Main aspects and basic choices of the Common Foreign and Security policy CFSP, financial consequences for the EC budget

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The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drafted by Elmar BROK (EPP-ED, Germany) on the CFSP. (Please see the summary of 07/10/03). Following its criticism of the Council's annual report, Parliament felt that was necessary, in view of the critical development that the CFSP has undergone during the Iraq conflict, that future annual reports should provide a genuine assessment of the Union's foreign and security policy activities. They should include a written report by the High Representative or Union Minister for Foreign Affairs on progress in implementing a specifically European approach to security. In the light of an anticipatory crisis-prevention policy, Parliament felt it necessary that it be informed and involved in future in good time during the early-recognition and planning stage of crisis operations in the context of the ESDP, the better to deliver a political opinion based on firm information. Only a well-informed Parliament is in a position to take the requisite personnel and budgetary decisions swiftly and efficiently. Unless it is so informed, such decisions may be rejected. Moving on to relations with NATO, Parliament stated that further consolidation of relations between the EU and NATO as mutually complementary organisations constitutes an important factor in the development of a European approach to security. It called for a European collective capacity for the planning and management of European operations and a multinational headquarters which can be deployed in the field for such operations in instances where NATO does not take action and the EU does not ask for NATO resources. Although the EU's present military capabilities are sufficient to conduct operations at the lower end of the Petersberg scale, they do not extend to peace-making operations. Therefore, the creation of greater interoperability and deployment capability is an important precondition for providing Europe with a balanced capability for coalition with the USA, both within and outside NATO. With respect to the transatlantic partnership, parliament pointed out that the latter cannot be defined only in military and security policy terms within NATO. It should also incorporate combined aspects of transatlantic economic, trading, environmental and social activities, and be guided by the principle of a 'transatlantic marketplace' as the basis of balanced cooperation. Parliament proposed as an initial practical step the introduction of mutual measures to make travel easier between the EU Member States and the USA, along the lines of the Schengen Agreement. Finally, Parliament stated that, as a central lesson learned from the experience gained in the assumption of international security missions, whether in the western Balkans or in Afghanistan, for the purposes of building a post-war order, the policing function of the ESDP should be significantly strengthened and given its own separate operational status between the 'military ' and the 'civilian' wings.