Resolution on the next EU/Russia summit at Saint Petersbourg on the 31st of May 2003

2003/2540(RSP) - 15/05/2003 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted a resolution in preparation for the EU-Russia summit, calling for enhanced and comprehensive cooperation with Russia. Enlargement will extend the border of the EU with Russia, thereby strengthening the ties between the two sides and underlining the need for good-neighbourly relations. While relations between the EU and Russia, especially in the political field, have made ample use of the opportunities created by the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), in the field of economic cooperation, neither the EU nor Russia have fully realised the potential of the PCA. The predominance of selective cooperation and the absence of a comprehensive and long-term concept of bilateral relations are among the major obstacles to the EU and Russia establishing an effective and dynamic partnership. The Commission is asked to formulate a strategic partnership with Russia, aimed at bridging the growing gap between a unifying Europe and Russia. In addition, the Council and the Commission should prepare for a new stage of the evolving EU-Russia relationship by expanding the regular EU-Russia summit meetings and by establishing closer links between the two sides. Both sides must adopt special programmes aimed at promoting their cooperation in the fields of high-tech and scientific research, including the aircraft-building industry, space exploration, nuclear energy, telecommunications and the pan-European transport system. Parliament went on to express its concerns over the situation of first generation nuclear reactors in Russia and other CIS countries. There is a pressing need to tackle bilaterally all relevant nuclear safety issues through cooperation and dialogue. It also expressed its deep concern at the management of nuclear waste in the Barents Sea and welcomed the decision of the Russian Government to sign the Multilateral Environmental Programme for the Russian Federation (MNEPR). Moving on, Parliament felt that the momentum should be maintained for Russia's timely entry into the WTO. This will provide new opportunities for expansion of trade between the two parties. It also supported the Commission's position that any examination of a possible Free Trade Area with Russia should not take place before Russia has joined the WTO. On other matters, Parliament stressed the importance of continuing efforts to implement the Action Plan for the fight against organised crime, and called on the Duma to ratify the Kyoto agreement swiftly and to adopt all the necessary measures for its implementation.