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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Council and Commission statements

pursuant to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Jules Maaten

on behalf of the ELDR Group

on the preparation of the European Council (Brussels, 12-13 December 2003)

European Parliament resolution on the preparation of the European Council (Brussels, 12-13 December 2003)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the European Council Conclusions of 17 October 2003,
- having regard to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas, following the decisions taken at its last meeting, the European Council must approve the European growth initiative, including 'quick-start projects', and assess the implementation of the Lisbon reforms,
- B. whereas the European Council should consider the border control agency, relations with non-EU states and action to combat drugs,
- C. whereas the European Council should assess the implementation of the Community 'acquis' by acceding countries, establish a framework for concluding negotiations with Bulgaria and Romania, look at Turkey's progress and call for a solution to the Cyprus problem,
- D. whereas the Commission's Strategy Paper and Report of 5 November 2003 on the progress towards accession by Bulgaria and Romania foresees that a financial framework for the accession of Bulgaria and Romania should be established no later than early 2004,

European growth initiative, Lisbon reforms and transport

1. Continues to strongly support the Lisbon process, and in this respect stresses the need for structural reforms as the most important key to solving the continuing problems affecting the European economy;
2. Continues to call for impact assessments to be carried out on all new European legislation, and in this context welcomes the Commission's call for competitiveness impact assessment throughout the decision-making process.
3. Urges Member States to speed up implementation of EU legislation, in particular the issues related to the Lisbon process, to assess the impact of national legislation on competitiveness and to involve stakeholders in decision-making;
4. Underlines the importance of adopting and implementing the Financial Services Action Plan as part of the completion of the Internal Market; continues to seek political assurance at the highest level that Parliament's legislative rights to review implementing legislation (level II) will be upheld, as in Article 35 of the draft Constitutional Treaty;
5. Welcomes the level of priority accorded to the development of rail infrastructure in the revised decision on the Trans-European Transport Networks;

6. Underlines that the concrete added value of investment in individual transport and energy infrastructure projects must be assured via comprehensive impact assessment and cost benefit analysis;
7. Considers that European transport policy can contribute most effectively to economic growth in Europe via a controlled liberalisation of transport markets, and that this constitutes an even more pressing priority than massive new investment in infrastructure;
8. Underlines, in this context, the fundamental importance of completing effective EU legislation to open the market in passenger rail and port services, and to re-design European airspace via the creation of a Single European Sky;
9. Further calls on the Council to take much more concerted action to improve competition in the allocation of slots at Community airports, and to bring about a controlled liberalisation of public transport services via competitive tendering, subject to rigorous standards, and policed by a strong, independent regulator in each Member State;

Home and Justice affairs

10. Reminds the European Council that the European Arrest Warrant is to be transposed by the Member States at the latest by 31 December 2003, and that at present only three Member States (Denmark, Spain and Portugal) have done so; urges the European Council, therefore, to insist that the remaining Member States respect the deadline for transposal;
11. Agrees that the tasks of combating terrorism, organised crime, illegal immigration, trafficking in human beings and drug trafficking are key areas of EU policy;
12. Stresses that illegal immigration affects not only individual Member States, but the EU as a whole, requiring progress to be made at EU level in the sphere of asylum and immigration policy;
13. Believes, therefore, that in the continued development of the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice, coherent EU measures in the sphere of illegal immigration and border protection are necessary;
14. Takes note of the recent Commission proposal to set up a European Border Management Agency to improve the operational cooperation between Member States, but insists that this should not be a precursor to a European Corps of Border Guards with an operational border control capacity;
15. Welcomes the fact that migration issues are to be integrated in the Union's relations with third countries and believes that stabilisation programmes, in the form of positive economic and trade-related measures, can be an incentive for countries of origin and transit countries to guarantee compliance with voluntary return agreements;
16. Deplores the failure of EU leaders and the Council Presidency to discuss the rights of the Guantanamo detainees to a fair trial and insists that the European Council and the Presidency undertake to raise this matter at every opportunity with the US administration;

Enlargement

17. Expects the European Council to take stock of progress made by the 10 acceding countries in adopting, implementing and enforcing the 'acquis' and to urge those lagging behind to make further efforts;
18. Expects the European Council to agree on a financial framework for the accession of Bulgaria and Romania, in order to allow for these countries to conclude their negotiations on agriculture, regional policy and budgetary issues, as foreseen in the Commission's Strategy Paper and Report of 5 November 2003 on the progress towards accession by Bulgaria and Romania; but stresses that the accession of each of these countries should be based on their individual merits;
19. Calls on the European Council, in its evaluation of the progress made by Turkey in meeting the political and economic criteria, to take adequate note of and welcome the considerable progress achieved in accelerating the pace of reforms, while calling for further efforts in the implementation of these reforms in order for Turkey to meet the Copenhagen criteria;
20. Calls on the European Council to clearly state its willingness for further engagement with the Turkish Cypriot community, regardless of the outcome of the mid-December elections and to continue its work for a settlement based on the Annan plan; recalls that a failure to register any progress towards a final solution on Cyprus would become a serious obstacle to Turkish aspirations to join the European Union and that the 1 May accession provides a historical opportunity for putting an end to the division of Cyprus;

European Security and Defence Policy

21. Welcomes the progress on the External Relations Council meeting's work concerning the development of a European Security Strategy;
22. Insists on the importance of multilateralism for dealing with crises, challenges and current threats;
23. Stresses the need for the strategies to be adopted by the European Council in December 2003 in order to ensure greater visibility in external affairs matters;
24. Supports the idea of creating an agency in the field of defence capabilities development research, acquisition and armaments, further to the Thessaloniki European Council conclusions of June 2003;
25. Calls on the Council to establish the agency in the course of 2004;
26. Welcomes and supports the adoption of the common position on the universalisation and reinforcement of multilateral agreements in the field of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, as well as the adoption of a policy approach on mainstreaming a non-proliferation element in the EU's relations with third countries;
27. Considers that Ukraine must be given a particularly important role in the context of the

EU's Wider Europe - Neighbourhood policy and supports Ukraine's desire for EU integration and the Council's and the Commission's current focusing on preparing an Action Plan for Ukraine to be presented during the December European Summit;

28. Considers that there should be a relaunch of the current Euro-Arab dialogue through bilateral and multisectoral initiatives, including through the establishment of a foundation for dialogue between cultures, and looks forward to a detailed work programme on relations with the Arab World, to be presented by the Commission during the European Summit in Naples;
29. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.