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2. Asks the Economic and Social Committee to improve financial management of the appropriations, the implementation of which has been entrusted to it by the budgetary authority,

Relocation to the Belliard building complex

3. Regrets that, almost two years after Parliament evacuated the Belliard building complex, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions do not appear to have acted with the required diligence with regard to their relocation there; takes the view that the prolonged negotiations with the owners of the buildings ultimately risk undermining the validity of the two Committees' undertaking to move to the Belliard complex as soon as possible; underlines that the current situation is detrimental to the Union budget with expenditure on rent and associated costs being charged in connection with both the current (Ardenne and Ravenstein complex) and future (Belliard complex) premises of the Committees;

4. Urges the Economic and Social Committee, jointly with the Committee of the Regions, to conclude the above-mentioned negotiations on the basis of the principle of sound financial management and to ensure optimum utilisation of appropriations put at their disposal by the budgetary authority at their own request (transfer No 44/99 involving € 26 000 000);

Follow-up to the 1996 Annual Report of the Court of Auditors

5. Regrets that it took the Economic and Social Committee over fifteen months to comply with the decision of the discharge authority to refer the matter to OLAF;

Postponing discharge

6. Decides to postpone the discharge decision in respect of the 1998 financial year until it has received the conclusions of the OLAF inquiry, under the terms set out in its above-mentioned resolution on postponement of the 1996 discharge;

7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Court of Auditors and the Economic and Social Committee.

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3. ECSC (1998 discharge)

A5-0092/2000

I.

European Parliament decision on granting discharge to the Commission in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) for the 1998 financial year (C5-0153/2000 − 2000/2077(DEC))

The European Parliament,

− having regard to the report of the European Court of Auditors on the financial statements of the European Coal and Steel Community at 31 December 1998 [1],

− having regard to the Court of Auditors' Annual Report on the ECSC for the financial year 1998 (including the statement of assurance concerning the ECSC), together with the Commission's reply (C5-0153/2000) [2],

[1] OJ C 240, 25.8.1999, p. 24.
[2] OJ C 338, 25.11.1999.

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— having regard to the special report of the Court of Auditors on the management and control of interest-rate subsidies by the Commission with the Commission's replies [1],

— having regard to the ECSC Treaty, and in particular Article 78g thereof,

— having regard to Rule 93 and Annex V to its Rules of Procedure,

— having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A5-0092/2000),

1. Proposes granting discharge to the Commission in respect of management of the ECSC for the 1998 financial year, but requires the following reports to be submitted before 15 August 2000:

(a) a report by OLAF on the follow-up to allegations of fraud communicated in November 1998 to the Commission and transmitted to the Guardia di Finanza in Italy in October 1999

(b) an evaluation report by the Commission on buildings acquired with ECSC funds, including criteria used and explanations as to why and how buildings were acquired and disposed of

(c) an evaluation report by the Commission on loans granted to officials from ECSC funds, including criteria used and explanations as to who decided on the granting of loans and the category and nationality of officials who benefited from loans;

2. Instructs its President to forward this decision and the resolution containing its comments to the Commission, the Council, the Court of Auditors, the ECSC Consultative Committee and each of the other institutions and to have them published in the Official Journal (L series).

[1] OJ C 217, 29.7.1999.

II.

European Parliament decision closing the accounts in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) for the 1998 financial year (C5-0153/2000 — 2000/2077(DEC))

The European Parliament,

— having regard to the report of the European Court of Auditors on the financial statements of the European Coal and Steel Community at 31 December 1998 [1],

— having regard to the Court of Auditors' Annual Report on the ECSC for the financial year 1998 (including the statement of assurance concerning the ECSC), together with the Commission's reply (C5-0153/2000) [2],

— having regard to the ECSC Treaty, and in particular Article 78g thereof,

— having regard to Rule 93 and Annex V to its Rules of Procedure,

— having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control (A5-0092/2000),

1. Notes that the ECSC balance sheet, profit and loss accounts and implementation of the ECSC operating budget for the 1998 financial year amounted to:

[1] OJ C 240, 25.8.1999, p. 24.
[2] OJ C 338, 25.11.1999.