2005 discharge: EC general budget, Council

2006/2072(DEC) - 27/03/2007

The committee adopted the report by Daniel CASPARY (EPP-ED, DE) granting discharge to the Council for 2005. In its accompanying resolution, the committee regretted the fact that, unlike other institutions, the Council does not submit an annual activity report to Parliament and it called on the Council to reconsider this decision "in order to be more accountable to the general public and taxpayers". Referring to the longstanding ‘Gentleman's Agreement’ between the two arms of the budgetary authority, the report said that, "in view of its age and the substantial shortfall between words used and the meaning or interpretation which is attributed to them, the Gentleman’s Agreement may be in need of revision". The report said that the current compromise - consisting of an informal dialogue between the Council and the competent committee’s chairman and rapporteur – should be widened so as to include a Member from each political group, and called for negotiations to begin with Council with a view to putting revised arrangements for informal dialogue in place in time for the next discharge procedure.

Lastly, the committee called for “maximum transparency” in the area of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). It urged the Council to ensure, in line with the Interinstitutional Agreement of 17 May 2006, that no operating CFSP expenditure appears in the Council's budget, and said that Parliament reserved the right "to take the necessary steps, where appropriate, if the agreement is infringed".