2004 discharge: EC general budget, Council

2005/2092(DEC) - 21/03/2006

The committee adopted the report by Nils LUNDGREN (IND/DEM, SE) recommending that the Council be granted discharge for the 2004 budget. In its accompanying comments, the committee urged the Council to continue improving its financial management. It noted that there had been a 225% increase in the funds initially allocated for Special Advisers for the European security and defence policy, and reiterated Parliament's view that other institutions' budgets should cover administrative expenditure. Greater transparency was needed as regards spending on and by the EU Counter-terrorism Coordinator, and MEPs pointed out that, "as a matter of principle, operational expenditure should only be made by the Commission". Lastly, the report referred to the Council's reluctance in previous years to give detailed answers to the questionnaire sent by the Budgetary Control Committee to the other institutions by way of preparation of the discharge decision. In view of the current compromise that had been reached, consisting of an informal dialogue between the Council and the committee's chairman and rapporteur, the report suggested that the committee should "broaden the scope of its participation to include other Members wishing to contribute to this informal dialogue".