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58. Intends to make better use of its instrument of recommendations to Council especially in cases of urgency; suggests to this end simplifying its own internal procedures;
59. Recommends that urgencies should also be on the agenda for the plenary sessions in Brussels and not only be dealt with in Strasbourg;
60. Recommends that its Bureau and its General Secretary ensure a closer cooperation between the Foreign Affairs Committee and Parliament's Delegations at political as well as at administrative level;
61. Recommends as well that, with full respect for their mutual independence, the strongest possible communication and cooperation should exist between the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Security and Defence Policy and the Committee on Development and Cooperation;
62. Therefore points out that the easiest way to improve such cooperation would be to harmonize the administrations of both committees at the beginning of the next parliamentary term;
63. Recommends the examination of all possibilities for improving the relations between Committee work, Plenary and Topical and Urgent Debates in order to increase Parliament's visibility and its foreign policy profile:

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64. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission as well as to the Governments and Parliaments of EU Member States.

(b) A4-0219/99

Recommendation of the European Parliament to the Council concerning the common strategy towards the Russian Federation

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal for a recommendation to the Council tabled by Mr Spencer and 32 others on the common strategy towards the Russian Federation (B4-0321/99),
- having regard to Articles 13 and 21 of the Treaty on European Union,
- having regard to Rule 46(3) of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to its assent of 30 November 1995 on the proposal for a Council and Commission Decision on the conclusion of an Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation between the European Communities, of the one part, and the Russian Federation, of the other part (COM(94)0257 – 7630/94 – C4-0191/95 – 6101/95 – C4-0358/95 – 95/0151(AVC) ⁽¹⁾), and the agreement itself,
- having regard to its resolution of 2 April 1998 on the Commission communication 'The future of relations between the European Union and Russia' and the action plan 'The European Union and Russia: the future relationship' (COM(95)0223 – C4-0217/95 – 6440/96 – C4-0415/96) ⁽²⁾,
- having regard to the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and Russia, adopted in Paris on 27 May 1997 ⁽³⁾,
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Security and Defence Policy (A4-0219/99),

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 339, 18.12.1995, p. 45.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 138, 4.5.1998, p. 166.

⁽³⁾ See Notice to Members PE 223.084.

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- A. whereas the Vienna European Council invited the Council to prepare a common strategy on the Russian Federation so that it may adopt such a strategy at Cologne in June 1999, pursuant to Article 13 of the Treaty on European Union,
 - B. whereas Russia is facing a serious economic and social crisis and has to be helped to make a success of political and economic transition, which also means strengthening the rule of law and democracy,
 - C. whereas it is in the European Union's interests that all areas of the partnership with the Russian Federation are developed,
 - D. whereas the purpose of a common strategy should be both to add value to the existing partnership and to ensure the coherence and consistency of the European Union's relationship with the Russian Federation, both within and between each of the pillars of the European Union's activities ('cross-pillar approach').
 - E. whereas a common strategy will set out the priority areas for the development of the European Union's partnership with the Russian Federation for years to come, notably within the context of the Agenda 2000 settlement reached at the Berlin Summit and in the light of the forthcoming revision of the TACIS programme.
 - F. whereas the adoption of a common strategy will entail that all implementing decisions, regardless of which pillar they come under, should be taken by qualified majority vote in the Council.
 - G. whereas the common strategy on the Russian Federation will act as a precedent for subsequent common strategies, notably the one for Ukraine,
 - H. whereas the Russian Federation cannot be overlooked in European security architecture and it is in the European Union and Russian Federation's interests to overcome the present difficulties relating to the crisis in the Western Balkans so continuing dialogue can be established on security and defence issues, in order to preserve peace and stability in Europe,
 - I. whereas the poor safety record of nuclear facilities in Russia and the high level of environmental degradation surrounding them, notably in the North-West, make it necessary for the common strategy to pay particular attention to this issue.
 - J. whereas the Northern Dimension is an essential part of the European Union's policy towards the Russian Federation,
- 1. Asks the Council to consult Parliament formally on common strategies, including the common strategy towards the Russian Federation, as a basic choice of the CFSP;
 - 2. Believes moreover that the proposed common strategy for Russia must be based firmly on the foundations of democratic institutions, good governance and respect for human rights;
 - 3. Calls for consultation of the European Parliament on common strategies to be made the subject of an interinstitutional agreement which spells out the respective responsibilities and commitments of Parliament, the Commission and the Council (and in particular of its Presidency and High Representative for the CFSP), so that a common strategy constitutes an instrument which is both democratic and effective;
 - 4. Believes that in general:
 - (i) the quality of the common strategy is more important than its early adoption;
 - (ii) the existence of new institutions of the CFSP, notably the High Representative and the Planning Unit, will strengthen policy making abilities and contribute to a better common strategy;
 - 5. Recognises that in the current international climate it would be unhelpful to communicate what could be interpreted as a negative signal to the Russian authorities, by seeking to postpone a decision on the common strategy, bearing in mind the forthcoming meeting of the EU-Russia Cooperation Council on 17 May 1999, but nevertheless expresses the view that to be taken seriously the common strategy must contain a significant medium and long-term perspective for EU-Russia relations, given the context of the future enlargement of the EU amongst other matters and the need to go beyond the existing parameters of the partnership and cooperation agreement and the Action Plan for Russia;

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6. Supports the principle of a common strategy towards the Russian Federation that confirms the European Union's declared foreign policy commitment to the Russian Federation and at the same time establishes the political and economic framework of the partnership across all three pillars of the European Union's activities to be developed between the two parties;
 7. Urges the Council to take account of Parliament's resolution of 2 April 1998, which contains essential points for inclusion in the common strategy;
 8. Hopes for stronger cooperation between the European Union and the Russian Federation, with account being taken of the regions' role so technical assistance will be made more effective, with due regard for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Russian Federation;
 9. Recommends that the Council, when it formally presents the common strategy to the European Council, include the following points:
 - the European Union and the Russian Federation will, in the context of the high-level political dialogue for which the partnership and cooperation agreement provides, address matters of security, defence and disarmament so as to strengthen peace and security in Europe; the European Union will try to associate the Russian Federation in political initiatives of common interest, to consolidate peace and security in areas where they are under threat;
 - the European Union will support the Russian authorities' efforts to restore the authority of the state, with respect for the rule of law; it will contribute, in collaboration with the Council of Europe and the OSCE, to the parallel development of civil society in the Russian Federation, so as to provide a lasting basis for democracy by expansion of a democratic political culture;
 - the European Union will work towards modernisation and development of the Russian economy; it will jointly examine the debt question with the Russian authorities, international financial institutions and other donors, so that servicing will not impede reform;
 - the European Union and the Russian Federation will devote particular attention to nuclear safety, environmental protection, trade policy development and liberalisation, agriculture, energy and the removal of obstacles and bottlenecks in the transport communications system, including infrastructure, linking the Russian Federation to the European Union; they will strengthen cooperation in areas relating to the third pillar, cultural affairs and public health; they will encourage scientific and technical cooperation of mutual interest, as well as joint projects, where financing and management are carried out jointly by EU Member States and the Russian Federation;
 - the European Union will undertake to combat money-laundering and to help the Russian authorities stem the illegal flow of money from Russia to EU countries; the European Union, worried about the further development of international crime, will invite the Russian authorities to make joint crime prevention a priority;
 10. Calls upon the EU to pursue its obligations towards minority groups in the Russian Federation and in particular to improve the situation in orphanages and in prisons; to this end, it will underline the rights and obligations for the Russian Federation following its membership of the Council of Europe and of the OSCE;
 11. Invites the EU to step up its dialogue on economic matters with the Russian authorities to overcome the Russian Federation's present crisis, including its negative impact on the other NISs; the EU actions should be closely coordinated with the international financial institutions;
 12. Instructs its President to forward this recommendation to the European Council, the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States and of Russia.
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