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on corporate social responsibility: a new partnership
(2006/2133(INI))

Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on corporate social responsibility: a new partnership (2006/2133(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the two most authoritative internationally agreed standards for corporate conduct adopted by the ILO: the "Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy" and the OECD: "Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises", and to codes of conduct agreed under the aegis of international organisations such as the FAO, WHO and World Bank and efforts under the auspices of UNCTAD with regard to the activities of enterprises in developing countries,
- having regard to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, 18 June 1998, and its agreement of universal core labour standards: Abolition of forced labour (Conventions 29 and 105), Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining (Conventions 87 and 98), Abolition of child labour (Convention 138 and Convention 182), and non-discrimination in employment (Conventions 100 and 111),
- having regard to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in particular its article where every individual and every organ of society is called upon to play its part in securing universal observance of human rights, the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the 1966 Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the 1979 Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the 1994 Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child,
- having regard to the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention (1997),
- having regard to the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) incepted in 1997¹, and the updated G3 Sustainability Reporting Guidelines, released on 5 October 2006,
- having regard to the United Nations Global Compact launched in September 2000,
- having regard to the Draft UN Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with Regard to Human Rights (December 2003),
- having regard to the outcome of the 2002 UN World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, in particular the call for intergovernmental initiatives on the question of corporate accountability and the Council conclusions of 3 December 2002 on the follow-up to the Summit,
- having regard to the UN Secretary General's report about the work of the Global Compact Group "Towards global partnerships - Enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, in particular the private sector", 10 August 2005 (05-45706 (E) 020905),

¹ www.globalreporting.org

- having regard to the appointment of a Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Business and Human Rights, to his interim report of 22 February 2006 (E/CN.4/2006/97), and the regional consultations he held in Bangkok in June 26-27, 2006 and Johannesburg in 27-28 March 2006,
- having regard to its resolution of 15 January 1999 on EU standards for European Enterprises operating in developing countries: towards a European Code of Conduct¹, recommending the creation of a European Model Code of Conduct supported by a European Monitoring Platform,
- having regard to the 1968 Brussels Convention as consolidated in Council Regulation (EC) No 44/2001 of 22 December 2000 on jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgements in civil and commercial matters²,
- having regard to Regulation (EC) No 761/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 March 2001 allowing voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS)³,
- having regard to the Council Resolution of 3 December 2001 on the follow-up to the Green Paper on corporate social responsibility⁴,
- having regard to its resolution of 30 May 2002 on the Commission Green Paper on promoting a European framework for corporate social responsibility⁵,
- having regard to its resolution of 13 May 2003 concerning Corporate Social Responsibility: A business contribution to Sustainable Development⁶,
- having regard to the Commission Recommendation of 30 May 2001 on the recognition, measurement and disclosure of environmental issues in the annual accounts and annual reports of companies (notified under document number C(2001)1495)⁷,
- having regard to its resolution of 4 July 2002 on the Commission Communication to the Council, the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee entitled "Promoting Core Labour Standards and Improving Social Governance in the context of Globalisation"⁸,
- having regard to the Council Resolution of 6 February 2003 on corporate social responsibility⁹,
- having regard to the Commission Communication "Governance and development" (COM(2003)0615),

¹ OJ C 104, 14.4.1999, p. 180.

² OJ L 12, 16.1.2001, p. 1.

³ OJ L 114, 24.4.2001, p. 1.

⁴ OJ C 86, 10.4.2002, p. 3.

⁵ OJ C 187 E, 7.8.2003, p. 180.

⁶ OJ C 67 E, 17.3.2004, p. 73.

⁷ OJ L 156, 13.6.2001, p. 33.

⁸ OJ C 271 E, 12.11.2003, p. 598.

⁹ OJ C 39, 18.2.2003, p. 3.

- having regard to Directive 2003/51/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the annual consolidated accounts of certain types of companies, banks and other financial institutions and insurance undertakings¹,
- having regard to Directive 2004/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts²,
- having regard to the final report and recommendations of the European Multi Stakeholder Forum on CSR of 29 June 2004, including recommendation 7 supporting action to achieve the right legal framework,
- having regard to the Commission Communication "The Social Dimension of Globalisation - the EU's policy contribution on extending the benefits to all" (COM(2004)0383),
- having regard to Directive 2005/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2005 concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market, amending Council Directive 84/450/EEC on misleading advertising, Directives 97/7/EC, 98/27/EC and 2002/65/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council ('Unfair Commercial Practices Directive')³,
- having regard to the European Council of 22 and 23 March 2005 which re-launched the Lisbon strategy focusing this partnership between the EU and Member States on "Working together for growth and jobs",
- having regard to its resolution of 5 July 2005 on exploitation and child labour in developing countries⁴,
- having regard to the Commission Communication on the review of the Sustainable Development Strategy - A platform for action (COM(2005)0658), and the renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy adopted by Council on 9 July 2006,
- having regard to the European Consensus on Development, signed by the Commission, Council and European Parliament on 20 December 2005,
- having regard to the new General System of Preferences (GSP+), in force since 1 January 2006 which grants duty-free access or a tariff reduction for an increased number of products and also includes a new incentive for vulnerable countries faced with specific trade, financial or development needs,
- having regard to the Commission Communication "Promoting decent work for all - the EU contribution to the implementation of the decent work agenda in the world" (COM(2006)0249),

¹ OJ L 178, 17.7.2003, p. 16.

² OJ L 134, 30.4.2004, p. 114.

³ OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.

⁴ OJ C 157 E, 6.7.2006, p. 84.

- having regard to the Green Paper on the European Transparency Initiative, 3 May 2006,
 - having regard to its resolution of 6 July 2006 on Fair Trade and Development¹,
 - having regard to the Commission Communication "Modernising Company Law and Enhancing Corporate Governance in the European Union - A Plan to Move Forward" (EU Action Plan on Corporate Governance) (COM(2003)0284),
 - having regard to the Hearing "Corporate Social Responsibility - is there a European approach?" organised by the European Parliament on 5 October 2006,
 - having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and the opinions of ... (A6-0000/2006),
1. Is convinced that increasing social and environmental responsibility by business, linked to the principle of corporate accountability, represents an essential element of the European Social Model, of Europe's strategy for Sustainable Development and in meeting the social challenges of economic globalisation;
 2. Welcomes the Commission Communication in enabling new impetus to the EU debate on corporate social responsibility (CSR) following a period of inaction; expresses concern about a lack of transparency and balance in the consultation undertaken before publication;
 3. Recognises that an open debate remains between different stakeholder groups on an appropriate definition of CSR, and that the concept of "beyond compliance" enables some companies to claim social responsibility whilst at the same time breaching local or international laws;
 4. Agrees with the Commission that CSR policies should be promoted on their own merits, neither as a substitute for appropriate regulation in other fields, nor as a covert approach to introducing such legislation; believes the debate on voluntary versus mandatory approaches to CSR at the EU level should be 'depolarised' by reiterating the essentially voluntaristic approach but enabling - without obligation - research and dialogue into potential regulatory measures;
 5. Remains convinced that the very proliferation of voluntary CSR initiatives presents an obstacle to more companies adopting CSR policies, particularly small enterprises, as well as a disincentive for companies to pursue more credible CSR actions, and therefore that 'convergence' of such initiatives as previously advocated by the Commission should remain part of the EU debate;
 6. Believes that the credibility of voluntaristic CSR initiatives is further dependent on a commitment to incorporating existing internationally agreed standards and principles, and on a multi-stakeholder approach, as recommended by the EU Multistakeholder Forum (MSF), as well as on the application of independent monitoring and verification;

¹ *Texts Adopted*, 6.7.2006, P6_TA(2006)0320.

The EU debate on CSR

7. Notes the Commission's decision to set up a European Alliance for Corporate Social Responsibility in partnership with several business networks; recommends that the Commission itself should ensure a single point of coordination to maintain an awareness of the Alliance's membership and activities, as well as agreeing clear objectives, timetables and strategic vision to inform its work;
8. Suggests that a substantial increase in uptake of CSR practices amongst EU companies, the development of new models of best practice by genuine leaders amongst companies in different aspects of CSR, and the identification and promotion of specific EU action to support CSR could comprise the Alliance's core benchmarks of success; and that a deadline of two years be set for completion of the work of the 'laboratories' set up under its umbrella as suggested by CSR Europe;
9. Notes that reconvening the EU Multistakeholder Forum was a late addition to the Communication, and that measures need to be taken to build the confidence of different stakeholders that a genuine dialogue will take place leading to a real impact of EU policies and programmes to incentivise and apply CSR in EU business; believes that lessons should be learnt in relation to the two years that the MSF previously operated, positive in terms of the "no fame, no shame" rule and the use of independent rapporteurs, improvements to avoid consensus-building being used to ensure the lowest common denominator, and that Commission representatives did not actively engage in the debate;
10. Supports calls for mandatory disclosure for corporate and other lobbyists and for balanced access between business groupings and other stakeholder groups towards EU policy-making itself;

The link between CSR and competitiveness

11. Welcomes the Communication's objective to link CSR to the Lisbon Agenda;
12. Welcomes dialogue on the inconsistencies between competitive sourcing strategies by companies seeking continuous improvements in flexibility and cost, against voluntary CSR commitments seeking to avoid exploitative employment practices and promote long-term relationships with suppliers;
13. Recognises CSR as an important business driver and calls for the integration of social and environmental issues both in support for new products and processes through EU innovation and trade policies, as well as in drawing up sector, sub-regional and city-based competitiveness strategies;

CSR Instruments

14. Welcomes the trend for larger companies to publish voluntary social and environmental reports in recent years, noting the number has now become fairly static;
15. Reiterates Parliament's support for integrated social, environmental and financial reporting by companies backed by regulation, perhaps with a minimum threshold to avoid disproportionate cost for smaller enterprises; calls for in-depth research on

implementation of minimum requirements for social and environmental reporting within the 2001 Commission Recommendation on Environmental Disclosure, the 2003 Accounts Modernisation Directive, and the 2003 Prospectus Directive, supporting effective transposition across all Member States, and undertaking consultation on the potential for strengthening these requirements when they are next reviewed, including interpretations of the materiality of social and environmental risk under existing disclosure requirements;

16. Reiterates its support for the EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme;
17. Supports the Code of Good Practice of the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance;
18. Regrets the omission of the issue of Socially Responsible Investment from the Communication, backs full participation by investors as stakeholders in the CSR debate at the EU level including in the MSF, supports industry calls for transparency rather than prescription through the introduction of EU-wide "statement of interest principles" for investment funds as already implemented in five EU Member States;
19. Supports the efforts of Eurostat to develop indicators to measure performance on CSR in the context of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy;
20. Recommends that further consideration is given to the appointment of an EU ombudsman on CSR to undertake independent enquiries on CSR-related issues;

Better Regulation and CSR

21. Without creating new regulation, believes that CSR policies can also be enhanced by better awareness and implementation of existing legal instruments; calls on the Commission to directly apply, organise awareness campaigns and undertake specific research into the implementation of the application of foreign direct liability according to the Brussels Convention, and on the application of the directives on misleading advertising and unfair commercial practices to adherence by companies to their voluntary CSR codes of conduct;
22. Restates that major efforts should be undertaken by the Commission and EU governments at national, regional and local level to use the opportunities provided by the revision of the Public Procurement Directives in 2004 to support CSR by applying social and environmental clauses to their contracts, to disqualify companies where necessary including in instances of corruption; and for the Commission, the European Investment Bank and the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development to apply strict social and environmental criteria to all grants and loans allocated to private sector companies, backed by clear complaints mechanisms;

Mainstreaming CSR in EU policies and programmes

23. Welcomes the commitments repeated in the Communication for the Commission to support and promote CSR across all of its fields of activity;
24. Believes that the CSR debate must not be separated from questions of corporate accountability, and that issues of the social and environmental impact of business,

relations with stakeholders, the protection of minority shareholders' rights and the duties of company directors in this regard should be fully integrated in the Commission's Corporate Governance Action Plan;

25. Welcomes direct financial support for CSR initiatives from the Commission, in particular to encourage innovation, enable stakeholder involvement and to assist potential victims' groups in relation to alleged malpractice; underlines the importance of the B34000 EU-budget line for pilot projects such as those involving Employee Community Engagement;
26. Calls on the Commission to fully integrate CSR in its trade policies, seeking to introduce provisions in all bilateral, regional or multilateral agreements binding articles in compliance with internationally agreed CSR standards such as the OECD Guidelines, ILO Tripartite Declaration and Rio Principles, as well as reservation of regulatory powers on issues of human rights, social and environmental responsibility; welcomes the support given to these objectives in the Communication on Decent Work; repeats its call for Commission Delegations in third countries to promote and act as contact points in relation to the OECD Guidelines on Multinational Enterprise;
27. Welcomes the commitment of the European Consensus on Development to support CSR as a priority action;
28. Suggests that the Commission targets the participation of small business in CSR through joint working with Chambers of Commerce and other intermediary bodies, offering specific support for the participation of cooperatives/social economy businesses through their specialist associations, uses the network of European Information Centres to directly promote CSR initiatives and considers the appointment of a CSR Envoy similar to the Small Business Envoy within DG Enterprise;
29. Welcomes the Communication's commitment to enhance the role of employees and their trade unions in CSR and reiterates its call for the Commission and social partners to build on the successful negotiation of now 50 International Framework Agreements and 30 European Framework Agreements in relation to mainly core labour standards for individual companies or sectors as one approach to developing corporate responsibility in Europe and the world;
30. Recommends that future CSR research goes beyond the simple 'business case' for CSR, to focus on the link between competitiveness and sustainable development, as well as the impact of current CSR initiatives and possible violations of CSR principles; calls on the Commission to publish an authoritative 'Annual State of CSR' drawn up by independent experts and researchers collating existing information, describing new trends and providing recommendation for future actions;

Europe's contribution to Global Corporate Social Responsibility

31. Believes that the potential impact of CSR policies remains greatest in relation to companies' global supply chains, to enable responsible investment by companies to assist the fight against poverty in developing countries, to support principles of fair trade and good governance, as well as reducing the incidence of breaches of international standards by corporations in countries where regulatory regimes are weak or non-existent;

32. Expresses disappointment that the Commission did not accord greater priority to promoting global initiatives within its Communication, and calls on the Commission working with Member States and stakeholders to both develop a strategic vision and input to the development of CSR initiatives at the global level, as well as a major effort to significantly raise participation in such initiatives by EU companies;
33. Calls on the Commission, working with other relevant partners, to organise a major international initiative in 2007 to mark the fifth anniversary of the commitment agreed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development to undertake inter-governmental initiatives in the field of corporate accountability;
34. Calls on the Commission to build on the success of the Transatlantic Business Dialogue on CSR in the 1990s, by organising a similar exercise between the EU and Japan;
35. Calls for support for the development of the Global Reporting Initiative;
36. Notes the discussions taking place in the International Standards Organisation on standards for social responsibility;
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37. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Corporate Social Responsibility represents business taking more direct responsibility for managing its social and environmental impact, becoming more openly accountable not simply to employees and their trade unions, but also to wider 'stakeholders' including investors, consumers, local communities, environmental and other interest groups.

The rise of CSR can be seen as a response to scandals over the past two decades, involving mainly American corporations, as well as a direct response from within and outside the business community to engage directly in meeting challenges such as climate change, social exclusion and world poverty that have become of increasing concern in an era of economic globalisation.

As Rapporteur, this is the third European Parliament report and resolution I have drafted on this subject since 1999. In meeting countless participants in the CSR "movement" I have been struck at how - at best - those involved carry an excitement and enthusiasm about confronting these challenges of a new era, creating a different vision for business in society, a willingness to take risks in forging new relationships beyond traditional boundaries, a genuine commitment to making a difference in a complex and difficult world. Amongst supporters and critics, there remain some who see CSR as essentially a public relations tool to evade or obstruct business responsibility for social or environmental problems. In addition there are many in the business community who practise CSR, but who do not relate to the jargon and apparatus associated with what has become an industry in its own right. Nevertheless CSR has proved it is neither a fad nor a fashion, with both business and political leaders recognising our own responsibility to move it forward.

The EU response to the CSR debate emanated from the Commission's call to business to help combat social exclusion in the mid 1990s, the European Parliament resolution of 1999 calling for a binding code of conduct to govern EU companies' environmental, labour and human rights compliance worldwide, together with the 2000 call of EU Heads of State for businesses to support CSR as part of the Lisbon Agenda.

The Commission Green and White Papers on CSR in the early 2000s put CSR on the agenda for EU institutions, and the setting up of a European Multistakeholder Forum enabled a genuine debate to take place amongst stakeholders, although one frequently frustrated by traditional assumptions and ways of working of social partners at the EU level. These processes succeeded in fostering an EU-wide debate on CSR, but largely failed to address what the EU could itself do to 'add value' to the debate, or to take concrete actions to promote responsible business.

There followed successive delays by the Commission in publishing its response over two years, caused by an unwillingness to confront the fundamental polarisation between those amongst business and other stakeholders who want to see CSR subject to transparency requirements laid down through external verification and/or legislation with an explicit role for stakeholders, and those who want to see CSR as a business-only led exercise which should evolve without public policy input beyond speeches, press conferences and awards ceremonies.

The Commission ultimately decided to opt-out from the debate, producing a Communication firmly backing an anti-regulation approach. Commissioners held a series of private meetings with selected company representatives to negotiate on the text of the Communication, then described it as "agreed" by business, and only met personally with interested NGOs to discuss its contents following on from publication. The key Commission official responsible for CSR appears to have been moved from his job, perhaps to make way for this new 'consensus'. A leaked memo from the European employers organisation UNICE described the Communication as a "true success" because "concessions to other stakeholders... will have no real impact". This has cast doubt on the sincerity of a last-minute change to reconvene the CSR Multistakeholder Forum, and suggests the Commission may have allowed excessive corporate lobbying in contradiction to its own Transparency Initiative of November 2005.

The European Parliament therefore has some strategic choices to make in determining its response to the Communication.

Although it would be easy to damn the entire process, this would probably lead the EU to retreat from the CSR debate altogether, so how can it be made to work?

First, the "Alliance for Business" must itself achieve minimum levels of organisation and transparency that its company participants would themselves expect in any of their own business activities. Lessons should also be learnt from the procedural difficulties of the Multistakeholder Forum, and it should be able to research and dialogue regulatory responses in order to 'depolarize' the debate between voluntary and mandatory approaches.

The Commission should become a full participant in both sets of discussions, and a new focus for all actors should be recommendations for specific actions within EU policies and programmes to implement the different aspects of CSR.

The opportunity should be used to back mandatory requirements for corporate and other lobbyists in EU policy-making, to demonstrate our Parliament's commitment to inclusive, balanced and transparent debate.

The European Parliament should not reject the Commission's focus on the link between competitiveness and CSR, partly because it does offer new political visibility, and partly because in pursuing an anti-regulatory approach, the Commission has if anything underplayed the "value creation" approach to CSR driven by the business opportunities for developing new socially and environmentally innovative products and processes by EU companies.

However Parliament has to recognise that companies facing competitors who seek to adopt less rigorous CSR standards, small businesses who face multiple and contradictory demands from the companies they supply, investors and consumers who find the information on which they want to make ethical choices confused and uncertain - all mean we should reject the "anything goes" approach to CSR adopted by the Commission, and return to the concept of 'convergence' which they previously advocated. By backing an essentially voluntaristic approach, "picking winners" amongst CSR initiatives (although not individual companies), and rejecting "one size fits all", we can adopt an approach more relevant to today's debate, but which still carries large support within the business community itself.

To 'depolarize' our own debate on mandatory versus voluntary approaches, the European Parliament should confine itself to repeating our positions of 2002 and 2003 for a single piece of new legislation for integrated social, environmental and financial reporting by companies - at least for larger companies. No more, no less. It is the ultimate "appropriate regulation" simply requiring transparency, so that voluntary, market-based responses are enabled amongst potential company recruits, investors and consumers.

Rather than advocating additional new legislation beyond this, Parliament can instead advance the EU's promotion of CSR by utilising existing EU legislation, policies and programmes. The Communication shares these aims, but Parliament can help write some of the detail that the Commission chooses to avoid.

Companies are invited to address social and environmental impacts within the business reviews as part of three separate EU corporate governance regulations. We should call for major efforts to raise awareness of these provisions, support effective transposition throughout the EU and consult around issues of 'materiality' and other ways to strengthen these provisions in the future. There should be no artificial divide between CSR and issues of corporate accountability and governance.

Important and genuine EU-level initiatives are underway to promote CSR in full respect of internationally agreed standards and the multistakeholder approach and these should be supported. The draft resolution recommended to Parliament follows detailed discussions with CSR Europe, the European Social Investment Forum, the European Academy of Business in Society as well as many others.

The Commission itself is invited to both raise awareness and directly apply existing policies on misleading advertising, foreign direct liability and public procurement, including setting up an Alliance laboratory, to send a strong signal in favour of responsible business. This is entirely consistent with recommendation 7 of the Multistakeholder Forum, fully backed by the business representatives, in favour of "a legal framework... to allow companies who wish to go further through CSR, to benefit from this in the market place, both in the EU and globally".

On institutional responses, a case is made for establishing an EU ombudsman on CSR and for an 'Annual State of CSR' report, but Parliament is recommended against the "quick fix" of establishing a European social label which could suffer problems of credibility, in favour of increasing collaboration and consistency amongst existing labels - another example of convergence.

Finally, I want to suggest a way of converting a debate on CSR in the EU which has been too often characterised by disagreement, delay and suspicion - towards the one of excitement, enthusiasm and commitment which I described at the start.

The European Parliament could seek to shift the debate much more into the context of global CSR strategies. Companies are much more comfortable with this approach, in order to allay fears that EU action could put them at a disadvantage against international competitors. Trade unions are increasingly negotiating worldwide International Framework Agreements recognising the global markets in which EU companies operate. Activists recognise that the biggest examples of violations of environmental, labour or human rights take place down the global supply chain of 'Northern' companies in 'Southern' developing country markets, and

that the ultimate aim must be for a binding international convention on corporate accountability - as argued at the World Summit on Sustainable Development at Johannesburg.

The Commission should recognise that such an approach cannot mean opting-out from actions at the EU-level, and indeed provides a greater challenge of marshalling political opinion amongst Member States in favour of decisive action at the international level. The German, Portuguese and French EU Presidencies due in the next two years are all enthusiastic to undertake actions in this area, and Parliament should suggest that Europe 'leads' the international debate by convening an international conference to review and take forward the Johannesburg commitment for "inter-governmental initiatives on corporate accountability" to mark its fifth anniversary. I am also suggesting a bilateral EU-Japan dialogue in this field.

Such an approach also means concerted efforts to integrate CSR in the EU's development and trade policies, including fully operationalising the OECD Guidelines on Multinational Enterprise - promised but never fulfilled.

When the UN Special Representative on Business and Human Rights is openly considering regulatory responses to the CSR debate, the renowned Global Reporting Initiative arising from the UN Environmental Programmes is openly seeking convergence of CSR tools with business, when the UN Global Compact has removed 200 companies from its initiative for failing to abide by its requirements - the Commission will also be confronted by the reality that the "anything goes" approach of its Communication is both out-of-date and outmoded.

But if the European Parliament can succeed in writing a resolution which helps make effective and transparent the mechanisms for dialogue on CSR within the EU, in encouraging the Commission to make good its words by concrete actions which visibly demonstrate the 'value-added' of an EU approach within existing EU policies and programmes, and which at the same time stops Europe from falling behind the international CSR debate and instils some of the vision and spirit from the global CSR movement into our own discussions - then Europe's CSR debate can be put back on track.