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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the European Council report and Commission statement

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

by Andrew Nicholas Duff and Cecilia Malmström

on behalf of the ELDR Group

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

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

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the European Council Conclusions of 13 December 2003
- having regard to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure,

ECONOMIC GROWTH

1. Welcomes the European Action for Growth, but underlines that boosting investments even in key projects can solve neither the immediate nor the long-term problems of the European economy; highlights the need for a stronger emphasis on implementation and results if the Lisbon targets are to be reached, particularly in the area of structural reform;
2. Applauds the initiative to enhance the competitiveness of the European economy, especially the easing of administrative and regulatory burdens; continues to call for impact assessments to be carried out on all new European legislation;
3. Welcomes the conclusions and the broad scope of the Employment Task Force, linking employment performance with economy and social inclusion, but underlines that similar recommendations have been made on many occasions, for example by the Employment Guidelines, and that the focus now must be on implementation;
4. Underlines in particular the importance of a flexible labour market and pension reforms, including the interaction between pension reform, employment policy, sound public finances and social cohesion;
5. Underlines that the priorities for development of the TENs must be strategically planned in accordance with the common interest, and that the added value of individual projects must be ensured via comprehensive impact assessments;
6. Reminds the Council, in this regard, that the decision on the TENs is subject to full codecision with Parliament, and regrets the lack of consultation of Parliament so far in determining priorities;

FREEDOM, SECURITY AND JUSTICE

7. Deplores the failure of EU leaders and the Council Presidency to discuss the rights of the Guantánamo detainees to a fair trial and urges the European Council and the new Irish Presidency to undertake to raise this matter at the highest level with the US administration;
8. Takes note of the political agreement reached by the Council on the main elements of the 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, and stresses that the Commission and Parliament must be fully involved;

9. Regrets, given the fact that only three Member States (Denmark, Spain and Portugal) have transposed the European Arrest Warrant, that the European Council failed to insist that the remaining Member States respect the deadline of 31 December 2003;
10. Regrets that the last JHA Council did not reach an agreement on a common European asylum policy despite the deadline set by the European Council, and insists on action early in the Irish Presidency based on high protection requirements;
11. Stresses the need to make major progress in defining and implementing a comprehensive European immigration policy, along the lines agreed at Tampere and developed since by the Commission;
12. Urges the integration of migration issues into 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;
13. Expresses its reservations with regard to the integration of biometric identifiers in visas and residence permits as there are numerous unresolved data protection concerns, including central storage and secondary use, notably in the development of the Visa Information System and the possible synergies with the Schengen Information System;
14. Agrees with the importance given by the Council to the fight against drug trafficking, which should undermine the financing of the illegal activities of traffickers and criminal or terrorist organisations;

ENLARGEMENT

15. Strongly emphasises that the failure to reach an agreement on the European Constitution will in no way affect the accession of the 10 new Member States from 1 May 2004;
16. Endorses the European Council's commitment to the accession of Bulgaria and Romania; looks forward to the financial framework to be established in early 2004 for the end-phase of the negotiations; points out that both countries should make further efforts to implement adopted legislation and that ultimately both countries will be judged on their own merits;
17. Welcomes the fact that the European Council is maintaining its open and constructive approach to the Turkish application to join the Union, and its positive assessment of the pace of reforms; agrees with the view that these reforms must be followed by further sustained reform, in particular with respect to the judiciary, civil-military relations, cultural rights and as regards the situation in the south-east of the country;
18. Calls on the parties concerned, and in particular on all political forces in Northern Cyprus, to immediately resume talks for a settlement based on the Annan plan, in order to allow

the whole island to join the Union on 1 May 2004; underlines that a settlement would allow Community support for the development of the northern part of Cyprus and that failure to reach an agreement would seriously affect long-term development prospects for the citizens of Northern Cyprus and could hamper Turkey's quest for EU membership;

19. Welcomes the European Council's assessment of relations with the countries of the Western Balkans; reiterates its support for the Stabilisation and Association process, but restates its demand for full cooperation with the ICTY; welcomes the new emphasis laid on Justice and Home affairs, as indicated by the recent Ministerial meeting on Justice and Home Affairs within the EU-Western Balkans Forum; points out, however, that EU action in this field should not only be targeting border management and the fight against cross-border crime, but should also aim at strengthening the overall quality of the justice systems in the region;
20. Looks forward to the Commission's initial opinion on Croatia's application, which will be presented in Spring 2004;
21. Shares the European Council's satisfaction with the recent progress made in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, including the establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly, and other concrete instruments for further reinforcing the implementation of the Barcelona process;

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

EU security strategy

22. Welcomes the adoption by the European Council of the EU Security Strategy paper submitted by the High Representative for the CFSP, Javier Solana, through which the EU must find its way to a clear prioritisation of its foreign and security interests and objectives; underlines that an EU security strategy can be developed only on the basis of multilateralism and within the UN system; is convinced of the great contribution that such a strategy, based on a global context going beyond the strictly military dimension and ensuring the deployment of a whole package of political, economic, social and military measures, can make in preventing and resolving conflicts;

Guantánamo Bay

23. Deplores the fact that the Council Presidency did not raise the issue of the right of prisoners detained at Guantánamo Bay to a fair trial with the US authorities and did not include this issue on the agenda for the next summit between the European Union and the United States;
24. Deeply regrets that the Brussels European Council did not submit an 'amicus brief' to the US Supreme Court in support particularly of the EU citizens held at Guantánamo Bay;

ESDP

25. Pays tribute to the first three crisis operations successfully carried out within the framework of the ESDP, welcomes the establishment of an EU Agency for Defence and

calls on the Council to further advance the setting-up of a comprehensive and credible European defence identity, including a European collective capacity for planning and command of EU operations, able to play a role complementary to NATO, yet not undermining the alliance or unnecessarily duplicating structures; insists that it be consulted in advance of decisions on ESDP operations and points out that only a well-informed Parliament is in a position to take relevant decisions swiftly and efficiently;

Iraq

26. Stresses that Saddam Hussein's capture is a welcome development and believes it is important that the Iraqi people feel ownership of his trial;
27. Insists that any tribunal trying Saddam Hussein should apply international standards of justice;

Transatlantic relations

28. Welcomes and supports the European Council declaration on transatlantic relations with the US and Canada and looks forward to concrete actions based on the promotion of the rule of law, democracy and human rights, poverty reduction, health and environmental protection;
29. Reiterates its call for an international order based on effective multilateralism;

Russian Federation

30. Believes, taking note of the recent non-transparent actions of the Russian judiciary, as in the cases of YUKOS and the Open Society Institute, that further development of the democratic process in Russia, especially in the field of free and fair elections, freedom of information, the media and the rule of law, and Russia's integration in more comprehensive political, economic, scientific and security structures constitute interrelated processes;
31. Expresses its deep concern at the situation in Chechnya and deplores that no mention of the conflict was made in the Presidency conclusions;
32. Urges the Russian authorities, therefore, to allow unfettered international monitoring in the republic, to halt attempts to forcibly return Chechen displaced persons and to undertake serious action to address, investigate and condemn all human rights violations committed in the republic; calls on the Council to make further efforts to facilitate a peaceful settlement of the conflict;

China

33. Deeply regrets that the European Council has invited the General Affairs and External Relations Council to re-examine the question of the embargo on the sale of arms to China without any evaluation of the human rights situation in this country;

34. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.