Resolution on the Northern dimension

2003/2580(RSP) - 20/11/2003 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted a resolution welcoming the Second Action Plan for the Northern Dimension as an important part of the development of the Northern Dimension policies and an important contribution to the region concerned. It supported the specific activities of the Action Plan, but expressed its concern at the tendency to over-emphasise the exploitation of fossil fuels and neglect the significant role which renewable sources of energy could play in the region. Parliament called for improved coordination between the EU, the Arctic Council, the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Nordic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and other bodies involved in Arctic and regional matters on the one hand, and a clear division of responsibilities among all relevant public bodies in the EU on the other. It regretted the lack of concrete proposals explicitly targeted to benefit the indigenous peoples in the area, with regard in particular to the Sami, whose political representation should be increased. Parliament went on to express concern about the implementation difficulties affecting the TACIS cross-border cooperation budget line, and stressed the importance of cooperation between Interreg and TACIS operations. It expected that some pilot projects could be carried out in parts of the border region even before the launch of the New Neighbourhood Instrument. Finally, the House felt parties must work actively to connect the EU and Russian energy, transport and information networks, which will require greater involvement of the European Investment Bank. The Council should establish a broader mandate for the EIB as soon as possible so as to enable it to become even more involved in Russia. Parliament also underlined the importance of including projects with a northern dimension in the TEN package. In developing the transport infrastructure in the Northern Dimension region, special attention must be paid to the environmental sustainability of proposed solutions by giving rail and sea transport priority.