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## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 103(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos, Paulo Casaca and Jamila Madeira

on behalf of the PSE Group

on the serious drought in Portugal

**European Parliament resolution on the serious drought in Portugal**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Article 2 and Article 6 of the EC Treaty, according to which environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the Community's policies for various sectors with the objective of environmentally sustainable economic development,
  - having regard to Article 174 of the EC Treaty,
  - having regard to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) of December 1997 and the EC's ratification of the Kyoto Protocol on 4 March 2002,
  - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the absence of precipitation in Portugal between 1 October 2004 and the end of March 2005, with rainfall less than 50% of the average between 1961 and 1990, has been causing extremely low levels of ground water, less than 20% in some southern areas of the country,
- B. whereas this situation has led to very slight or non-existent development of plant growth, in particular for cereals, forage crops and natural meadows, thereby jeopardising harvests of straw and cereals and causing an enormous shortage of animal feed, the stocks of which are exhausted,
- C. whereas between May and the beginning of autumn there will be no new precipitation and hence it will be necessary to continue to feed animals not only during summer but also during the coming winter,
- D. whereas in many cases spring crops are jeopardised, in view of the low level of water stored in the main reservoirs,
- E. whereas, finally, according to research carried out into the projected impact of the drought over the next eleven months, a loss of 34% in net added value is estimated, and losses of as much as 40% may occur in the worst hit areas of the south,
- F. considering that the persistent drought in Portugal is further evidence of the adverse effects of climate change and emphasising that it is another sign of the need for ambitious worldwide action to halt climate change; whereas the EU should continue to play a leading role in this process and step up its efforts in the key fields of environment, energy and transport,
1. Expresses its sympathy with the populations and sectors affected;

2. Calls on the European Commission:

- to launch the relevant legal mechanisms with a view to allowing the advance payment of the various premiums to which farmers are entitled;
  - to facilitate, in accordance with Community legislation and following the example of action in similar situations in the past, the mobilisation of cereals from Community intervention stocks resulting from the surpluses in some Member States,
  - to give its backing to the veterinary tasks listed in the contingency plan to tackle 'blue tongue' disease which broke out at the same time as the drought and which, because the movement of animals was restricted, aggravated the situation enormously;
  - to grant various derogations from the application of a number of Community regulations, in particular authorisation for grazing in 'set-aside' zones or areas planted with cereals, which it will be impossible to harvest because the production cycle has been affected;
  - to authorise the Portuguese authorities to grant the State aid required by the situation, especially to small farmers, in particular in order to provide support for the exceptional costs incurred in feeding animals and transporting or collecting water, or the other activities worst affected, such as potato and citrus production;
3. Welcomes the Commission's Communication on risk and crisis management in agriculture (COM(2005)74 final) and encourages it and the Council to take urgent action in response to it so as to establish, as swiftly as possible, an effective Community protection system to safeguard European farmers against risks and crises such as those resulting from the current drought in Portugal;
4. Calls on the Commission to take initiatives to ensure respect for the Kyoto commitments;
5. Urges the European Union to explore options for a post-2012 arrangement in the UN climate change process, together with the development of an EU long-term strategy, considering emission reductions by 2020 as a pathway for developed countries; insists that the EU should retain its leading role in international efforts to tackle climate change and present concrete proposals for strategic action beyond 2012;
6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the European Commission, the Council of the European Union and the Government of the Republic of Portugal.