Thursday 13 April 2000

21. Stabilisation and association process for countries of South-Eastern Europe

A5-0069/2000

European Parliament resolution on the communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on the stabilisation and association process for countries of South-Eastern Europe (COM(1999) 235 – C5-0124/1999 – 1999/2126(COS))

The European Parliament,

– having regard to the Commission communication (COM(1999) 235 – C5-0124/1999),

– having regard to the Commission communication to the Council and the European Parliament of 8 December 1999 on Community assistance for the stabilisation and association process for certain countries of South-East Europe – CARA Programme (Community association and reconstruction assistance – Guidelines and detailed arrangements for assistance to Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia under the future CARA programme (2000-2006)) COM(1999) 661,

– having regard to the report of the Finnish presidency and the Commission to the European Council in Helsinki on EU Action in Support of the Stability Pact and South-Eastern Europe, 10-11 December (Council 13814/1999),

– having regard to the decision on the introduction of a Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe adopted in Cologne on 10 June 1999 and the Declaration by the participants at the Balkan Summit on the Stability Pact held in Sarajevo on 30 July 1999,

– having regard to the Work Plan adopted by the Regional Table of the Stability Pact in Brussels on 16 September 1999 and the results of the deliberations of the three Tables,

– having regard to Rule 47(1) of its Rules of Procedure,

– having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy (A5-0069/2000),

A. convinced that the issue of establishing peace, stability, democracy and the rule of law, as well as economic development, in South-Eastern Europe is one of the central challenges facing the European Union in the coming years and will also be a test of its ability to develop an effective civil and military crisis management strategy aimed at conflict prevention,

B. convinced that the region's problems cannot be dealt with in isolation from one another or separately from the problems of the rest of Europe,

C. whereas the Kosovo crisis once again made it clear that the Balkan region is part of Europe and that ethnic conflicts, the exodus of refugees and unstable economies can have an enormous impact on the stability of Europe as a whole,

D. convinced that the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe constitutes a proper conceptual framework for crisis prevention, in which the region is considered as a whole and the establishment of democracy, economic development and security are seen as interdependent elements,

E. whereas all countries involved in the region should respect the resolution of United Nations concerning the respect of borders between the countries in the area,

F. whereas all countries in the region – to varying degrees – have to combat the same problems: weak political institutions and legal uncertainty, lack of media freedom, corruption and crime, ruined or neglected infrastructure and environment, inadequate economic activity and a low level of investment, high unemployment, an inefficient banking and taxation system, insufficient border management, an undersized private sector and inadequate economic legislation,

G. whereas following the conflicts in former Yugoslavia, reconstruction is to be understood not only in the physical and economic sense but also as the reconstruction of social infrastructure, society and institutions, and hence the central aim of any reconstruction strategy must be the reestablishment of the rule of law,

H. having regard to the severe damage caused by the NATO bombing to industrial and civilian infrastructure in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), the consequences of which affect the normal and basic conduct of daily life, including health, food supply, employment, energy supply etc.,

I. whereas long-term stability in the region cannot be accomplished as long as the FRY remains in isolation, producing an ongoing void in the region's geographical centre and the permanent presence of destabilising factors in the soft underbelly of Europe,

J. whereas the offer made by the EU to Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania to conclude Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAAs) opens up to them the long-term prospect of EU membership,

K. whereas the Stability Pact constitutes the link between these five SAA countries and the applicant countries Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Slovenia, since they all participate together with the EU and its Member States, the USA, Russia, Canada, Japan and Turkey, as well as the international organisations and international financial institutions, in the Regional Table, where programmes for the development of the region are discussed,

L. convinced that the EU's offer of integration into the European structures and the support for regional cooperation are not to be seen as alternatives but as two complementary and mutually enhancing processes,

M. whereas between 1991 and 1999 the EU supplied aid worth more than € 7.5 billion to the five countries in the region and whereas the Commission has proposed to make approximately € 5.5 billion available for the period 2000-2006, as well as € 6.2 billion for Romania and Bulgaria,

1. Considers the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe as the central challenge for the European Union at present, and considers that it will be decisive for the future of peace and stability in South-Eastern Europe, as well as for the Union's political credibility;

2. Calls therefore on the EU to take over the central leading role in the Stability Pact using all the instruments, programmes and funding potential at its disposal;

3. Calls on the High Representative for the common foreign and security policy and the Commissioner for External Relations to ensure that the EU, as the principal donor for the region, is closely dovetailed with the Special Coordinator responsible for the implementation of the Pact;

4. Calls for this dovetailing and the strengthening of the European pillar within the structure of the Stability Pact to be used to reduce the number of actors on the Balkan stage and to ensure greater transparency in the use of existing structures;

5. Supports the strategic concept of the Stability Pact as a preventive policy in which external and internal security, democratisation and the rule of law and economic development are to be dealt with on an equal footing and in parallel as interdependent issues;

6. Stresses the need to isolate extreme nationalist groups which resist all efforts to bring about a return to democratic dialogue and the economic development wanted by moderate groups in the region;

7. Notes the results of the financing conference of 29/30 March 2000 for Stability Pact projects and considers its implementation as a decisive test of the Pact's ability to transform political concepts into practice;

8. Calls on the Commission to cofinance practical projects from all three subject areas in the context of the new Association and Reconstruction Programme for the five countries of the Western Balkans (CARA), under the PHARE programme and exploiting Interreg; not only should regional economic projects be promoted, but particular attention should also be devoted to projects in the first subject area – democratisation and promotion of civil society as well as the third – regional disarmament, mine-clearance, improving police work and anti-corruption measures;

9. Urges the Commission, in this respect, to make an overall evaluation of the European Community Monitoring Mission with a view to discussing with Parliament the possibility of redefining its tasks with regard, in particular, to conflict prevention and confidence-building within the new framework of the Stability Pact;

10. States that, if any of the countries develops policies or undertakes activities which seek unilateral border changes or in any other way cause damage to the Stability Pact, it will be excluded from the financing procedures of the Stability Pact;

11. Stresses that with the introduction of the Stabilisation and Association process the EU is offering the peoples in the region the prospect of being incorporated in the structures of the EU in the long term and giving them hope of a better future after years of suffering;

12. Considers the regional approach to the Western Balkans advocated by the EU since 1996 still to be valid, and takes the view that the principle of political conditionality should also apply to the Stability Pact;

13. Considers that there is an urgent need to submit a comprehensive aid programme for the five SAA countries in the interests of making the Stability Pact directly effective and providing the necessary financial support for the stabilisation and association process;

14. Calls for particular emphasis to be laid on regional cooperation and programmes for several countries and cross-border projects to remain feasible in the context of the Stability Pact;

15. Takes the view that the sphere of responsibility of the European agency for reconstruction should be extended beyond Kosovo to the whole region covered by the new association and reconstruction process and that the agency must be responsible for implementing the horizontal EU programmes as well as for coordination with projects devised by other international donors;

16. Considers that, in addition to the regional projects for each country, special national programmes must be set up, tailored to the particular needs and conditions of each country, and that the relevant EU delegations should manage their implementation on the spot;

17. Considers, in this context, Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo and Albania to be particular trouble spots, to which the EU and the international community must devote special attention, requiring a rational and feasible division between the work of the institutions outside the Stability Pact, e.g. UNMIK, and the work of the Stability Pact;

18. Believes, in this respect, that a strict armaments control policy is a fundamental factor for the stabilisation and security of these three countries as well as the whole region; urges Member States therefore, together with all the signatories of the Stability Pact, to set up a common programme to assist and train local police forces, while keeping national armies as limited in size as possible;

19. Considers, with regard to the FRY, that the selective lifting of sanctions might be a way of strengthening the Serb opposition and weakening the Milosevic regime;

20. Considers that a distinction should be made between sanctions against the establishment in Yugoslavia and sanctions against the people of the country, so that the latter sanctions may be gradually lifted, thus allowing democratic dialogue in Yugoslavia to be promoted;

21. Supports the participation of Montenegro in the political dialogue launched with democratic forces in the FRY;

22. Requests, in the interests of the whole region, the earliest possible re-establishment of conditions for ensuring the navigability of the Danube;

23. Welcomes the democratic developments in Croatia and encourages the new government to take the necessary steps to ensure that the EU can extend its aid towards the country and the negotiations for a Stabilization and Association Agreement to commence;

24. Insists on the need to provide direct assistance to the municipalities in the region and to further development cooperation and partnership between local authorities in South-Eastern Europe and in the European Union, especially in institution-building, management of public service and local economic development;

25. Calls on the Council and the Commission to ensure their active participation in the Conference on the Security and Development of the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, to be held on 19 and 20 May this year, as a valid contribution to the work of the Stability Pact, as mentioned in the conclusions of the extraordinary meeting of the European Council in Tampere;

26. Is of the opinion that the Stability Pact is of great significance for the wider region as well and therefore asks for the Republic of Moldova to be given the opportunity to participate directly in the Stability Pact;

27. Considers the combating of corruption and organized crime to be a decisive precondition for creating a civil society based on the rule of law and democracy and, in this context, requests that appropriate attention be given to recruitment, training and adequate levels of pay for police forces;

28. Proposes that the SAA countries should be offered zero-tariff free trade with the EU, EFTA, EEA and CEFTA and offered compensation for the latest tariff reviews, as this action would boost the economy and undermine smuggling and organised crime;

29. Stresses the increasingly dangerous nature of the links between criminal organisations operating in certain countries of South-Eastern Europe and those in the Member States nearest to the area, such as Italy and Greece; deplores the fact that these links thrive on illicit trafficking such as smuggling, drugs and trafficking in illegal immigrants;

30. Calls on the Council, the Commission and the Pact coordinator to promote a specific initiative for drawing up common agreements on police and judicial cooperation between the European Union and the countries concerned and to offer active support for the projects needed for its achievement;

31. Stresses the importance of the independent media for the development of civil society; welcomes the draft Charter for Media Freedom in the context of the Stability Pact and considers that it should also receive tangible support in the form of precisely targeted projects;

32. Insists on the creation of a free and independent regional network of existing channels from each country in the region, to create links and synergies between national and local broadcasting in order to ensure fair and adequate information;

33. Calls for the teaching of tolerance and cooperation, not least in schools, and calls for particular attention to be devoted to this when school books, curricula, etc. are being drawn up;

34. Supports the formation of concrete plans aimed at contributing to the cultural and religious approach between the five countries and stresses the need for protection of the monuments and the cultural heritage; measures in the region with precise actions;

35. Stresses the important role of international and local NGOs in economic and social reconstruction; stresses also the need for the greatest participation of as many local NGOs as possible in the reconstruction projects, retaining on the other hand strict and efficient control over their financial procedures in order to avoid corruption;

36. Reiterates its demand for active regional aid from the EU in the context of the Stability Pact, to promote regional infrastructure projects, such as the extension of European corridors 8 and 10, cross-border energy, environment and water projects and the joint improvement of border management and customs;

37. Welcomes the Commission's latest initiative for a 'regional environmental reconstruction plan' in the framework of the Stability Pact;

38. Calls on the Commission, in particular by means of coordination between the individual departments, to ensure that there are no barriers to trade between the countries in the region, in particular between the applicant countries and the other countries;

39. Supports the efforts of the Commission to create an effective mechanism for civilian crisis management;

40. Is open to the idea of creating a rapid reaction fund, and in its capacity as part of the budget authority expresses its willingness to discuss the practicalities of such a fund with the Commission at an early date;

41. Expresses its willingness to take part in strengthening the parliamentary dimension in the region; intends, therefore, to take the initiative of extending its existing bilateral relations with the parliaments in the region to include an annual multilateral meeting in the framework of the Stability Pact;

42. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and the Council.

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22. Financial markets

A5-0059/2000

European Parliament resolution on the Commission communication on implementing the framework for financial markets: Action Plan (COM(1999) 232 – C5-0114/1999 – 1999/2117(COS))

The European Parliament,

– having regard to the Commission communication (COM(1999) 232 – C5-0114/1999),

– having regard to its resolution of 4 May 1999 [1] on an earlier Commission communication on Financial Services: Building a Framework for Action (COM(1998) 625 – C4-0688/1998),

– having regard to Rule 47(1) of its Rules of Procedure,

– having regard to the report of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and the opinions of the Committee on Legal Affairs and the Internal Market, the Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Policy (A5-0059/2000),

A. whereas the Commission communication entitled 'Implementing the framework for financial markets: Action Plan' is the basis for a future working programme in this field, which will take the form of 43 concrete measures, to be adopted over a five-year period with a view to deriving maximum benefit from the introduction of the euro and guaranteeing the stability and competitiveness of the Union's financial markets,

B. whereas the strategic objectives set out in the Action Plan (a single EU wholesale market, open and secure retail markets, state-of-the-art prudential rules and supervision and wider conditions for an optimal single financial market) may be summarised under two headings, namely to develop further the internal market in technical services (liberalisation of the sector) and to improve a number of technical aspects (reduction of systemic risk and/or improvement of the forecasting system for those risks while also facilitating the conclusion of transactions),

[1] OJ C 279, 24.9.1999, p. 7.

Thursday 13 April 2000

21. Stabilisation and association process for countries of South-Eastern Europe

A5-0069/2000

European Parliament resolution on the communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on the stabilisation and association process for countries of South-Eastern Europe (COM(1999) 235 – C5-0124/1999 – 1999/2126(COS))

The European Parliament,

– having regard to the Commission communication (COM(1999) 235 – C5-0124/1999),

– having regard to the Commission communication to the Council and the European Parliament of 8 December 1999 on Community assistance for the stabilisation and association process for certain countries of South-East Europe – CARA Programme (Community association and reconstruction assistance – Guidelines and detailed arrangements for assistance to Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia under the future CARA programme (2000-2006)) COM(1999) 661,

– having regard to the report of the Finnish presidency and the Commission to the European Council in Helsinki on EU Action in Support of the Stability Pact and South-Eastern Europe, 10-11 December (Council 13814/1999),

– having regard to the decision on the introduction of a Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe adopted in Cologne on 10 June 1999 and the Declaration by the participants at the Balkan Summit on the Stability Pact held in Sarajevo on 30 July 1999,

– having regard to the Work Plan adopted by the Regional Table of the Stability Pact in Brussels on 16 September 1999 and the results of the deliberations of the three Tables,

– having regard to Rule 47(1) of its Rules of Procedure,

– having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy (A5-0069/2000),

A. convinced that the issue of establishing peace, stability, democracy and the rule of law, as well as economic development, in South-Eastern Europe is one of the central challenges facing the European Union in the coming years and will also be a test of its ability to develop an effective civil and military crisis management strategy aimed at conflict prevention,

B. convinced that the region's problems cannot be dealt with in isolation from one another or separately from the problems of the rest of Europe,

C. whereas the Kosovo crisis once again made it clear that the Balkan region is part of Europe and that ethnic conflicts, the exodus of refugees and unstable economies can have an enormous impact on the stability of Europe as a whole,

D. convinced that the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe constitutes a proper conceptual framework for crisis prevention, in which the region is considered as a whole and the establishment of democracy, economic development and security are seen as interdependent elements,

E. whereas all countries involved in the region should respect the resolution of United Nations concerning the respect of borders between the countries in the area,

F. whereas all countries in the region – to varying degrees – have to combat the same problems: weak political institutions and legal uncertainty, lack of media freedom, corruption and crime, ruined or neglected infrastructure and environment, inadequate economic activity and a low level of investment, high unemployment, an inefficient banking and taxation system, insufficient border management, an undersized private sector and inadequate economic legislation,

C. whereas following the conflicts in former Yugoslavia, reconstruction is to be understood not only in the physical and economic sense but also as the reconstruction of social infrastructure, society and institutions, and hence the central aim of any reconstruction strategy must be the reestablishment of the rule of law,

H. having regard to the severe damage caused by the NATO bombing to industrial and civilian infrastructure in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), the consequences of which affect the normal and basic conduct of daily life, including health, food supply, employment, energy supply etc.,

I. whereas long-term stability in the region cannot be accomplished as long as the FRY remains in isolation, producing an ongoing void in the region's geographical centre and the permanent presence of destabilising factors in the soft underbelly of Europe,

J. whereas the offer made by the EU to Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania to conclude Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAAs) opens up to them the long-term prospect of EU membership,

K. whereas the Stability Pact constitutes the link between these five SAA countries and the applicant countries Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Slovenia, since they all participate together with the EU and its Member States, the USA, Russia, Canada, Japan and Turkey, as well as the international organisations and international financial institutions, in the Regional Table, where programmes for the development of the region are discussed,

L. convinced that the EU's offer of integration into the European structures and the support for regional cooperation are not to be seen as alternatives but as two complementary and mutually enhancing processes,

M. whereas between 1991 and 1999 the EU supplied aid worth more than € 7,5 billion to the five countries in the region and whereas the Commission has proposed to make approximately € 5,5 billion available for the period 2000-2006, as well as € 6,2 billion for Romania and Bulgaria,

1. Considers the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe as the central challenge for the European Union at present, and considers that it will be decisive for the future of peace and stability in South-Eastern Europe, as well as for the Union's political credibility;

2. Calls therefore on the EU to take over the central leading role in the Stability Pact using all the instruments, programmes and funding potential at its disposal;

3. Calls on the High Representative for the common foreign and security policy and the Commissioner for External Relations to ensure that the EU, as the principal donor for the region, is closely dovetailed with the Special Coordinator responsible for the implementation of the Pact;

4. Calls for this dovetailing and the strengthening of the European pillar within the structure of the Stability Pact to be used to reduce the number of actors on the Balkan stage and to ensure greater transparency in the use of existing structures;

5. Supports the strategic concept of the Stability Pact as a preventive policy in which external and internal security, democratisation and the rule of law and economic development are to be dealt with on an equal footing and in parallel as interdependent issues;

6. Stresses the need to isolate extreme nationalist groups which resist all efforts to bring about a return to democratic dialogue and the economic development wanted by moderate groups in the region;

7. Notes the results of the financing conference of 29/30 March 2000 for Stability Pact projects and considers its implementation as a decisive test of the Pact's ability to transform political concepts into practice;

8. Calls on the Commission to cofinance practical projects from all three subject areas in the context of the new Association and Reconstruction Programme for the five countries of the Western Balkans (CARDS), under the PHARE programme and exploiting Interreg; not only should regional economic projects be promoted, but particular attention should also be devoted to projects in the first subject area — democratisation and promotion of civil society as well as the third — regional disarmament, mine-clearance, improving police work and anti-corruption measures;

9. Urges the Commission, in this respect, to make an overall evaluation of the European Community Monitoring Mission with a view to discussing with Parliament the possibility of redefining its tasks with regard, in particular, to conflict prevention and confidence-building within the new framework of the Stability Pact;

10. States that, if any of the countries develops policies or undertakes activities which seek unilateral border changes or in any other way cause damage to the Stability Pact, it will be excluded from the financing procedures of the Stability Pact;

11. Stresses that with the introduction of the Stabilisation and Association process the EU is offering the peoples in the region the prospect of being incorporated in the structures of the EU in the long term and giving them hope of a better future after years of suffering;

12. Considers the regional approach to the Western Balkans advocated by the EU since 1996 still to be valid, and takes the view that the principle of political conditionality should also apply to the Stability Pact;

13. Considers that there is an urgent need to submit a comprehensive aid programme for the five SAA countries in the interests of making the Stability Pact directly effective and providing the necessary financial support for the stabilisation and association process;

14. Calls for particular emphasis to be laid on regional cooperation and programmes for several countries and cross-border projects to remain feasible in the context of the Stability Pact;

15. Takes the view that the sphere of responsibility of the European agency for reconstruction should be extended beyond Kosovo to the whole region covered by the new association and reconstruction process and that the agency must be responsible for implementing the horizontal EU programmes as well as for coordination with projects devised by other international donors;

16. Considers that, in addition to the regional projects for each country, special national programmes must be set up, tailored to the particular needs and conditions of each country, and that the relevant EU delegations should manage their implementation on the spot;

17. Considers, in this context, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and Albania to be particular trouble spots, to which the EU and the international community must devote special attention, requiring a rational and flexible division between the work of the institutions outside the Stability Pact, e.g. UNMIK, and the work of the Stability Pact;

18. Believes, in this respect, that a strict armaments control policy is a fundamental factor for the stabilisation and security of these three countries as well as the whole region; urges Member States therefore, together with all the signatories of the Stability Pact, to set up a common programme to assist and train local police forces, while keeping national armies as limited in size as possible;

19. Considers, with regard to the FRY, that the selective lifting of sanctions might be a way of strengthening the Serb opposition and weakening the Milosevic regime;

20. Considers that a distinction should be made between sanctions against the establishment in Yugoslavia and sanctions against the people of the country, so that the latter sanctions may be gradually lifted, thus allowing democratic dialogue in Yugoslavia to be promoted;

21. Supports the participation of Montenegro in the political dialogue launched with democratic forces in the FRY;

22. Requests, in the interests of the whole region, the earliest possible re-establishment of conditions for ensuring the navigability of the Danube;

23. Welcomes the democratic developments in Croatia and encourages the new government to take the necessary steps to ensure that the EU can extend its aid towards the country and the negotiations for a Stabilization and Association Agreement to commence;

24. Insists on the need to provide direct assistance to the municipalities in the region and to further development cooperation and partnership between local authorities in South-Eastern Europe and in the European Union, especially in institution-building, management of public service and local economic development;

25. Calls on the Council and the Commission to ensure their active participation in the Conference on the Security and Development of the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, to be held on 19 and 20 May this year, as a valid contribution to the work of the Stability Pact, as mentioned in the conclusions of the extraordinary meeting of the European Council in Tampere;

26. Is of the opinion that the Stability Pact is of great significance for the wider region as well and therefore asks for the Republic of Moldova to be given the opportunity to participate directly in the Stability Pact;

27. Considers the combating of corruption and organised crime to be a decisive precondition for creating a civil society based on the rule of law and democracy and, in this context, requests that appropriate attention be given to recruitment, training and adequate levels of pay for police forces;

28. Proposes that the SAA countries should be offered zero-tariff free trade with the EU, EFTA, EEA and CEFTA and offered compensation for the latest tariff reviews, as this action would boost the economy and undermine smuggling and organised crime;

29. Stresses the increasingly dangerous nature of the links between criminal organisations operating in certain countries of South-Eastern Europe and those in the Member States nearest to the area, such as Italy and Greece; deplores the fact that these links thrive on illicit trafficking such as smuggling, drugs and trafficking in illegal immigrants;

30. Calls on the Council, the Commission and the Pact coordinator to promote a specific initiative for drawing up common agreements on police and judicial cooperation between the European Union and the countries concerned and to offer active support for the projects needed for its achievement;

31. Stresses the importance of the independent media for the development of civil society; welcomes the draft Charter for Media Freedom in the context of the Stability Pact and considers that it should also receive tangible support in the form of precisely targeted projects;

32. Insists on the creation of a free and independent regional network of existing channels from each country in the region, so create links and synergies between national and local broadcasting in order to ensure fair and adequate information;

33. Calls for the teaching of tolerance and cooperation, not least in schools, and calls for particular attention to be devoted to this when school books, curricula, etc. are being drawn up;

34. Supports the formation of concrete plans aimed at contributing to the cultural and religious approach between the five countries and stresses the need for protection of the monuments and the cultural heritage treasures in the region with precise actions;

35. Stresses the important role of international and local NGOs in economic and social reconstruction; stresses also the need for the greater participation of as many local NGOs as possible in the reconstruction projects, retaining on the other hand strict and efficient control over their financial procedures in order to avoid corruption;

36. Reiterates its demand for active regional aid from the EU in the context of the Stability Pact, to promote regional infrastructure projects, such as the extension of European corridors 8 and 10, cross-border energy, environment and water projects and the joint improvement of border management and customs;

37. Welcomes the Commission's latest initiative for a 'regional environmental reconstruction plan' in the framework of the Stability Pact;

38. Calls on the Commission, in particular by means of coordination between the individual departments, to ensure that there are no barriers to trade between the countries in the region, in particular between the applicant countries and the other countries;

39. Supports the efforts of the Commission to create an effective mechanism for civilian crisis management;

40. Is open to the idea of creating a rapid reaction fund, and in its capacity as part of the budget authority expresses its willingness to discuss the practicalities of such a fund with the Commission at an early date;

41. Expresses its willingness to take part in strengthening the parliamentary dimension in the region; intends, therefore, to take the initiative of extending its existing bilateral relations with the parliaments in the region to include an annual multilateral meeting in the framework of the Stability Pact;

42. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and the Council.

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22. Financial markets

A5-0059/2000

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The European Parliament,

– having regard to the Commission communication (COM(1999) 232 – C5-0114/1999),

– having regard to its resolution of 4 May 1999 [1] on an earlier Commission communication on Financial Services: Building a Framework for Action (COM(1998) 625 – C4-0688/1998),

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– having regard to the report of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and the opinions of the Committee on Legal Affairs and the Internal Market, the Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Policy (A5-0059/2000),

A. whereas the Commission communication entitled 'Implementing the framework for financial markets: Action Plan' is the basis for a future working programme in this field, which will take the form of 43 concrete measures, to be adopted over a five-year period with a view to deriving maximum benefit from the introduction of the euro and guaranteeing the stability and competitiveness of the Union's financial markets,

B. whereas the strategic objectives set out in the Action Plan (a single EU wholesale market, open and secure retail markets, state-of-the-art prudential rules and supervision and wider conditions for an optimal single financial market) may be summarised under two headings, namely to develop further the internal market in technical services (liberalisation of the sector) and to improve a number of technical aspects (reduction of systemic risk and/or improvement of the forecasting system for those risks while also facilitating the conclusion of transactions),

[1] OJ C 279, 24.9.1999, p. 7.