Macao special administrative region SAR. 2nd annual report 2001

2002/2275(INI) - 08/04/2003 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted an own-initiative report drafted by Mario SOARES (PES, Portugal) on the Macao SAR. Parliament welcomed the Commission reports for 2000 and 2001. It pointed out that the stable and prosperous development of Macao is in the interests of both China and the EU. Macao has an important role to play as a gateway to other regions in China and can act as a key facilitator for exchanges of all kinds between the EU and China. Parliament also expressed its support for the full implementation and upholding of the Basic Law of the MSAR under the 'one country, two systems' principle. It noted that both the Central Government in Beijing and the MSAR government continued to attach great importance to this principle and that the Macao government administered the SAR, internally and internationally, in an autonomous way, as set out in the Basic Law. It asked the Commission to appoint an EU-Macao Cupertino officer to the MSAR, as announced in the Commission Communication of 2000. The European Parliament wanted further and more systematic links between its parliamentarians and those of the MSAR Legislative Assembly. It recommended, at some point, the creation of an EP-MSAR Friendship Group, as well as the enhancing of links between academic, cultural and scientific institutions in the two regions. In its general appraisal, Parliament found, overall, three years after the handover, the situation in the MSAR is evolving in a satisfactory way, maintaining Macao's specific characteristics, institutionally, economically and socially. It stated that the EU is in a position to make a vital contribution to safeguarding the high degree of autonomy enjoyed by the MSAR and its unique character, which are inherent to the 'one country, two systems' principle. The Commission is asked to work together with the MSAR in a creative approach, and explore the ways and means required for significant expansion in EU-Macao cooperation, as agreed in the final declaration of the ninth annual meeting of the EU-Macao Joint Committee. The EU, at all institutional levels, must continue its support for Macao and maintain the Macao issue as an important point of discussion in the EU-China dialogue. Finally, Parliament welcomed the decision of the MSAR Government, expressly supported by the Chinese Government, to assert and consolidate Macao's position as a centre for China's links with the countries whose official language is Portuguese. This policy is particularly important, given that it will affect China's relations with countries such as Portugal, Brazil, or Cape Verde, Angola, and Mozambique. The Commission, the Council, and Parliament will not fail to keep this new policy under the most careful review and will lend their support whenever common interests are shown to exist.