Basic information

2001/2277(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic) EU-Albania agreement: stabilisation and association agreement. Report on the work of the High Level Steering Group **Subject** 6.40.03 Relations with South-East Europe and the Balkans **Geographical area** Albania	Procedure completed

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security, Defense	PACK Doris (PPE-DE)	12/09/2001

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
CULT Culture, Youth, Education, Media and Sport	ALAVANOS Alexandros (GUE/NGL)	16/10/2001

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
General Affairs	2372	2001-10-08
General Affairs	2458	2002-10-21
General Affairs	2406	2002-01-28

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
External Relations	

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
06/06/2001	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2001)0300	Summary
08/10/2001	Debate in Council		
13/12/2001	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
28/01/2002	Debate in Council		Summary

16/04/2002	Vote in committee		Summary
16/04/2002	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0118/2002	
15/05/2002	Debate in Parliament		
16/05/2002	Decision by Parliament	T5-0249/2002	Summary
16/05/2002	End of procedure in Parliament		
21/10/2002	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		
31/07/2003	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2001/2277(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 148
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/5/15574

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0118/2002	16/04/2002	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0249/2002 OJ C 180 31.07.2003, p. 0405-0504 E	16/05/2002	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2001)0300	06/06/2001	Summary

EU-Albania agreement: stabilisation and association agreement. Report on the work of the High Level Steering Group

2001/2277(COS) - 28/01/2002

The Council stressed the Union's willingness to start as soon as possible negotiations for a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Albania. In this spirit, it recognised the efforts undertaken by the Albanian government to move forward in this direction. The Council nonetheless noted that attention has been diverted from the vital reforms, which are essential for Stabilisation and Association Agreement negotiations. It encouraged all political forces in Albania to unify their efforts in order to accelerate the implementation of such reforms.

EU-Albania agreement: stabilisation and association agreement. Report on the work of the High Level Steering Group

2001/2277(COS) - 16/05/2002 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Adopting by 390 votes to 7, with 11 abstentions, the report by Mrs Doris Pack (PPE-DE, D) on the preparation of a stabilisation and association agreement with Albania, the European Parliament has overwhelmingly backed the position of its lead committee (see the summary for 16 April 2002). It should be noted that the House has echoed the committee's insistence on respect for democracy, the rule of law and democratic institutions in the negotiations for a future agreement. Parliament also considers it essential that the stabilisation agreement should guarantee the right of minorities to receive education and training. In addition, the agreement must require Albania to readmit its citizens. Finally, the House wishes to see the emergence of a strong civil society in Albania.

EU-Albania agreement: stabilisation and association agreement. Report on the work of the High Level Steering Group

2001/2277(COS) - 06/06/2001 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : Commission report assessing the ability of Albania to implement the obligations of a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA).
CONTENT : In making the assessment and recommendations set out in this report the Commission has taken account of political, economic and regional factors. Since the failure of the pyramid schemes in 1997, major efforts have been made to restore law and order, reform economic and social life and to open Albania to the EU and the region. Much has been done to reform the electoral system. There has been an overhaul of the legal system and serious efforts are being made to align legislation with EU standards. Economic decline has been reversed and in 2000, GDP grew by 7.8%, in line with growth rates reported for 1999, (+8%) and 1998 (+7.3%). Important progress has been made in securing government revenue through reform of the customs and tax services, and Albania has become a member of the WTO. Privatisation of small and medium sized companies can now be considered as complete and, with some delay, privatisation of larger companies is proceeding. Despite these achievements, problems remain that would make it difficult for Albania to meet the obligations of a SAA and to deliver on the commitments it would make. The main difficulties lie in the functioning of the judiciary, widespread corruption, a large grey economy and lack of capacity to implement laws. Judges are ill prepared to administer the huge volume of new laws which have been adopted recently, there is still interference with the work of the Courts and Corruption is a serious problem. This situation retards economic development and inward investment, since the law is not uniformly applied and the enforcement of contracts is difficult. The size of the grey economy is threatening the viability of officially registered businesses, preventing fair competition and discouraging investment. Emigration is an important phenomenon. Albania is both a source and a centre for trafficking in human beings. Illegal migration and trade in arms are also areas of concern to the EU which require greater attention. The negotiation of a SAA is both a technical and political process. Given the mixed situation, the Commission has had to balance different elements in coming to a conclusion. The Commission considers that Albania is not yet in the position to meet the obligations of an SAA. If, however, the current pace of change is sustained and if sufficient priority is given to strengthening administrative capacity during the negotiating and transition periods, considerable improvements can be made in the areas highlighted. The perspective of opening SAA negotiations is the best way of helping maintain the momentum of recent political and economic reform, and of encouraging Albania to continue its constructive and moderating influence in the region. The Commission therefore considers it appropriate to proceed with a SAA.