

# **Third-country anti-dumping, anti-subsidy and safeguard action against the Community. 2004 report**

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report drawn up by Cristiana MUSCARDINI (UEN, IT) in response to the Commission's 2004 annual report on third country anti-dumping, anti-subsidy and safeguard actions against the EU.

The committee was concerned at the abnormal increase in the number of trade defence cases involving both 'traditional' users of trade defence instruments and other, more recently-developed WTO members. It said that, in many of these cases, the WTO's rules and case-law had been partially or completely disregarded, thus causing unjustified damage to the Community's industry. However, it welcomed the help provided by the Commission to Member States and European industry in trade defence cases brought by third countries. The report urged the Commission to constantly monitor the action taken by third countries to ensure that it is appropriate and fair, and also called on the Commission to campaign at the WTO for a radical revision of the rules governing the imposition of safeguard measures to avoid the excessive and unjustified use of such measures. And it wanted the Commission to consider whether the rules on the use of trade defence (anti-dumping, anti-subsidy) measures should perhaps be revised under the aegis of the WTO.

The Member States were urged to maintain a 'communal' approach to these issues which would enable the measures in question to be applied more harmoniously in the Community context and reduce the number of actions taken against the Community by bringing sustained pressure to bear at political and technical level on WTO members which intend to apply trade defence measures, while constantly endeavouring to raise awareness of the issues involved. MEP stressed, however, that 'communal' action must not be used as an excuse to support unfair trading practices by individual Member States. The committee recommended that the Community refrain from granting preferential treatment to trade partners which are not acting in accordance with WTO rules and case-law, if such action is damaging Community industry. It also urged the Commission to take the principle of reciprocity into account when dealing with trade defence cases involving those trade partners.

Finally, the report stressed that, if the new rules on international trade are to win public support, they must be applied transparently and consistently, in compliance with the principle of the rule of law, both within and outside the Community.