

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

22 March 2000

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WRITTEN DECLARATION

for entry in the register

pursuant to Rule 51 of the Rules of Procedure

by Mrs Piia-Noora Kauppi, Mrs Marjo Matikainen-Kallström, Mr Ilkka Suominen, Mr Ari Vatanen and Mrs Eija-Riita Korhola

on the use of abbreviations

Expiry date: 22.6.2000

The European Parliament,

- whereas the use of generally unknown abbreviations in discussion papers, reports and other public documents of the European institutions has faced a tremendous increase during recent years,
 - whereas this extensive use of abbreviations undermines the clarity of the texts and hinders the discussion processes;
 - whereas it is apparent that official abbreviations (e.g. EU, WTO, EBRD, VAT, etc) are useful, but those which are not used as widely only tend to make the reading of the documents more difficult for all counterparts,
 - whereas most of the newly created abbreviations are in fact purposeless, since the translation of such abbreviations into other languages requires the use of all words within that abbreviation to make the text understandable for all the citizens of the European Union,
 - whereas the European Union is moving towards the Code of Conduct in all the European institutions; therefore notes that the true access to information mentioned in such codes also means that we should be even more careful not to create more bureaucratic slang with unknown abbreviations,
 - whereas the use of abbreviations certainly does not bring the texts to a more transparent level, as the wording is incomprehensible for delegates and citizens alike,
1. Calls on the Commission to limit the use of abbreviations to those which are commonly known;
 2. Calls on the Commission to prohibit all use of new, formerly unknown abbreviations in all the written documents published by the European institutions;
 3. Calls on the Commission to pay severe attention to this difficult problem and make its utmost to prevent the use of such abbreviations also in oral speeches given by its representatives;
 4. Instructs its President to forward this declaration to the Commission.