Resolution on the preparation of the European Council meeting in Feira on 19 and 20 June 2000

2000/2571(RSP) - 15/06/2000 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament has approved a joint motion for a resolution tabled by the PPE-DE, PSE and ELDR groups by 216 votes to 145, with 145 abstentions, on the preparation for the meeting of the European Council in Feira, Portugal, on 19 and 20 June 2000. The resolution, which was adopted almost unamended, supports the efforts of the Portuguese presidency to extend the agenda of the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) to include, in particular, the rationalisation of the structure of the Treaty. It expresses deep concern at the lack of political will displayed by the Member States in the last few months with regard to the settlement of the various questions under discussion in the IGC. In particular, it regrets the obvious reluctance of Member States to agree on a credible extension of qualified majority voting in the Council. It calls on the Heads of State or Government meeting in Feira to give fresh impetus to the work of the Convention responsible for drawing up the Charter of Fundamental Rights. It welcomes the development of the situation in the Middle East and calls on the European Union to play an active role in strengthening the peace process. Parliament calls on the European Council to pursue actively the EU's strategy for stabilisation and association in the Balkans and to strengthen the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership by means of measures under the three headings (political, economic and socio-cultural) of the Barcelona Declaration. It also calls on the European Council to maintain the momentum of its Lisbon conclusions, with a view to achieving a European Union of increased prosperity and shortened dole queues, by keeping the private sector and individuals at the forefront of the endeavour, paying particular regard to the European information society and innovative businesses, especially SMEs; it emphasises the need for the creation of a European Research Area. The resolution also expresses the view that that the new European Social Agenda must be based on clear objectives and specific targets and calls for the modernisation of social protection systems in order to make work pay, to guarantee the viability and sustainability of pensions and benefit systems. It expresses the wish that the European Union can overcome the current deadlock on the taxation package. It also asks the Council Presidency to evaluate relations between Austria and the other Member States and to develop a procedure leading to an acceptable solution. Lastly, it urges the European Council to establish a strong, independent and competent Food Safety Authority, with a clear status in law, in conjunction with a far-reaching overhaul of legislation, and with a clear definition of Member States' obligations with regard to notification in the event of a crisis.