

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Committee on Foreign Affairs

2007/2118(INI)

4.3.2008

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

for the Committee on Petitions

on the environmental impact of the planned gas pipeline in the Baltic Sea to
link up Russia and Germany
(2007/2118(INI))

Draftsman: Christopher Beazley

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Foreign Affairs calls on the Committee on Petitions, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Reiterates its opinion that, taking into consideration the increasing dependence of the EU on a limited number of energy sources, suppliers and transport routes, it is essential to support initiatives aimed at their diversification, both geographically and by developing sustainable alternatives;
2. Underlines that energy security must be regarded as an essential component of the overall security of the European Union, whereby the definition of energy security should not be merely limited to the lack of internal EU production but should also take into account the geopolitical aspects of dependency on imports and the potential therein for politically motivated interruptions;
3. Is of the opinion that Nord Stream is an infrastructure project with a wide political and strategic dimension for both the EU and Russia; underlines that it is primarily driven by Russian commercial and political interests, aimed at delivering gas straight from Russia to Western Europe, bypassing the transit states; underlines that this project increases Russia's energy leverage over the EU and its neighbours and decreases the ability of small littoral states to act as security providers in the Baltic Sea region; considers that since the project goes against the priorities of several EU Member States, it undermines the EU's ability to act as a unified entity and speak with one voice on energy issues;
4. Therefore asks the Commission and the Member States to put forward the following demands and to call for:
 - a thorough assessment of the various transparency, economic and budget-related aspects of Nord Stream and its affiliated companies;
 - a thorough legal assessment aimed at determining whether a broader set of legal framework is applicable;
 - a thorough assessment of the need for the project and consideration of all alternatives, including the Amber and Yamal II pipelines;
 - a truly independent environmental impact assessment, to be commissioned with the approval of all littoral States;
 - Ratification of, and commitment to the full implementation of the provisions of, the Espoo Convention and the Energy Charter Treaty, including its Transit Protocol, as an act of good faith and to encourage the Russian Federation's confidence in the project;
 - opportunities for equal participation by all the littoral States;
5. Suggests, further, that the permission for the construction and maintenance of the pipeline should be managed by an Executive Board nominated by all the littoral states with the participation, where appropriate, of the Commission;
6. Considers that the Member States should actively consider enacting legislation which

includes geopolitical security aspects of energy agreements;

7. Notes the lack of institutional structures capable of responding adequately to the environmental and geopolitical security issues associated with this project, and once again calls on the Council to consider the proposal for the creation of the office of High Official for Foreign Energy Policy, who, wearing a "double hat", would act under the authority of the newly created strengthened High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, a Vice-President of the Commission.