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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Commission statement

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

by Karl Erik Olsson and Nicholas Clegg

on behalf of the ELDR Group

on the WTO agriculture negotiations

European Parliament resolution on the WTO agriculture negotiations

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions of 18 November 1999, 13 March 2001, 25 October 2001 and 13 December 2001,
 - having regard to the negotiation mandate of the European Commission,
 - having regard to the EC's proposal for modalities in the WTO agriculture negotiations as adopted by the General Affairs Council of 27 January 2003,
- A. whereas agriculture is one of the most problematic sectors in world trade owing to its strategic importance to all States and the distortion of world markets caused by export subsidies,
- B. whereas most of the developing countries have their highest comparative advantage in agricultural production and whereas the WTO rules should not hinder their benefiting from it,
- C. whereas liberalisation of the world market will inevitably increase the price level of agricultural commodities to the benefit of farmers around the world,
- D. whereas the Commission's proposals for the WTO negotiations on agriculture were unanimously supported by Member States in the General Affairs Council,
- E. whereas the Union needs to reform the agricultural trading system further, while recognising the need for special treatment of developing countries, especially the most fragile economies, and ensuring that concerns such as the environment, rural development and animal welfare are taken into account,
- F. whereas the key elements of the EU's proposals are that import tariffs should be cut by 36%, that export subsidies should be reduced by 45% and that trade-distorting domestic farm support should be reduced by 55%, provided that the burden is shared equally, amongst developed countries in particular,
- G. whereas the proposal includes specific actions to give developing countries better terms as well as emphasising the importance of addressing non-trade concerns such as the environment, rural development and animal welfare,
1. Supports the proposal adopted for modalities in the WTO agriculture negotiations;
 2. Emphasises the role of the two strongest trading blocks – the EU and the USA – in providing leadership through far-reaching proposals in the process of world trade liberalisation and phasing out export subsidies;

3. Repeats its demand that future agreements must not pose a threat to the survival of the European model of agriculture and the multifunctional role of agriculture;
4. Emphasises the need further to develop non-trade-distorting support mechanisms in the CAP;
5. Notes that the enlargement of the EU increases its agricultural production potential; emphasises that a functioning world market creates new export possibilities for increasing production; opposes any new trade barriers erected as a result of the enlargement;
6. Considers that differentiation of traded goods should be possible not only on the basis of product quality, but also on that of the production method;
7. Calls for a new multilateral framework to incorporate appropriate provisions to guarantee that account is taken of the public's demands regarding food quality and safety, environmental protection and animal welfare; regrets that proposals for the promotion of animal welfare in international trade do not go far enough;
8. Takes the view that the EU should take a firm stand against the United States' newly increased and more distorting types of farm support; insists that the EU must defend its right to define the criteria for precaution in food safety;
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.