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B8-0351/2014

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the steel sector in the EU: protecting workers and industries  
(2014/2976(RSP))

**Angelika Mlinar, Pavel Telička, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Renate Weber,  
Fredrick Federley**  
on behalf of the ALDE Group

**European Parliament resolution on the steel sector in the EU: protecting workers and industries  
(2014/2976(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Commission communication of 11 June 2013 on the Steel Action Plan, entitled ‘Action Plan for a competitive and sustainable steel industry in Europe’ (COM(2013)0407),
  - having regard to its resolution of 4 February 2014 on the Action Plan for a competitive and sustainable steel industry in Europe<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to its previous resolutions on the steel industry and on the restructuring, transfer and closure of companies in the EU,
  - having regard to its resolution of 21 May 2013 on regional strategies for industrial areas in the European Union<sup>2</sup>,
  - having regard to the recommendations of the High-Level Round Table on the future of the European Steel Industry,
  - having regard to the Europe 2020 strategy,
  - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the maintenance of a sustainable, resource-efficient and competitive steel sector is in the interest of the whole European Union, as a backbone for many major forms of industrial production;
- B. whereas the European steel industry is, in many Member States, suffering from a substantial drop in global demand, and in some cases from challenges related to competitiveness as well as increased costs;
- C. whereas it is important to coordinate policies to ensure a sustainable, resource-efficient and competitive steel industry, responsive to changing European and non-European market conditions;
- D. whereas the steel industry is fully global, and whereas Europe faces severe competition from third countries that have different regulations and standards; whereas a level playing field is vital for the steel sector;

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2014)0069.

<sup>2</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2013)0199.

- E. whereas energy costs have to be taken into account in a global approach to the steel industry, and whereas electricity prices for industrial consumers in the EU could have a direct impact on competitiveness;
  - F. whereas the EU steel industry is a major employer, accounting for more than 350 000 direct jobs and several million more in related industries, including the recycling supply chain; whereas in recent years the steel industry has faced considerable challenges in terms of restructuring, industrial mergers and offshoring of European manufacturing;
  - G. whereas research and innovation are important driving forces for economic growth and competitive industry;
  - H. whereas the creation of a stable framework for private capital investment is crucial, together with efficient use of EU resources;
1. Supports the creation of a more business-friendly Europe with a competitive and sustainable industrial base, in particular in the steel sector, through investment in research and innovation, resource efficiency, new technologies, skills and better access to finance;
  2. Stresses the importance of an industrial policy and smart regulation with measures that will enable a revival of the competitiveness of the European industry in a global market and ensure an effective level playing field for all economic agents, in order to protect European production against social and environmental dumping;
  3. Supports the Commission's commitment to the industry, as one of the main agents of the economy, which is able to provide stable, quality jobs;
  4. Highlights the importance of the steel industry to the European Union's economy, as well as to all downstream industries that use its high-quality products;
  5. Encourages moves towards energy and financial single markets with a view to creating a real level playing field within the internal market and promoting competitiveness based on knowledge and innovation;
  6. Notes the difficulties facing the steel sector in many Member States, driven in part by a significant fall in global demand and a rise in energy costs and offshoring of European manufacturing; calls on the Commission, therefore, to fully implement the Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe (COM(2011)0571) and the European Resource Efficiency Platform policy recommendations;
  7. Encourages the use of innovative financial instruments such as risk-sharing finance facilities which give priority access to steel industries in crisis; calls on the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development to design a long-term financing framework for steel projects;
  8. Believes that the competitiveness and sustainability of European industries and their capacity to create jobs in a time of crisis and scarce public resources should be based on a more effective use of the existing financial resources, with particular emphasis on the

reskilling of workers who have been made redundant , through all available means, such as the European Social Fund and, in the short term, the European Globalisation Fund, and within a stable framework for private capital investment;

9. Calls for a review of European tax policy in order to promote progressive convergence of taxation of the industry, and supports innovation and better use of resources;
10. Believes that future severe changes in the steel and other industrial sectors should be anticipated; considers, in this respect, that the Member States should align education and training policies more closely with labour market needs so as to be able to cope with similar situations and promote the appeal of the technical and scientific fields, in order to ensure there are specialised professionals in the steel sector to drive innovation;
11. Believes that abatement options, in particular for the steel industry sectors, will heavily depend on new technologies, and therefore emphasises the important role that EU-funded research and innovation programmes could play in boosting the European economy through Horizon 2020, as well as its role in ensuring the competitiveness of the European steel sector and the high quality of its production; recalls that research and innovation are important driving forces for economic growth and competitive industry;
12. Believes that joint research and development efforts will promote low-carbon and low-impact steelmaking, thus favouring a more sustainable and competitive industry;
13. Recalls that innovation must be encouraged by supporting not only research and development and knowledge transfer but also market introduction and innovation clusters, through the promotion of public-private partnerships in strategic sectors such as the steel industry in order to mobilise more private capital;
14. Supports the continued use, within the EU Emissions Trading Scheme, of measures necessary to prevent the risk of carbon leakage as long as no comparable efforts are undertaken in other major economies, with the aim of not undermining the international competitiveness of the most efficient installations in the sectors concerned;
15. Welcomes the creation of the High Level Group on Steel;
16. Calls on the Commission to take concrete measures to reduce energy costs in the medium and long term, especially for the energy-intensive industries;
17. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.