

The European Parliament: Influencing the EU's External Relations

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The purpose of this paper is to show that the European Parliament has been, and remains, an active player in the formulation of EU foreign and external policies, in spite of having few formal powers under the second pillar of the Maastricht treaty. In making this assertion, it is worth noting at the outset that foreign policy in general is not something in which EU parliaments usually play a major part, certainly in any hands-on sense. The European Parliament thus differs from most *national* European parliaments in its constant efforts to *shape* rather than merely react to or control initiatives of the executive in this field. In this respect, it is more akin to the U.S. Congress, which does play a more proactive role, and one that sometimes puts it at odds with the views of the President or his Administration: the Helms-Burton legislation on Cuba is a good recent example of policy that would not exist but for the Congress.

By implication, the paper will also provide support for the contention that much of EU/EC foreign policy-making continues to take place outside the framework of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP). Even when general policy guidelines have been set under intergovernmental auspices (whether in formal CFSP meetings or by the European Council), implementation is left to the Community institutions. But the complexities of implementation (e.g. negotiation of an international agreement) are such that both the Commission and the European Parliament are able to set conditions that were never part of the original policy guidelines. Policy is thus shaped, or reshaped, during the implementation process itself, and this occurs under Community rules.

We need also to bear in mind during this discussion the question of what we mean by foreign policy. Where is the line to be drawn between foreign policy as such and external economic policy, whose impact is often indistinguishable from true foreign policy? Indeed, in the case of the EC/EU, whose only foreign policy weapons have tended to be economic, external economic policy has more often than not served in lieu of foreign policy *per se*. As good a recent example of this as any was the conclusion, in February 1997, of an interim association agreement on trade and cooperation between the European Union and the PLO¹. Technically similar to other external economic agreements between the EU and third countries, it was clearly and deliberately political in the signal it sent to the Palestinians, as well as to Israel. Yet it was negotiated and signed by the Commission on behalf of the European Community, on the basis of a *Council* mandate (i.e. negotiating directives emanating from a Community institution), and was in no way an operation carried out under the CFSP.

Actions under the CFSP (and earlier under EPC, or European Political Cooperation) have been in areas that have usually possessed no immediate economic overtones. They have included a series of "joint actions" related to the war in the former Yugoslavia, and in connection with the Russian, South African and Palestinian elections, and appointment of EU envoys for the African great lakes region and the Middle East. Article J.7 of Title V of the EU Treaty provides only that the European Parliament be consulted and kept informed of the Presidency's plans under the CFSP. But against the backdrop of the EU's overall external role, whether in the field of trade, economic cooperation, institutionalized political dialogue or development policy, its purely "political" actions under EPC/CFSP have formed only a small proportion of the total. In terms of actual foreign and security *policy*, the second pillar mechanisms provide for the adoption of "common positions". But, with rare exceptions, such common positions have tended to be largely declaratory in nature and are, moreover, designed primarily to ensure that member states' *national* policies do not diverge. The general principles enunciated in common positions, and by the European Council, offer guidelines but, to the extent that responses at EC level are required, their application is left to the Community institutions

In the Community domain, however, the European Parliament has a say in a way that it does not under the CFSP. Thus, to the extent that the European Union conducts its external relations on the basis of the Community method, the European Parliament plays its part: institutionally, this culminates in its right of approval of foreign agreements under the assent procedure. The agreement with the PLO fell into this category, exemplifying how the EP can find itself involved as co-decision maker in fields that may ostensibly be economic in nature but do in fact possess significant political ramifications.

This paper will look at the European Parliament's involvement in the EU's external relations from a number of perspectives, including

- its responsibilities under the treaties;
- its non-statutory impact;
- its concerns with human rights and democracy;
- its "diplomatic" role.

1. The European Parliament's responsibilities under the treaties

(A) The assent procedure

The most obvious of Parliament's statutory powers under the EC treaty is the assent procedure. In the foreign relations sphere, the field of application of the assent procedure is laid down in Article 228 EC. Assent is required for agreements concluded under Article 238 ("association [agreements] involving reciprocal rights and obligations, common action and special procedure") as well as for cooperation agreements and other accords "having important budgetary implications for the Community". In effect, this means virtually all agreements concluded by the European Community with third countries, *as well as acts under such agreements (such as additional protocols) or amendments to them*. Moreover,

Article O of the Treaty on European Union provides for parliamentary assent (by an absolute majority of MEPs) in the case of enlargement of the EU, itself arguably an act of foreign policy.

Parliamentary assent is the key statutory element in the EP's arsenal of foreign policy powers. It is more than merely formal, as several specific cases have shown over a number of years. Moreover, its existence is used by Parliament as a reason for taking external relations more seriously than might otherwise be the case. It provides a justification that did not exist previously for the existence of the Foreign Affairs Committee and the External Economic Relations Committee, which are the lead committees in the parliamentary assent process. While a blunt instrument on the face of it, the threat of withholding assent, and delaying or indeed preventing ratification of a new agreement, has shown itself to be a powerful weapon.

As early as March 1988, just months after it had first gained the power of assent under the Single European Act, the European Parliament withheld its approval on the proposed renewal of a financial protocol with Israel². The motive: Israeli obstruction of fruit exports from the occupied territories. This first example served as a warning, both to the country concerned and to the Commission and Council. For Israel, as well as for any other country that had observed the incident, it sent a message saying that agreements with the European Community, and indeed technical adjustments to such agreements, could no longer be taken for granted: the European Parliament would use its powers, if necessary to demand political rather than economic adjustments to policy. For the Commission and Council, it constituted a warning to take care in its negotiations, to listen to Parliament, and to consider each new agreement on its political as well as economic merits.

For this was the crux of the matter: Parliament had shown that it would use its assent procedure powers to ensure that accords with third countries would impose political responsibilities on the signatories, not just economic ones. For the EP, Israeli restrictions on Palestinian exports were a political matter, going to the heart of the peace process, and with implications for the EC's long-held policies on the question dating back to the Venice Declaration of 1980.

There have been a number of subsequent occasions when the European Parliament has used the assent procedure as a political lever in shifting the positions of third countries, and serving warning on the Community's other institutions that their negotiations must take account of Parliament's views. They included delays, sometimes lengthy, in ratifying several partnership agreements with the countries of the CIS, including with Russia itself, where the latter's involvement in Chechnya led to strong opposition in Parliament. Concerned with the lack of democracy in Kazakhstan, the EP persistently held up its assent on the partnership accord with that country, only granting it in March 1997, almost two years after it had been signed³.

But the most notorious example concerned Turkey's customs union with the EU⁴. The EP had long been critical of Turkish human rights violations, including the arrest and imprisonment of members of the Turkish parliament. Indeed, the EP's relations with the Turkish Grand National Assembly, with which it had had a formal link (in the shape of a joint parliamentary committee) since the 1960s under

the terms of the Ankara Agreement, had often been stormy; so much so in recent times that the usual twice-yearly meetings had been suspended altogether in 1994 and only resumed in June 1996. Parliament announced even before the signature of the March 1995 decision on customs union that it would withhold its assent in the absence of clear commitments by the Turkish government on a number of questions⁵.

Against considerable internal opposition, the government in Ankara did push through a raft of reforms during 1995, including a series of constitutional amendments strengthening the democratic rights of citizens, trade unions and parliamentarians, and a relaxation of the anti-terrorism laws. As a result, two Kurdish members of parliament were released from jail and the promise given that four others could have their cases heard by the European Court of Human Rights. 79 other prisoners were set free by year's end as a result of the changes in the anti-terrorism laws. The European Parliament was not overly impressed with these moves, which it felt did not go far enough. Nevertheless, it acknowledged that the Turkish action represented progress and, under considerable political pressure from national EU capitals, approved⁶ the customs union in December 1995, just days before the January 1, 1996 deadline.

This is a neat example of how the European Parliament has been able to exercise a genuine measure of foreign policy influence through its use of the assent procedure. Today, after a number of occasions where its use has been seen to be effective, its mere existence has come to be important. Now that the Commission is aware that any agreement that it negotiates will have to be "got through Parliament", its whole approach is inevitably modified. The Commission talks seriously to Parliament and its committees about what it intends to do, discussing in depth the negotiating mandate it has received from the Council. Armed with Parliament's views, it conducts the actual negotiations accordingly. Indeed, though it has so far never come to it, it can be safely assumed that the Council would today be unlikely to give the Commission a negotiating mandate to begin talks with a country towards which the European Parliament had expressed misgivings *a priori*.

(B) Budgetary powers

The assent procedure is not the only treaty-based procedure available to the European Parliament in the field of external relations. Parliament's *budgetary powers* also give it a degree of leverage that has proved effective on numerous occasions. Again, to take the example of Turkey: in September 1996, the EP decided to open the procedure for placing funds destined for Turkey under the MEDA programme (aid to the Mediterranean) into the budgetary reserve⁷, and asked the Commission to block all payments for Turkish projects immediately. The Commission concurred. Since then, Parliament and Commission have agreed to set up a working group that will decide jointly which MEDA projects for Turkey can be funded (eg. those having a bearing on the promotion of democracy, human rights and civil society), and which not. By threatening to block these funds, the EP has been able to exert pressure not only on Ankara itself, but also on the other Community institutions, effectively warning them that unless they voluntarily take a firmer stance towards Turkey, they will be obliged by Parliament to do so.

But there have been other examples of the EP exerting its budgetary muscle to ensure compliance with its own views. In 1992, following parliamentary delegation visits to Russia and the Transcaucasian states, MEPs became concerned at the way in which Community aid under the TACIS programme was being spent: too much was going to suppliers and companies within the EC itself, and not enough was flowing to the countries for whom it was intended. The Commission was invited to review its procedures and to come forward with proposals for improving the programme and making the use of the assistance more effective. In the absence of proposals that Parliament's Budgets Committee considered acceptable, members threatened to place a proportion of the agreed TACIS funding into the reserve, and only release it when it was satisfied that the money was going to be correctly allocated. The threat was enough: the Commission duly came up with a reform of the programme acceptable to the committee, and the latter agreed not to propose to Parliament use of its budgetary powers to hold up disbursement of the funds. Noteworthy here is the fact that the Commission's revisions followed threats not by Parliament itself, but merely by its Budgets Committee.

More generally, the EP is able to set priorities during the budgetary procedure itself. As one arm of the EC's budgetary authority, with the right to modify non-compulsory (discretionary) expenditure, it can and does influence how much can be spent on what. It may be tempted to exercise its budgetary powers in relation to policies in which it has a particular interest. Such policies often exist because of parliamentary initiatives that led to their creation in the first place. Parliament can actually create new budgetary lines and vote funds to put on those lines. It has frequently done so, often in areas that have direct external policy implications. Examples—and there are many of them—include programmes to combat the destruction of tropical forests⁸ or to promote democracy and human rights in the central and eastern European countries⁹.

While the European Parliament cannot directly influence the size and scope of development and cooperation spending for the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states (which is financed by the European Development Fund [EDF], an instrument that does not form an integral part of the EC's budget), it does have control over most other areas of Community ODA, including to Asia, Latin America, South Africa, the Mediterranean and Middle East and the central and eastern European countries and the former Soviet Union. Again by way of example, the EP played a significant part in setting the priorities for aid spending for southern Africa in the immediate post-apartheid era¹⁰. Since the legislation necessary for implementing such aid measures is subject to the cooperation procedure (Article 189c EC), the European Parliament finds itself with real power to amend Commission proposals; knowing this, the Commission is likely to take note of the EP's input even before drafting proposals, and the Council is likely to take seriously amendments tabled during the procedure itself.

These, then, are just a few examples of how the EP is able to influence external actions of the European Community through the powers it enjoys under the EC treaty. The more often the European Parliament uses its powers, or threatens to do so, the more likely are the other Community institutions to consider their actions in the field of external relations before taking them.

2. Non-statutory activities of the EP and their effects

(A) Trade

While the European Parliament has no right of legislative initiative as such, parliamentary pressure on the Commission can and has led to the introduction of proposals that have come to have notable effects on the European Community's relations with third countries. The ban on the importation of seal products in the early 1980s came about as the result of parliamentary pressure on the Commission to introduce legislation. It was the Environment Committee that took the lead within the European Parliament, as it did in numerous subsequent efforts to get the Community to use its muscle to persuade third countries to change their practices. In this way the EC restricted imports of kangaroo products from Australia and old-growth lumber from Canada. Legislation is currently pending that would affect a number of countries which export furs from animals caught in leg-hold traps—the United States among them.

These are, strictly speaking, trade issues. But trade is a key element in external relations, especially for the European Union, where the part it plays is arguably proportionately greater than in the external relations of most nation states. Certainly, in the cases cited above, there was a strong political reaction by the countries concerned. The EU's numerous trade disputes, especially with its major industrialized partners, nearly always take on a highly political dimension and tend to constitute the single biggest irritant in bilateral relations. Nowhere is this more true than in the transatlantic relationship. To the extent, therefore, that the European Parliament may be instrumental in encouraging or initiating trade disputes, it is making its impact on the European Union's external relations.

(B) Human rights and democracy

Parliament's preoccupation with human rights abuses has had one of the most significant influences on the European Union's relations with third countries. It is true that the EP's role in the human rights field, while extensive, is difficult to quantify in terms of results. Parliamentary pressure tends to be cumulative, complementing other pressures originating from a variety of sources. But the *culture* evoked by Parliament's long-standing concern with the issue has certainly permeated through to the other Community institutions. Nowhere is this clearer than in the practice in force since the early 1990s of including a "human rights clause" in all agreements negotiated or renegotiated with third countries, whether simple trade accords or complex association agreements. These clauses allow abrogation of the agreement, by either side, where human rights abuses are established.

EP resolutions on human rights issues—usually adopted following Rule 47 "urgency" debates—generally highlight specific cases and call on the authorities of the offending country to rectify the abuses concerned. Often, in addition, they demand action from the Community's other institutions, usually through requests to the Commission and the Presidency to make representations to the target country. Sometimes, however, they go farther than this, proposing specific responses either by the other institutions, or by Parliament itself.

Urgency resolutions are not the sole vehicle for attacks by the EP on human rights violations, however. The case of Turkey has already been referred to, with the EP using alleged human rights violations as a reason for freezing the allocation of project funds. The Foreign Affairs Committee, in its regular "initiative reports" on relations with third countries, will include paragraphs referring to human rights issues. A case in point is the current report on relations with China¹¹, due to be adopted in June 1997, which contains a number of paragraphs calling for improvements in the human rights field, but which deals also with all other aspects of the EU-China relationship, including political, economic and trade ties.

References to human rights in resolutions adopted by the European Parliament do not fall on deaf ears. Major targets of such resolutions regularly react, often sending letters containing detailed rebuttals of the allegations (and often protesting that the resolution represents an interference in their internal affairs). It is in this sense that the EP's efforts in this field may be seen as cumulative or complementary. Parliamentary resolutions, while not in themselves necessarily resulting in any amelioration of a given abuse situation, nonetheless form part of wider campaigns directed at the perpetrators of human rights violations and thus serve to strengthen ongoing international efforts. In some cases, however, there is a clear linkage between alleged human rights violations in a third country and the European Union's formal relations with that country, in the form of an existing or pending agreement. Here, as we have already seen, Parliament may use its powers under the assent procedure to threaten to hold up or reject the accord subject to improvements in the human rights situation.

Related to human rights is the question of democracy and good governance. Parliament has recently started to draw parallels between human rights abuses and the lack of democracy in given countries. The decision by the EP to delay assent on the partnership accord with Kazakhstan, referred to above, was provoked by the dissolution of that country's Supreme Soviet in 1995 by the President following a ruling by the Kazakh Constitutional Court. Parliament considered that "the ratification of the partnership agreement with Kazakhstan must be suspended until new general elections have been held, free of the defects of those held in March and April 1994", and went on to urge the Commission and Council to offer help to Kazakhstan to create "the legal framework for the establishment of parliamentary democracy..."¹². Since that time, Community agreements with third countries include, in addition to a human rights clause, reference to respect for democracy and the rule of law.

3. Interparliamentary delegations and joint parliamentary committees

A curiosity in the European Parliament's internal organizational structure is the existence of a large number of standing bodies known as interparliamentary delegations and delegations to joint parliamentary committees. There are currently 34 such bodies, and this number is likely to rise to 40 or more once the last of the accords with central and eastern Europe and the NIS have been ratified. Many parliaments in the world have similar bodies, but none has so all-embracing a network of them as the EP. Some of the EP's interparliamentary delegations are bilateral, covering relations with a single partner country such as the United States or Japan; but most are regional, dealing with several

partner countries in a geopolitical area such as ASEAN or South Asia. Together with the EU-ACP Joint Parliamentary Assembly, which brings together members of the European Parliament and representatives of the 70 African, Caribbean and Pacific states of the Lomé convention, the interparliamentary delegations and joint parliamentary committees provide links between the European Parliament and all but half a dozen countries in the world.

The backgrounds to these delegations are diverse. The first delegations were to the joint parliamentary committees established between the Turkish and Greek parliaments and the EP in the early 1960s under the terms of the association agreements between those countries and the Community. Similar "parliamentary clauses" in the EC's agreements with Cyprus and Malta and the Maghreb and Mashreq countries in the 1970s led to the creation of interparliamentary delegations with most of the Community's Mediterranean partners. While these, and the more recent joint parliamentary committees set up under the Europe agreements with the central and eastern European countries (as well as the parliamentary cooperation committees with the CIS countries that signed partnership accords with the EC) all took as their legal basis formal agreements signed with the partner countries concerned, other interparliamentary delegations were set up on a voluntary basis by the European Parliament itself. Delegations for relations with the U.S., Canada, Japan, China and others did not *need* to be set up, but came into being for largely political reasons, often in response to overtures from the parliaments of the countries concerned. Today, the EP takes a decision every two and a half years listing the interparliamentary bodies it will set up, together with their responsibilities and role.

The European Parliament has used these bodies to exercise a degree of "parliamentary diplomacy". It is true that parliamentarians are often unconventional diplomats, and for those who have observed MEPs in action confronting their American, Russian or Chinese homologues it is clear that their approach is often undiplomatic in the extreme! However, given the regularity and scope of these contacts, it is also clear that a type of partner is being targeted who might otherwise have little occasion to be confronted with issues pertaining to the EU. There are now bodies of parliamentarians in the U.S. Congress, the Japanese Diet, the Chinese National Peoples' Congress, the Russian Duma and in many other parliamentary bodies around the world who have been exposed to the EP and its views. For most such parliamentarians this may indeed be a first contact with any of the EU's institutions, and with its policies. Nor do travelling EP delegations limit themselves to discussions with their *parliamentary* counterparts. Meetings regularly take place with members of the host country's administrations, often at the highest levels. MEPs find themselves talking to presidents, premiers and foreign ministers and conveying to them the EU's concerns on trade problems, security issues or human rights. Moreover, they do this in some cases with extraordinary frequency: meetings of the joint parliamentary committees of the EP and its partners in central and eastern Europe take place every six months. The same applies to the EP-U.S. Congress relationship, which is now in its 24th year and has held 45 meetings.

In its incarnation as roving ambassador, the European Parliament presents one of only two institutional faces shown by the EU around the world. The other is that of the Commission, which maintains permanent "delegations"—*de facto* embassies—in capitals around the globe, and which is occasionally

represented through official visits by its President or members. But the Commission, while involved in the Union's policy-making process as negotiator, is not overtly political: it is the EC's executive institution, and not a policy-maker as such. It is thus left to the Parliament to present the *political* face of the Union. Indeed, because the structure of the European Union is so poorly understood in many third countries, European Parliament delegations are often viewed by their hosts as representative of the EU *per se* and treated accordingly. A group of MEPs arriving in Bangladesh or Armenia, say, can expect to be dealt with as if they possessed the full negotiating powers of the European Union as a whole. It would not be untrue to say that European parliamentarians have learned to exploit the fact that the EU is a poorly understood entity. In any event, it has come to play an important role in sensitizing political elites in many third countries to the political nature of the European Union. This is something the Council is not equipped to do. While the ambassadors of the EU's member states, under the chairmanship of the ambassador representing the country holding the presidency, play a part in contacts with the governments of third countries, they do not speak for the Council as such (although they can convey the EU's views to a foreign government).

Related to the activities of the European Parliament's standing delegations are those of other, more ad hoc delegations, such as those sent as election observers or to participate in ministerial meetings between the European Union and its partners, such as the Barcelona Conference on the Mediterranean, or the EU-Rio Group meetings. Parliament is increasingly insisting on playing a part in such international gatherings, refusing to be excluded from what used to be meetings exclusively reserved for representatives of the member states' governments. Having achieved this right to participate, the European Parliament finds itself involved in international events from which even the member states' national parliaments are excluded (except, of course, to the extent that government ministers are usually also members of their national parliaments).

4. Conclusion

It has not been the intention of this paper to suggest that the European Parliament is anything more than one of several players in the European Union's external relations activities. Even less has the idea been to show that the EP plays any special part in the formulation of foreign policy under the CFSP. The latter not only excludes the parliament *a priori* from its strictly intergovernmental approach, it also still contributes only marginally to the Union's overall external role. But, by arguing that the bulk of the EU's external relations (and even, *defacto*, its foreign policy) remains effectively based on the Community method, often under treaty articles that give a cooperation or codecision capacity to the EP, the paper has tried to show that Parliament is not only involved on a statutory basis, but also uses its powers to help *shape* those relations.

Several examples have been provided in support of the idea that, unlike national European parliaments whose job is to maintain governments in power, the European Parliament considers itself free to take an often independent line in exerting pressure directly on third countries while at the same time urging the other Community institutions to adopt policies that reflect its thinking. If we accept, for example,

the proposition that EU policy towards Turkey—which is carried out almost exclusively through instruments that were created and are managed on the basis of EC Treaty provisions—can be defined as "foreign policy" as much as "external relations", then we must conclude that the European Parliament has played a central role in defining or redefining that policy.

The few examples given here are by no means exhaustive. There are many others, ranging from the obvious (such as the EP's role in Central America in supporting the creation of the Central American Parliament, thus helping to encourage stability in the region) to the more subtle (such as the many ways in which the EP has influenced specific *domestic* Community policies that have then had repercussions on the EC's *external* relations, e.g. in the fields of the environment, telecommunications, audio-visual, and others). The European Parliament, involved as it is in the implementation of EU policy under the EC Treaty, has certainly had a significant impact on the way the Union conducts itself internationally. In addition, however, the fact that the Commission and Council have now begun to include the "EP factor" into their policy- and policy-implementation equations means that Parliament can now claim at least a shared role in policy definition and policy shaping.

NOTES

1. "Euro-Mediterranean Interim Association Agreement on trade and cooperation between the European Community, of the one part, and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) for the benefit of the Palestinian Authority of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, of the other part" (Council Document CE/OLP/en1)
2. European Parliament, *Decision on the conclusion of a protocol on financial cooperation between the European Economic Community and the State of Israel*, 8 March 1988 (OJ No C94, 11.4.88, p. 56)
3. European Parliament, *Decision on the proposal for a Council and Commission Decision on the conclusion of the partnership and cooperation agreement between the European Communities and their member states, of the one part, and the Republic of Kazakhstan, of the other part*, 13 March 1997 (Doc. A4-0069/97, Minutes of 13.3.1997)
4. See Christopher Piening, *Global Europe: The European Union in World Affairs* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1997), p. 87
5. See European Parliament, *Resolution on the trial of Turkish Members of Kurdish origin of the Turkish Grand National Assembly*, 15 December 1994, paras. 6 and 7 (OJ No C18, 23.1.1995, p. 177) and *Resolution on the draft agreement on the conclusion of a customs union between the EU and Turkey*, 16 February 1995, para. 1 (OJ No C56, 6.3.1995, p. 99).
6. European Parliament, *Legislative resolution on the proposal for a Council Directive relating to a common position by the Community in the EC-Turkey Association Council on implementing the final phase of the customs union*, 13 December 1995 (OJ No C17, 22.1.1996, p. 43)
7. See European Parliament, *Resolution on the political situation in Turkey*, 19 September 1996, para. 4 (EP Minutes of 19.9.1996)
8. Budget chapter B7-62 (Environment in the developing countries). See also EP resolution on the conservation of tropical forests of 25.10.1990 (OJ No C 295, 26.11.1990, p. 193).

9. Budget chapter B7-7 (European initiative for democracy and the protection of human rights). See also EP resolution on a European initiative for democracy of 14.5.1992 (OJ No C 150, 15.6.1992, p. 281)

10. In December 1995, the European Parliament amended a Commission proposal on rehabilitation in developing countries and southern Africa, adding new priorities, particularly calling for greater emphasis on sustainability. These amendments were accepted by the Council, thus becoming EC policy. See European Parliament, *Decision on the common position adopted by the Council with a view to adopting a Council Regulation on rehabilitation and reconstruction operations in developing countries*, 21 May 1996 (OJ No C166, 10.6.1996, p. 33), and Council Regulation EC No 2258/96 of 22.11.1996 (OJ No L306, 28.11.1996, p.1)

11. European Parliament, *Draft Report on the Communication from the Commission to the Council on a long term policy for China-Europe Relations*, Doc. PE 221.588/A, 4 March 1997

12. European Parliament, *Resolution on the partnership agreements with the NIS* of 7 April 1995, para. 5 (OJ No C109 of 1.5.95, p. 298)

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