Europol convention: protocol amending the European Police Office. Initiative Belgium and Spain

2002/0804(CNS) - 30/05/2002 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted the report by Gerard DEPREZ (EPP-ED, Belgium) and rejected the Belgian and Spanish initiative on the Europol Convention. (Please refer to the document dated 14/05/02.) In a recommendation to the Council on the future development of Europol, Parliament stated that the extension of powers envisaged by the Belgian and Spanish initiative, through the introduction of joint investigation teams, reinforced the current imbalance between the executive and the legislative bodies. Parliament felt that Europol, as a European body, must be monitored by the European Parliament and not by national parliaments. It added that the opportunities for parliamentary control open to the European Parliament would be considerably increased if a part of Europol's budget were to be incorporated into the Community budget. Bearing this in mind, Parliament addressed the following recommendations to Council: -on the legal base, the Europol Convention, the Protocol on the interpretation of the Convention and the Protocol on the Privileges and immunities of Europol should be replaced with Council decisions taken pursuant to Article 34(2) of the TEU. The Council should take action pursuant to Articles 30 and 31 of the TEU to recast the Europol Convention provisions with particular regard to the basic elements of the criminal acts for which Europol is competent. -on the budget, Europol funding should be amended by replacing part of the contributions of Member States with funding from the EU budget. -Europol's tasks should be changed so that it could, inter alia, ask Member States authorities to conduct investigations in certain cases, as well as equip it with more effective means to combat money-laundering; -the adoption of various provisions in order to strengthen the European Parliament's democratic power of control over Europol; -on data protection, there needs to be a provision which guarantees that the data protection provided and the supervision of compliance with these standards are equivalent to those guaranteed under the first pillar; and -measures are required to ensure close cooperation between Europol, Eurojust and OLAF in order to strengthen the operational efficiency of those bodies in the fight against organised crime and terrorism.