Resolution on ECHELON

2002/2596(RSP) - 07/11/2002 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament passed a resolution on Echelon, regretting that Council and Commission have failed to act adequately on the recommendations made by its Temporary Committee. Further measures are necessary to protect citizens and firms against the abuse and illegal use of interceptions of communications, to protect the privacy of communications and to introduce measures against industrial espionage and the abuse of competitive intelligence. Member states are asked to collaborate amongst themselves in the exchange of information with the aim of increasing effectiveness in the area of the Common Security and Defence Policy. Parliament insisted that measures should be taken to provide all European citizens with the same legal guarantees concerning the protection of privacy, whilst scrupulously respecting their legal rights as enshrined in the acquis, and taking into account the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU. There should be international agreements, particularly with the United States, on the abuse of interceptions of communications and measures against industrial espionage. The Convention on the Future of Europe is asked to formulate recommendations guaranteeing that Member States will be committed to prohibiting, and not engaging (either directly or under cover of third parties) in industrial espionage. Finally, Parliament remarked on how little progress had been made concerning the establishment of coordinated European intelligence activities and the introduction of a democratic scrutiny of these activities. There must be proposals in this field soon.