

RESOLUTION 128¹

on parliaments and the Althea mission²

The Assembly,

- (i) Welcoming the way the European Union's Althea mission is being conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina, thus making it possible to pursue the stabilisation process with a view to rebuilding democratic institutions in that country;
- (ii) Considering, however, that not enough was done to secure the support of European public opinion when the operation was launched and that the results obtained so far have not been given the well deserved publicity that would allow European citizens to assess the progress European defence has made;
- (iii) Noting that oversight of the Althea mission in the national parliaments has often been weak and of a formal nature and that parliamentary debates have tended instead to concentrate on other international military missions which are more problematic and attract more attention in the media;
- (iv) Taking the view that the announced extension of the mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina calls for a review of its mandate in the light of the results achieved in the first year, and that national parliaments should be informed of these forthwith,

INVITES THE NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS TO:

1. Stress, both in parliamentary debates and in their relations with the electorate, the progress the European Security and Defence Policy has made, in order to project a positive picture of EU-led military operations in the Balkans and elsewhere in the world;
2. Request their respective governments to inform them regularly about progress in implementing the EU mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina so that they are in possession of all the facts before adopting decisions concerning the extension of the Althea mission;
3. Request that they be kept abreast of the civil-military aspects of the operation and of its management by the EU's Special Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the results of his mandate, relations with representatives of civil society and relations of mutual trust established with the local population;
4. Ensure that the Althea mission complies with the legal framework and democratic principles of the European institutions so that from the outset the reconstruction process constitutes a first step towards the country's future integration in the European Union;
5. Urge their respective defence ministers to conduct a more effective national communications policy in parallel with the policy that should be implemented by the European institutions responsible for the CFSP and ESDP, in order to make public opinion aware to the advantages of joint actions and the positive results they can produce.

¹ Adopted by the Assembly on 7 December 2005 at the 9th sitting.

² Explanatory Memorandum: see the report tabled on behalf of the Committee for Parliamentary and Public Relations by Giovanni Crema, Rapporteur (Italy, Socialist Group) and Ali Riza Gülçecek, co-Rapporteur (Turkey, Socialist Group), Document 1911.