Resolution on the European Union strategy for the Almaty Conference on the Aarhus Convention

2005/2558(RSP) - 12/05/2005 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the Aarhus Convention and the forthcoming second Meeting of the Parties (MOP-2) to be held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, from 25 to 27 May 2005. It urged the EU to take a leading role in the negotiations, stating that MOP-2 would provide a good opportunity both to review the progress which has so far been achieved and to reflect on future challenges.

Parliament asked the Commission and the Member States in particular to aim to ensure that -precise provisions are laid down to guarantee public participation in decision making concerning GMOs, if appropriate by amending the Convention and its annexes;

-a permanent system of financial arrangements is established to guarantee funding on a predictable basis; and

-the compliance mechanism is further improved, based on the experience gained.

The Commission and the Member States should also continue legislative work with the aim of adopting a legislative instrument which implements Article 9 of the Convention within the EU.

Parliament went on to express support for the work of other Conventions, in particular the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. However, the Aarhus Convention is the competent forum for deliberating on horizontal principles of public access to information, participation and access to justice in environmental matters. Countries which have not yet done so are asked to ratify the Aarhus Convention and the Kiev Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers.

Finally, Parliament felt that Members of the European Parliament who are part of the EC delegation have an essential contribution to make. They should have access to EU coordination meetings in Almaty, on the basis of at least observer status with or without speaking rights.