



Plenary sitting

**B8-0434/2017 }
B8-0435/2017 }
B8-0450/2017 } RC1**

4.7.2017

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 37(3) of the Rules of Procedure and the Framework
Agreement on relations between the European Parliament and the Commission

replacing the motions by the following groups:

PPE (B8-0434/2017)

ALDE (B8-0435/2017)

ECR (B8-0450/2017)

on the Commission Work Programme 2018
(2017/2699(RSP))

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on behalf of the ECR Group

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European Parliament resolution on the Commission Work Programme 2018 (2017/2699(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Commission Work Programme 2017 – Delivering a Europe that protects, empowers and defends’ (COM(2016)0710) and Annexes 1 to 5 thereto,
 - having regard to the Interinstitutional Agreement (IIA) between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on Better Law-Making¹,
 - having regard to the final report of 24 July 2014 of the High Level Group of Independent Stakeholders on Administrative Burdens, entitled ‘Cutting Red Tape in Europe – Legacy and Outlook’,
 - having regard to the Conference of Committee Chairs Summary Report of 13 June 2017,
 - having regard to Rule 37(3) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas political priorities and financial resources must be matched;
- B. whereas sustainability and economic growth are compatible and can be mutually reinforcing;
- C. whereas the EU must be committed to regaining competitiveness in the face of fierce global competition, thus preserving the model of the social market economy and ensuring sustainable growth with improving levels of productivity and innovation in order to provide the next generation of young citizens with jobs instead of debts;
- D. whereas the best economic and social support that the Member States can offer their citizens to ensure improved quality of life is a growing economy with low inflation and high rates of employment and wage growth, generating the resources required to fund investment for the future, improved infrastructure and public services;
- E. whereas the EU is facing various and complex forms of threats which create instability, leading to a feeling of insecurity for European citizens;
- F. whereas the Commission has a duty to uphold the Treaties and enforce EU laws; noting with strong regret that both the implementation of EU policies and the enforcement of EU laws and rules are weak, as has become visible in several areas; whereas the Commission, together with the Member States, should make implementation and enforcement a top priority;

PART I

1. Notes that the current crises, including their financial, economic, social and migratory consequences, have led to increased dissatisfaction among European citizens, expressed in

¹ OJ L 123, 12.5.2016, p. 1.
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the rise of extremism; stresses that significant challenges require a joint response from the EU and its Member States; believes that serious policy initiatives are required to tackle these crises, and that realistic reforms should be undertaken to restore trust and confidence and to counter the exploitation of this anxiety to stoke fear and insecurity; emphasises that demagogical and unrealistic political campaigns gives false hope in the very short term but have damaging consequences leading to more divisions, instability and conflicts across Europe;

2. Underlines the importance to the EU of being outward-looking and maintaining and developing close economic, commercial and strategic ties with its close neighbours; believes a clear framework is required in the future for the EU's relationship with non-members in its neighbourhood;
3. Considers a highly competitive social market economy to be a cornerstone of the European society on which European policies were built to the direct benefit of citizens' day to day lives; supports the initiatives to improve work-life balance;
4. Calls on the Commission to determine key priority actions aimed at strengthening the EU's industrial competitiveness by enabling companies to compete in domestic and global markets and reinforcing the capacity of the EU and its Member States to support the development of businesses, paying special attention to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); believes that European industrial modernisation must be wide-ranging and should include the marketing of innovative products and services, technologies and business models that are based on research and innovation investments converted into improved goods, services and processes for the market;
5. Emphasises that a comprehensive approach is needed to realise the benefits and address the remaining weaknesses of the single currency while ensuring the sustainability, resilience and completion of the EMU and achieving the goals of growth and full employment; considers that further development of the EMU must be based on, and build on, existing legislation and its implementation, and must include measures to render its institutional structure more legitimate and democratically accountable;
6. Urges the Commission to speed up the work on the completion of a Capital Markets Union to help unleash investment in the EU to create growth and jobs; calls on the Commission to come forward with proposals that improve the business environment in the EU to attract more foreign direct investment and re-shore jobs;
7. Stresses that a successful European policy on migration requires an agreed mechanism for fair and effective distribution of asylum seekers; emphasises the importance of progress in tackling the migration crisis in a way that demonstrates much more sensitivity to widespread concerns within the Member States over uncontrolled migration; welcomes the recent achievements in strengthening the management and effective control of the Union's external borders, which is a precondition for the Member States to regain a critical level of mutual trust;
8. Stresses that the Common Foreign and Security Policy must be improved so as to contribute to finding credible answers to new security threats and challenges, fighting terrorism, and bringing peace, stability and order to its neighbourhood; calls on the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) to continue to work closely

together with the Member States in developing practical policies and methods of cooperation to pursue these objectives;

9. Underlines that free trade has significantly improved living standards and reduced poverty in the EU and around the world, creating economic growth and jobs and strengthening political and economic relations with third countries; considers that the EU must continue to counter protectionist tendencies worldwide, and therefore asks the Commission to swiftly bring forward and finalise both planned and ongoing negotiations and to continuously explore possibilities for new free trade agreements;
10. Urges the Commission to launch, in cooperation with the other institutions, a wide public debate on the future of the Union;
11. Underlines that Europe will continue to lead the fight against climate change and that the EU remains fully committed to the implementation of the Paris Agreement; points out that a forward-looking climate change policy is crucial for the modernisation of Europe's industry and economy;
12. Emphasises the importance of delivering value for money and pursuing a policy of zero tolerance in cases of mismanagement and fraud;
13. Highlights that the EU is still facing substantial challenges when it comes to the implementation of agreed or adopted legislation, and therefore calls on the Commission to focus on the enforcement of EU law in all Member States; stresses the importance of competition-policy enforcement in creating a level playing field that fosters innovation, productivity, job creation and investment by all players across the single market and across all business models, including SMEs;
14. Calls once again on the Commission to put forward a legislative proposal on EU administrative law which will guarantee an open, efficient and independent European administration, and to take due account of Parliament's proposal for an EU regulation in this regard;

PART 2

1. Youth and lifelong learning

15. Calls on the Commission to:
 - invest, in support of the Member States, in inclusive and efficient education systems;
 - ensure that the expert community and relevant stakeholders, including parents' organisations, are consulted on matters of policy development;
 - ensure adequate Erasmus+ funds to meet the programme's objectives, and that these be used for the primary purpose of the programme (mobility, education and training, youth policies and sports);
 - support the Member States, first and foremost, on educational actions across all ages and occupational groups; invest in a lifelong learning framework, with a particular focus on digital and entrepreneurial skills and competences, as well as media literacy,

including specific programmes designed to specifically encourage women;

- analyse labour markets to determine the right balance between vocational training and university education, thus improving the link between supply and demand in the labour market;
- foster entrepreneurship and further develop and support the right legal environment for SMEs in accordance with the ‘think small first’ principle;
- come forward with recommendations and proposals on how to keep ageing workers in the workforce for a longer period of time, thus also encouraging the transfer of experience to the younger generations and foster mentoring at the workplace;
- take further measures, together with the Member States, to enhance the attractiveness and value of skills in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM subjects) and to encourage more women and girls to take up and pursue STEM subjects, within which ICT in particular may open up new possibilities for them;

16. Considers that the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) is essential in tackling youth unemployment, which remains unacceptably high in the EU; calls on the Commission to seek adequate funding to fight youth unemployment and continuing the YEI, while at the same time improving its functioning and implementation and taking into account the European Court of Auditors special report No 5/2017;

17. Urges the Commission to put in place all suitable mechanisms for greater mobility among young people, apprenticeships included, as a way to address skills mismatches in the labour market and improve access to employment opportunities;

2. Blue growth and a circular economy

18. Asks the Commission to put forward proposals:

- for blue growth to support sustainable growth in the marine and maritime sectors as a whole;
- to fill the gap arising from the absence of multiannual plans under the new common fisheries policy (CFP) to manage all important stocks and fisheries in EU waters;

19. Urges the Commission to bring forward without delay the initiatives listed in the Circular Economy Action Plan, and to regularly monitor progress towards a circular economy;

3. Financial framework beyond 2020

20. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the implementation of all EU programmes reaches cruising speed by next year, in order to compensate for the significant delays observed at the beginning of the present programming period; is particularly concerned at the implications of such delays on a possible accumulation of payment claims towards the end of this MFF; considers that every effort should be made to avoid another payment crisis, including reaching a decision on an adequate level of payments in the coming annual budgets;

21. Urges the Commission to come forward with its legislative proposals on the post-2020

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MFF by June 2018 at the latest, in order to allow substantial interinstitutional negotiations to be launched immediately; sets as an objective the successful conclusion of those negotiations by the end of the present parliamentary term;

22. Calls on the Commission to take due account of Parliament's position on the future MFF, which will be adopted ahead of the Commission's legislative proposals; underlines the need to embark on a structured dialogue regarding the overall level, political and budgetary priorities, architecture and flexibility provisions of the future MFF, including reaching a position on the duration of the financial framework; considers that the next MFF must develop a pathway towards a modern EU budget; believes that the Commission should undertake a comprehensive spending review as part of its preparation;
23. Urges the Commission to come forward with detailed plans for addressing concerns about the future revenue side of the budget and own resources; stresses that the Commission should present those legislative proposals together with the proposals on the post-2020 MFF, in order to allow joint negotiations to be conducted on both items; underlines that Parliament will adopt its own position ahead of the presentation of the legislative proposals, and asks the Commission to take due account of Parliament's position in this regard;
24. Calls on the Commission to submit:
 - proposals for regulations for EU cohesion policy post-2020, as a consequence of the forthcoming presentation of the next MFF, as early as possible in 2018;
 - a comprehensive review of the financial regulation and related sectoral legislation, including the Common Provisions Regulation currently in force ('the Omnibus'), including provisions for cohesion policy simplification and the improved combination of EU Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds) with the European Fund for Strategic Investment, being enacted at the beginning of 2018;
25. Asks the Commission, in the context of the White Paper debate, to clarify its ambitions for the Framework Programme (FP9), early enough in 2018 for Parliament to formulate a position on that programme and also on Galileo, Copernicus and COSME, so that all measures can be operational from 2021 onwards; expects the FP9 proposal to be based on the Horizon 2020 (H2020) interim evaluation and Parliament's implementation report;
26. Stresses the need for applied research, particularly research that leads to better knowledge, skills and practices, to ensure that new technologies are used in the best possible manner; calls on the Commission to better balance the needs of fundamental, applied and translational research and development, to ensure efficient, fast translation of new discoveries into real technologies and products;
27. Urges the Commission to continue working towards simplification while minimising barriers to participation and ensuring the highest returns – both short-term and long-term – for all parts of the programme, and to work towards an ambitious proposal for the next Framework Programme; stresses that strengthening the existing synergies with the ESI Funds is needed to develop innovation opportunities within the EU;
28. Highlights the need to establish a performance framework, and considers that the Commission should develop an improved system of budgetary control which is

proportionate to the benefits achieved through EU funding; considers that an integral part of this system should be its reporting, which ought to be sufficiently transparent and detailed, including the reporting of information on the recipients of EU funds and whether payments have been made on time; believes that the performance, cost-effectiveness and results achieved via EU funding should always be scrutinised in order to ascertain the sustainable, long-term effects of EU expenditure; calls for the preparation of proposals to reform the Court of Auditors to strengthen its performance auditing function so as to serve as both an audit and evaluation authority;

4. Digital Single Market Strategy

29. Is concerned by the delays taken by some of the legislative proposals contained in the Digital Single Market Strategy; considers that the EU institutions should not lose the momentum of the strategy and devote every possible effort to delivering and adopting the relevant proposals; asks the three institutions, at the time of its mid-term review, to commit at the highest level to giving them priority treatment in the legislative process so that citizens and businesses can benefit from their results;

30. Asks the Commission to:

- make progress on the completion of the digital single market and also on an environment that supports SMEs;
- present proposals to establish the general principle of the free movement of data and to remove data localisation restrictions across the EU;
- further support the digitalisation of the European transport sector through initiatives such as C-ITS and E-CRM and other digital systems;
- come forward with its planned initiative(s) on cybersecurity, also with respect to the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA); such initiatives should aim at increasing cybersecurity for industry and other civilian ends and should include effective remedies;
- urgently identify, together with the Member States, the systemic causes of the growing digital gender gap and take action at global level to end the digital exclusion of women;

5. Energy Union Strategy

31. Calls on the Commission, following the adoption of various Energy Union, energy efficiency, market design, renewable energy and other energy-related legislative proposals and communications, to focus its attention on ensuring that Member States fully implement these, the aim being to build a genuine Energy Union;

32. Expects the Commission's continued close cooperation on the ongoing and highly important legislative procedures in the Clean Energy Package, including during the trilogue stage, so as to ensure a successful finalisation of the negotiations as early as possible in 2018;

33. Calls on the Commission to monitor the economic consequences of the new electricity

market design, particularly in the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) region, which is likely to bear high energy transition costs;

6. *Single Market Strategy*

34. Calls on the Commission to:

- improve, together with the Member States, the implementation of the Services Directive, including the removal of the remaining regulatory and administrative barriers in the service sector as well as putting an end to ‘gold-plating’;
- enforce the existing legislation by, first and foremost, applying the rules in place, thus ensuring a level playing field and making it possible to reap the full benefits of the single market;

35. Regrets that the Commission has not listened so far to the repeated calls for the creation of a strong single market pillar within the European Semester, with a system of regular monitoring and identification of country-specific barriers to the single market;

36. Considers as political priorities:

- development of the potential of the culture and creative industries on the basis of a coherent EU policy, acknowledging that they mainly consist of micro-enterprises and SMEs and are key factors for sustainable growth and quality employment;
- the improvement and promotion of measures and actions to facilitate cultural tourism, with the full participation of regions and local authorities;
- the proposal for the review of the IPRED (Intellectual Property Rights Enforcement Directive) by the end of the year;
- the revision of the General Safety Regulation, which has been postponed once again, deploring the fact that the timeline set out in Directive (EU) 2015/719 of 29 April 2015¹ has been disregarded and reminding the Commission of the need for clear and decisive action as regards this revision and road safety in general;
- a timely follow-up, with concrete proposals, to the findings and suggestions to be contained in the upcoming strategic own-initiative report on odometer fraud, recalling that this deals with a major concern of European citizens and bearing in mind that well-working models are already deployed in some Member States;

7. *Health*

37. Stresses the urgency and importance of taking action against the threat of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), since this can have an enormous impact on citizens’ health and productivity as well as on the Member States’ health budgets; calls on the Commission, therefore, to come forward with an initiative for an EU action plan on how to implement in the Union the World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance; calls on the Commission also to enhance measures already applied in the current Action Plan against AMR and to ensure the consistent implementation thereof by

¹ OJ L 115, 6.5.2015, p. 1.
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all relevant parties;

38. Calls on the Commission to:

- put forward a legislative proposal on packaging leaflets for pharmaceutical products aimed at making them clearer and more patient-friendly ('drug fact box');
- urgently review Directive 2004/23/EC of 31 March 2004 on quality and safety standards for donated human tissues and cells¹ (the Tissues and Cells Directive) to bring it into line with the principle of unpaid donation and with Regulation No 1394/2007 of 13 November 2007 on advanced therapy medicinal products (the Advanced Therapies Regulation)², which, furthermore, needs to be made more applicable to SMEs;

8. Fisheries and agriculture

39. Stresses the important role that sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors play in ensuring food security in the EU, providing jobs and improving environmental standards, and also underlines the potential of European agriculture in contributing to climate change policies through innovation and adoption of policies which enhance the carbon sequestration potential of European agriculture;

40. Urges the Commission to work on bilateral fisheries agreements with countries outside the EU that are approaching their expiry date;

41. Reiterates that, in order to ensure the timely and proper implementation of the common fisheries policy adopted in 2013, the Commission must continue to come forward with legislative proposals for the adoption of renewed multiannual management plans for fish stocks;

42. Calls on the Commission to:

- ensure that the CFP and the landing obligation are implemented in a sound manner;
- continue working closely with fishermen and scientists to identify and forecast where choke species may occur and to develop research solutions such as innovative fishing techniques;
- revise Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 (the Mediterranean Regulation), in particular the part that refers to the ban on the use of certain traditional gears and the provisions that relate to the specific characteristics of fishing gears;
- find a pragmatic solution with regard to industrial fisheries in order to regulate and limit the practice of using valuable fish resources for fishmeal, in particular when it comes to vulnerable ecosystems in the Baltic Sea;

43. Commits to enter into constructive dialogue with the Commission on its communication on the future of the CAP after 2020, which is expected before the end of 2017;

¹ OJ L 102, 7.4.2004, p. 48.

² OJ L 324, 10.12.2007, p. 121.

44. Calls on the Commission, in this context, to:

- simplify the implementation of the CAP;
- cut red tape in order to increase its efficiency;
- alleviate the administrative burden on agricultural entrepreneurs;
- make room for innovations that are indispensable for a forward-looking, competitive European agriculture sector;
- ensure that the principle of better regulation is included in the upcoming CAP reform proposal which should provide more room and financial incentives for innovation in agriculture aimed at ensuring long-term food security in the EU, reducing agriculture's impact on biodiversity and increasing its climate resilience;
- present, without delay, a proposal for EU-level framework legislation to combat unfair trading practices in the food supply chain;

45. Calls on the Commission to ensure that taxpayers receive value for money from the investment they make in agriculture, while moving towards the equalisation of direct payments across the Member States and ensuring that the EU can maintain and increase its food-producing potential;

9. Fairer taxation

46. Asks the Commission:

- to put forward proposals on a definitive VAT system and on VAT rates;
- to present clear guidelines on fiscal state aid by Member States;
- to evaluate the conditions of access to cultural goods and services and to propose solutions to improve them, including looking at the issue of existing variations in VAT on books and e-books;

47. Welcomes the work of the Commission and Member States to actively promote the fight against tax fraud, tax evasion, aggressive tax planning and the use of tax havens, drawing on the expertise of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in fostering good tax governance;

10. Financial services and Capital Markets Union

48. Calls on the Commission to present a proposal to streamline the EU approach and third country-related issues in the field of financial services legislation;

49. Calls on the Commission to come up very rapidly with concrete proposals in the field of retail financial services, noting that retail finance in the EU should work in the interests of citizens and provide better products and more choice on the market;

50. Highlights the importance of the achievement of the Capital Markets Union; stresses, however, that any further legislative proposals should be made only if the intended effects

cannot be achieved by non-legislative means;

11. Digitalisation and automation: challenges and opportunities

51. Underlines the need to face and deal with the changing patterns of work and to find the way for job creation coupled with decent social security for workers, as well as exploring the possibilities for flexible working arrangements in support of work-life balance;
52. Calls on the Commission to work with Member States to come up with an EU strategy on automation in the labour market, and to accompany it by initiatives on how to organise interaction between professionals and robots, how automation can help maximise benefits for employers and employees, how to improve productivity, and the effects on work-life balance and on health and safety at work;

12. An area of justice and fundamental rights based on mutual trust

53. Calls on the Commission to promptly take the relevant follow-up action and submit a legislative proposal on common minimum standards of civil procedure;
54. Welcomes the Council's signature marking the Union's accession to the Istanbul Convention;
55. Reminds the Commission of the vital importance of full implementation of Directive 2012/29/EU of 25 October 2012¹ (the victims' rights directive) and Directive 2011/99/EU of 13 December 2011² (the European protection order directive);

13. Progress towards an effective and genuine Security Union

56. Believes that work on new or updated databases should be a priority, including the Entry-Exit System (EES), the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS), the SIS II package, Eurodac, the European Police Records Index System (EPRIS) and the European Criminal Records Information System (ECRIS), and that proper funding should be made available for putting them in place;
57. Calls on the Commission to make the necessary legislative adaptation on the basis of the conclusions of the dialogue on interoperability, regarding the ways in which existing and future information systems could enhance both external border management and internal security in the EU;
58. Calls on the Commission to come forward with concrete initiatives to address the challenges related to the fight against cross-border cybercrime, to be identified in the review of the cybersecurity strategy due in autumn 2017, to review existing legislation in the area of cybercrime and to put forward a proposal which establishes a clear framework for the relationship between private companies and law enforcement authorities in the fight against organised crime and radicalisation online, while considering the security of personal data processing and the risk of data breach;
59. Calls on the Commission to ensure the efficient and coordinated implementation of the European Agenda on Security for the 2015-2020 period and its priorities in the fields of

¹ OJ L 315, 14.11.2012, p. 57.

² OJ L 338, 21.12.2011, p. 2.

counter-terrorism and cross-border organised crime and cybercrime, focusing on effective security outcomes; reiterates its call for an in-depth evaluation focused on the operational effectiveness of relevant existing EU instruments and on the remaining gaps in this field;

60. Considers the fight against corruption to be a political priority;
61. Calls on the Commission to seek to adopt legal acts amending or replacing the Union acts in the field of police cooperation and judicial cooperation in criminal matters that were adopted before the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, in particular Council Decision 2005/671/JHA and Council Framework Decision 2006/960/JHA on the exchange of information and intelligence between law enforcement authorities, including the exchange of information on terrorist offences, by proposing a legislative instrument to improve the exchange of law enforcement information and increase operational cooperation between Member States and with EU agencies, with a view to ensuring exchanges of information for the purpose of combating serious transnational crime and terrorism;
62. Calls on the Commission to ensure a timely and compliant entry into force of the data protection package;

14. The European Agenda on Migration

63. Calls on the Commission to undertake the necessary review of Regulation (EC) No 767/2008 of 9 July 2008¹ (the Visa Information System - VIS - Regulation), following the interoperability dialogue;
64. Recognises the significant legislative steps taken by the Commission to achieve a common EU-level immigration and asylum policy, and stresses that the EU has embarked on an important process of articulating an immigration and asylum policy at a time when real crises requiring urgent attention have put serious pressure on the borders of Europe;
65. Recalls the importance of tackling the root causes of migration by upgrading the EU's development and cooperation policy with Africa, as well as its role in the resolution of conflicts in its neighbouring countries;
66. Reminds the Commission that a concrete reporting mechanism should be presented to regularly assess the effectiveness of current efforts to tackle the root causes of migration, and that the implementation of the EU Trust Fund for Africa and the future European Fund for Sustainable Development should be closely monitored;
67. Reiterates its support for innovative ways of financing measures to tackle the current migration crisis, and particularly welcomes the reinforced partnership that they entail with the private sector; believes that engaging with the private sector is key in realising development objectives, and that mobilising private funding is essential for addressing the root causes of irregular migration; insists that parliamentary oversight of trust funds and other blending mechanisms should be guaranteed under all circumstances;

15. Climate change

68. Calls on the Commission to come forward with complementary, Union-wide measures to

¹ OJ L 218, 13.8.2008, p. 60.

combat climate change with a view to the 2018 facilitative dialogue under the Paris Agreement; calls on the Commission, in this regard, to evaluate the consistency of current EU policies in relation to the objectives of the Paris Agreement;

16. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

69. Underlines the fact that the SDGs apply universally to all countries and stresses the necessity of mainstreaming the SDGs into all EU policies; calls on the Commission, as a first step, to undertake a comprehensive assessment of existing EU policies and possible policy gaps and inconsistencies; calls on the Commission to develop, in cooperation with the Member States and stakeholders, an overarching EU framework for the implementation of all 17 SDGs; insists that successfully achieving the SDGs requires a better use of existing tools, such as the Better Regulation Agenda and the Environmental Action Programme, as well as the effective implementation of the principle of policy coherence for development;

70. Calls on the Commission to:

- closely monitor the institutional and policy changes needed to effectively implement the 2030 Agenda;
- implement in parallel the new European Consensus on Development, which is expected to be signed in June 2017;

71. Calls on the Commission to establish a clear, structured, transparent and accountable framework governing partnerships and alliances with the private sector in developing countries; calls, furthermore, for the setting-up at EU level of sectorial, multi-stakeholder platforms, bringing together the private sector, civil society organisations (CSOs), NGOs, think tanks, partner governments, donors and other stakeholders;

72. Stresses that the promotion of, and respect for, human rights, international law and fundamental freedoms must be a central common denominator across EU policies; calls on the Commission not to neglect the importance of protecting human rights in the context of counter-terrorism measures; urges the Commission to actively continue pushing for human rights to be implemented effectively through all agreements subscribed to by the EU, in particular the so-called ‘democracy clause’ and Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement; calls on the Commission to make a clear monitoring of the human rights situation in the countries with which the EU has agreements;

17. Security-development nexus

73. Calls for the creation of a new innovative financing instrument for peace and justice that would take into account the revised ODA (Official Development Assistance) eligibility criteria on peace and security in order to reflect the growing interlinkages between development and security actions, in particular those promoting democracy, good governance and respect for human rights;

18. Trade

74. Considers that a balanced trade and investment agreement with the United States is in the interests of the EU, and therefore invites the Commission to continue the negotiations and

deliver tangible results;

75. Emphasises its support for an ambitious and values-based trade agenda which will strengthen the global rules-based system and contribute towards jobs and growth in Europe; welcomes, in this connection, the Commission's efforts to conclude negotiations with Japan and to push ahead with other ongoing negotiations, such as with Mexico, Chile and Mercosur, as well as aiming to commence new ones with, for example, Australia and New Zealand and trying to unblock other negotiations, such as those with India;
76. Calls on the Commission to reinvigorate the post-Nairobi WTO discussion, since multilateral trade negotiations are vitally important for the EU even when they prove difficult; considers that it would also be worthwhile to look into new areas and issues within the WTO framework, such as digital trade, and welcomes the international initiatives taken by the Commission on investment protection;
77. Stresses that the modernising and strengthening of the Union's trade defence instruments, to make them compatible with WTO rules, is a matter of urgency and of the utmost importance;
78. Calls on the Commission to review the current ACP-EU trade framework governed by the Cotonou Agreement, which will expire in 2020; believes that the new outline should aim to support economic growth in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and their integration into the global economy; asks the Commission, therefore, to develop a clear and strong trade policy that includes, but is not limited to, private sector development, trade facilitation and reciprocal liberalisation; calls on the Commission to do so in line with the principle of policy coherence for development;

19. External policies: priorities

79. Asks the Commission:

- to put forward the mid-term review of the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI);
- to foster the transatlantic bond;
- to confirm the Union's commitment to the Balkans and the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhoods;
- to support civil society and the ability to access credible information despite shrinking legal frameworks and constraints, in the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhoods and beyond;
- to prepare proposals for enhancing cooperation with international organisations, including, in particular: the United Nations, NATO, the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Commonwealth, in areas of common concern;
- to strengthen the EU Guidelines on Freedom of Religion or Belief;
- to promote key global human rights priorities, including, inter alia, religious freedom,

freedom of expression, political freedom, the rights of women and children, the rights of persons with disabilities, and the rights of minority groups, including LGBTI people;

– to develop international cooperation between ombudsmen and partnerships for human rights;

80. Considers NATO to be the basis of the architecture of European Defence and notes that the protection of Europe will become a mutually reinforcing responsibility of NATO and the EU, as set out in the Joint Declaration made in Warsaw in July 2016, and, in particular, within the framework of the European Defence Action Plan;

81. Supports maintaining the framework agreement based on three pillars (reinforced political dialogue, development cooperation and trade); believes that further regionalisation should be explored with a view to addressing each region according to its needs and specificities, also stressing the need to respond to the new Africa-EU Strategy to be adopted for 2018-2020;

82. Calls on the Commission to advance with setting up the European Defence Fund, which would encompass adequate funding for both collaborative research on defence technologies and the acquisition of joint assets by the Member States, as and when this would be demonstrably practical, beneficial and cost-effective; encourages the Commission to step up the enforcement of the two directives framing the single market for defence and to come up with an initiative on development of shared industry standards for equipment and assets;

83. Urges the Commission to pay particular attention to the rising tension in the Western Balkans and to seek ways to enhance the EU's engagement in favour of reconciliation and reforms in all of the countries concerned;

84. Commends the Commission for its emphasis on the Neighbourhood Policy, both eastern and southern, but underlines that this policy must be strengthened, notably through a combination of increased financial assistance, reinforced democracy support, market access and improved mobility; stresses that the policy needs to clearly identify areas of action in order to better address the challenges which the neighbouring countries are facing;

20. A more strategic approach to enforcement of EU law

85. Asks the Commission to improve the control systems, notably regarding error rates;

86. Urges the Commission to enhance the quality, as regards substance and depth, of the replies provided by it to Parliament's Committee on Petitions, in order to more thoroughly address the concerns of European citizens;

87. Calls on the Commission to do its utmost to facilitate an agreement in the Council on the ratification of the Marrakesh Treaty, with a view to achieving the full potential of that treaty without delay;

88. Points to growing efforts by third states and non-state actors to undermine through hybrid means, including disinformation, the legitimacy of democratic institutions inside the EU, and urges the Commission to strengthen its resilience against hybrid threats and improve

its ability to adequately counter false news and disinformation;

21. *Better law-making*

89. Calls on the Commission to ensure that:

- all legislative proposals undergo a thorough impact assessment and cost-benefit analysis;
- the SME Test is rolled out across all DGs and that systematic cooperation with the Regulatory Scrutiny Board is undertaken in order to achieve a more structured application of the SME test;
- an evaluation of the independence of the Regulatory Scrutiny Board in supervising and providing objective advice on impact assessments is submitted to Parliament;
- the Annual Burden Survey (ABS) is developed as a vital tool to identify and monitor, in a clear and transparent manner, the results of the Union's efforts to avoid and reduce any overregulation and administrative burdens both by the Union itself and by Member States in the transposition and interpretation of legislation ('gold-plating');
- proposals for establishing burden reduction targets in key sectors are submitted to Parliament with the ambition of securing a 25 % reduction by 2020 and a 50 % reduction by 2030 of the economic costs linked to regulatory burdens for businesses;

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90. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.