soil contamination, - the transfer of the responsibility for supervising common legal standards (inspections) to the European Environment Agency, - amendment of Directive 98 /70/EC on fuel quality, with a view to reducing sulphur content to 10ppm per litre, - prevention and repair of damage to the environment (replacing the proposed White Paper on civil liability in environmental protection), - noise policies, - waste from electrical and electronic equipment, - process for evaluating and modifying the common list of substances annexed to Directive 91/414/EEC on pesticides, - detailed review of Directive 92/43/EEC (Fauna, Flora & Habitat) on the conservation of wild flora and fauna, in the light of its application in the Member States. In relation to the programmes set out in the areas of food safety and public health, the Parliament emphasises the need for quality over quantity and reminds the Commission that problems still remain in implementing and monitoring existing legislation. It also calls for the continuation of the existing moratorium on new GMO releases in the context of the full application of the precautionary principle. In the field of energy, it calls on the Commission for clearer signs of a shift in its energy policy towards the promotion of renewable energies, including market penetration and easiernetwork access. The European Parliament calls on the Commission to improve the planning of European Justice and Home Affairs policies by means of close cooperation with the Parliament at a very early stage in order to avoid hasty decision-making as well as loss of credibility of the EU institutions in this field, and to ensure that, in future, the decision-making process allows for thorough scrutiny of policies and their impact. The Parliament emphasises that the Commission's programme does not make any explicit reference to the creation of a European educational and cultural area. On the internal reform of the EU institutions, the Parliament believes that the reform must meet severak conditions: - contribute towards enhancing transparency of political responsibilities at European level, especially for the general public, - it should not be misused as an excuse for political inactivity in certain areas nor as a pretext for avoiding difficult policy issues, - it needs to be developed in close consultation with the EP.