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B7-0130/2012

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Question for Oral Answer B7-0101/2012

pursuant to Rule 115(5) of the Rules of Procedure

on the 6th World Water Forum taking place in Marseille on 12-17 March 2012  
(2012/2552(RSP))

**Richard Seeber, Sophie Auconie, Daciana Octavia Sârbu,  
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy, Michèle Rivasi, Miroslav Ouzký, Sabine Wils**  
on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food  
Safety

**European Parliament resolution on the 6th World Water Forum taking place in Marseille on 12-17 March 2012 (2012/2552(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the 6th World Water Forum taking place in Marseille on 12-17 March 2012,
- having regard to the final declarations of the first five World Water Forums, held in Marrakech (1997), The Hague (2000), Kyoto (2003), Mexico City (2006) and Istanbul (2009),
- having regard to UN General Assembly resolution 64/292 of 28 July 2010 on the human right to water and sanitation and UN Human Rights Council resolution 15/9 of 30 September 2010 on human rights and access to safe drinking water and sanitation,
- having regard to the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 8 September 2000, which set out the Millennium Development Goals as objectives established jointly by the international community for the elimination of poverty, and provided for the halving by 2015 of the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation,
- having regard to the third UN World Water Development Report, entitled ‘Water in a Changing World’,
- having regard to the resolution on water pollution adopted by the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in Budapest (16-18 May 2011),
- having regard to Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy<sup>1</sup> (‘the Water Framework Directive’),
- having regard to its resolution of 29 September 2011 on developing a common EU position ahead of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to its resolutions of 12 March 2009 on water in the light of the 5th World Water Forum in Istanbul on 16-22 March 2009<sup>3</sup> and of 15 March 2006 on the Fourth World Water Forum in Mexico City (16-22 March 2006)<sup>4</sup>,
- having regard to the question of 25 January 2012 to the Commission on the 6th World Water Forum in Marseille, 12-17 March 2012 (O-000013/2012 – B7 0101/2012),

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> P7\_TA(2011)0430.

<sup>3</sup> P6\_TA(2009)0137.

<sup>4</sup> P6\_TA(2006)0087.

- having regard to Rules 115(5) and 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas almost half of the developing world's population lacks sanitation facilities, over 800 million people still use unsafe drinking water sources, and inadequate access to safe water and sanitation services and poor hygiene practices cause the death of more than 2.5 million children every year;
- B. whereas water management impacts directly on human health, energy production, agriculture and food security, and effective water management is a fundamental precondition for poverty reduction;
- C. whereas deforestation, urbanisation, population growth, biological and chemical pollution and climate change put increased pressure on the availability and quality of safe and secure water resources, as well as causing increased risks of water-related extreme events, and poor populations are the most vulnerable to and least capable of adapting to these trends;
- D. whereas water is geographically very unequally distributed and is often best managed with a 'multi-level governance' approach that emphasises the role of regional and local authorities;
- E. whereas, in its resolutions on the 4th and 5th World Water Forums, Parliament called on the Commission and the Council to encourage EU local authorities to devote a proportion of the levies collected from users for the supply of water and sanitation services to decentralised cooperation measures, and whereas, despite the fact that action in this area would result in increased access to water and sanitation for the poorest people, such demands have not given rise to any action;
- F. whereas water infrastructure systems are often inadequate in developing countries and outdated in developed countries;
- G. whereas new technological developments have the potential to achieve increased water efficiency and sustainability, and can be used in particular to the advantage of developing countries;
- H. whereas the Water Framework Directive established a framework to protect and restore clean water in the EU and to ensure its long-term, sustainable use;
- I. whereas good water status is best achieved by reducing discharges, emissions and losses of pollutants to the environment;
- J. whereas the proposed new EU frameworks for the Common Agricultural Policy and Cohesion Policy, in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, have advocated a mainstreaming of environmental and climate issues;
- K. whereas the World Water Forum, which meets every three years, provides a unique platform where the water community and policy and decision makers from all regions of the world can come together, debate and attempt to find solutions to achieve water security;

- L. whereas the 6th World Water Forum, whose theme is ‘Time for solutions’, has identified 12 key priorities for water action, grouped into three strategic directions, namely ‘ensure everyone’s well-being’, ‘contribute to economic development’ and ‘keep the planet blue’, as well as three ‘conditions for success’;

### **Ensure everyone’s well-being**

1. Declares that water is a shared resource of humankind and, therefore, should not be a source of profit and that access to water should constitute a fundamental and universal right; welcomes the recognition by the United Nations of the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, as derived from the right to an adequate standard of living; calls for all necessary efforts to be made to guarantee access to water to the most deprived populations by 2015;
2. Calls on the Commission and Member States to reinforce their commitment to achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in the field of water and sanitation, and also to take into account the relevant outcomes of the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development; stresses that the World Water Forum debate should aim at strategies and solutions for agricultural and economic development that can guarantee a high level of water availability and quality;
3. Underlines the need to make concrete commitments towards the promotion and protection of water resources, especially in light of the upcoming Rio+20 conference;
4. Considers public health and environmental protection as priorities for any water management policy; stresses the fundamental role of the protection of drinking water resources for human health; calls for the planning and implementing of water measures at river basin scale covering the entire hydrological cycle; points out that water pollution should be tackled at source, limiting the amount of hazardous substances that enter the environment and drinking water resource zones; calls for the implementation of the ‘polluter pays’ principle;
5. Underlines the role of water for peace and cooperation; calls for the conclusion and implementation of international agreements for the shared management of transboundary surface waters and groundwater, drawing populations and administrations together to ensure the sustainable management of water resources and as a safeguard against local and international conflicts;

### **Contribute to economic development**

6. Stresses the need to balance water uses to ensure water demand and availability as well as quality, in particular in developing countries; calls for the adoption of integrated water resource management plans together with land planning at the international, national and local scale;
7. Calls for public and private investment in research into and development of innovative technologies for water in all fields; encourages the use of new water technology, equipment and facility in agriculture, to produce sufficient and safe food in a sustainable way, using water more efficiently and making better use of non-conventional water

sources, including the reuse of treated wastewater for irrigation and industrial purposes;

8. Calls for the removal of barriers which prevent the transfer of knowledge and technology relating to water conservation, water collection, irrigation techniques, groundwater management, treatment of waste water etc.;
9. Emphasises the importance of water efficiency; calls for more efficient water usage especially in sectors where most water is used, such as the agricultural sector, as it is within these sectors that major efficiency gains can be made; calls also for minimum efficiency requirements to be set for products with major water consumption implications that are placed on the EU market, also taking into account the related energy saving potential;
10. Stresses that the sustainable use of water is as much an economic necessity as an environmental necessity; calls for increased transparency in water pricing schemes;

### **Keep the planet blue**

11. Stresses that water is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, which could lead to a decline in the quantity and quality of water available, particularly drinking water, as well as to a rise in the frequency and intensity of floods and droughts; calls for climate change adaptation and mitigation policies to take due account of the impact on water resources; underlines the importance of risk prevention, mitigation and response strategies to prevent water-related extreme phenomena;
12. Calls on all countries to set, by 2015, a quantitative target for the reduction of chemical and biological pollution from urban wastewater and land-based activities, in order to protect and restore water quality and to support the sustainability of water resources and ecosystems; reminds the Member States of their obligations under the Water Framework Directive to achieve good water status by 2015; calls on the Member States to take all the necessary measures and to make sufficient funding available to reach these water quality targets;

### **Conditions for success**

13. Encourages the development of a hydrological knowledge base shared at global and EU level; calls for the development of key global indicators for water quality, quantity, availability and affordability, as well as indicators for water efficiency at river basin level;
14. Supports the development of integrated river basin management plans at global level; stresses the primary role of river basin management plans for the implementation of EU water policy under the Water Framework Directive; underlines the fundamental role of regional and local authorities in tackling global water issues in a cost-efficient way, and in preventing corruption;
15. Calls on the Commission, on behalf of the European Union, and the Member States to accede to the 1997 United Nations Convention on International Watercourses and to promote the entry into force of the amendments to the 1992 Helsinki Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, in order to

extend the scope of this instrument beyond solely the UNECE countries, and to encourage wider ratification of the Protocol on Health and Water to the 1992 Helsinki Convention, with a view to promoting the coordinated and fair management of water in national and international basins;

16. Stresses the need to achieve a thematic concentration of available financing on water issues and to mainstream the issue of water into all policy areas, including all EU financial and legal instruments; highlights that addressing water challenges is integral to the successful transition to and functioning of a 'green economy';
17. Reiterates its call on the Commission and the Council to encourage EU local authorities to devote a proportion of the levies collected from users for the supply of water and sanitation services to decentralised cooperation measures; draws attention to the principle of '1% solidarity for water' adopted by some Member States as a possible example to promote;
18. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of Member States and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.