Resolution on the conclusions of the United Nations World Food Summit

2002/2569(RSP) - 04/07/2002 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the conclusions of the UN World Food Summit. It deplored the fact that the summit had ended with no new commitments and denounced the unending mantras of world summits that produced few results. The decisions taken at Monterrey should have led to a renewed effort by all nations attending the Summit. If pledges are not to be worthless they must be backed by clear and concrete political commitments and accompanied by a precise timetable. Parliament urged action on the growing crisis of famine and food shortages now facing around 14 million Africans. It deplored instances in which governments of food-insecure countries have let military expenditure prevail over the acute nutritional needs of their people. The European Council and Commission, when preparing country strategies, must encourage the reallocation of funds. Food aid must be reserved for emergencies and granted solely in the form of donations giving preference to local purchasing and respecting nutritional balance and food habits whenever possible. It must be accompanied by measures which allow this aid to be phased out whilst rebuilding the productive capacity of the regions affected. Parliament underlined the need to encourage micro-finance and low interest credit to help rural economic development for farmers, access to land, local fisheries, fish farming and the encouragement of local food processing facilities in developing countries and called for the promotion of non-industrial fishing and local aquaculture. The current WTO round must focus its attention on the need for development, including food security. This means adjustments to the common agricultural policy and common fisheries policy. Parliament condemned the growing protectionism practised by some developed countries in favour of their own agricultural products, which runs counter to WTO rules. The EU must ensure that its own food production standards do not create a barrier to trade for developing countries.