



Delegation to the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly

DLAT_PV(2022)1019

MINUTES

of the meeting of 19 October 2022, from 17.00 to 19.00

Strasbourg

The meeting opened at 17.10 on 19 October 2022, with Javi López (Chair) presiding.

1. Adoption of draft agenda

OJ – PE624.872v01-00

The draft agenda was adopted.

2. Approval of minutes of:

- 06 July 2022

PV – PE624.870v01-00

The minutes were approved.

3. Chair's announcements

MEP Javi López indicated that he had received a response from Vice-President / High Representative Josep Borrell to the resolutions adopted during the EuroLat plenary of the previous April in Argentina.

4. Exchange of views on trade relations with Latin America, with the participation of:

- Paolo Garzotti, Head of the Trade Relations with Latin America Unit, DG TRADE, European Commission (*via video conference*);

Observing that the European Union had important cultural relations with Latin America, as well as being the principal investor in the region, he expressed regret at the lack of attention being paid to the region at political level. The Latin American region was made up of a large group of medium-sized importing countries. They were also suppliers of agricultural products and raw materials, not only petroleum and iron, but also copper and lithium, which were necessary for the green transition.

Chile was the world's largest copper exporter, and Argentina and Chile were key producers of lithium. Argentina had the world's second largest gas reserves.

With the adoption of the 'Road to 2023' strategy, the Commission and the European Union had been seeking to forge closer links with Latin America, firmer and deeper relations with like-minded countries being an EU priority. Furthermore, Latin America had aligned itself with the EU in backing UN resolutions regarding Russian attacks on Ukraine.

At the same time, in view of the growing influence clearly being exercised by China in the region, this could not be taken for granted.

For this reason, it had been crucial for the Commission President, in her State of the Union address, to underline the importance of strengthening trade links with Latin America.

Mr Garzotti went on to stress the importance of implementing the Association Agreements with Mexico and Chile, recalling that they contained not only trade but also important political and cooperation provisions, adding that his negotiations with the Chilean Government on updating the agreement had made good progress.

They should in fact have been completed the previous October but had been delayed by the national elections and the constituent procedure. He anticipated that they would be wound up by the end of the year, pointing out that this was the first agreement to include chapters on gender issues and sustainable food supply.

With regard to the EU-Mexico Agreement, the legal framework provisions were being discussed. Despite delays, the agreement was expected to be finalised in the second half of 2023.

Regarding the agreement with Mercosur, he highlighted a number of environmental concerns raised by certain EU Member States. An additional instrument was also being drawn up to ensure transparency and a firmer commitment to trade and sustainable development.

Javi López, Chair, expressed regret at the lack of interpretation into Spanish during part of Mr Garzotti's speech.

Speakers: Paolo Garzotti, Enikő Győri, Leopoldo López Gil, Mónica Silvana González, Jordi Cañas, Ibán García Del Blanco, Javi López.

5. Exchange of views on Russia's presence in Latin America and the Caribbean, with the participation of:

- Carlos Malamud, senior researcher at the Elcano Royal Institute; Professor of American History at the National University of Distance Education (UNED) (*via video conference*);

- Anna Ayuso Pozo, senior researcher at the Barcelona Centre for International Affairs (CIDOB) (*via video conference*);

Carlos Malamud gave an historical overview of the Russian presence in Latin America, with particular reference to its alliances with Cuba and Nicaragua dating from the Soviet era. Although Russia had distanced itself from Cuba and Latin America in general following the fall of the USSR, the situation changed in 2007 with the incoming Nicaraguan regime under the presidency of Daniel Ortega providing an opportunity for Russia to expand its economic and political activities in the region. As a result, Putin had become the chief guarantor of the Nicaraguan regime. In 2008, Nicaragua had been one of the only countries in the world to recognise the ‘independence’ of South Ossetia. Following Putin’s annexation of Crimea in 2014 Bolivia, Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela opposed the UN vote of censure (out of 11 countries to do so, four were Latin American).

Russia now clearly enjoyed the explicit and implicit support of a number of countries in the region. Furthermore, no Latin American country had joined those imposing sanctions on Russia. Among the countries explicitly supporting Russia, Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela were also major purchasers of Russian arms. Mexico, Brazil and Argentina were giving it tacit support, as evidenced by a visit to Moscow by the presidents of Mexico and Argentina in February, shortly before the war. In the meantime, President Obrador of Mexico had signed a cooperation agreement with Russia for the exploration and peaceful use of space.

In April 2022, Mexico had abstained during the vote to suspend Russia from the UN Human Rights Council. Bolivia, Cuba and Nicaragua had voted against. Venezuela had lost its UN voting rights, while Brazil, Mexico and El Salvador had also abstained. The speaker took the view that, if a vote were held now, the outcome would still be the same, notwithstanding the worsening situation in Ukraine.

Furthermore, the President of Mexico, López Obrador, had opposed the proposal to nominate Volodymyr Zelensky for the Nobel Peace Prize. More encouragingly, on the other hand, Chilean President Gabriel Boric had expressed his disapproval of the invasion of Ukraine.

The EU should accordingly cooperate with civil society in a bid to strengthen its relationship with the countries supporting Ukraine.

The speaker also wondered aloud what would happen if the hostilities were to continue, forcing Russia to increase its economic dependence on China, possibly being reduced to the status of a Chinese colony and, in view of its geographical proximity, becoming one of the main exporters of raw materials and fuel to China. This would effectively reduce the importance of Latin America as a trading partner to Asia, leaving more room for the European Union to step in as a trading partner.

Anna Ayuso Pozo observed that the Russian presence in Latin America had always been, at least in part, of a geopolitical nature, designed to consolidate its position on the international stage as a perceived global power. This, she observed, had become less a question of ideology in the countries concerned and more a desire to counterbalance traditional US hegemony, with Russia being perceived as a suitable political and economic ally. For Russia on the other hand, alliances with the Latin American regions represented a bulwark against NATO interference, particularly in the areas of the former USSR still regarded by Russia as falling within its area of influence.

At the same time, it was necessary to distinguish between, on the one hand, Latin American countries with strong links to Russia, such as Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua, which were its historical allies, and, on the other hand, non-aligned countries such as Brazil that were seeking Russian support for their multipolar political and economic stance.

However, Russia had managed to gain only a limited economic foothold in the region, concentrated mainly in Mexico and Brazil. In general, Latin America regarded the Russian-Ukrainian conflict as a distant problem that was not perceived as a danger to it but rather a problem confronting Europe and NATO.

Carlos Malamud underlined the importance of putting into perspective the outcome of the UN vote on Russian aggression against Ukraine. Most countries had voted in favour of condemning Russia during the UN Summit. However, taking into account the number of abstentions, the gap between the number of Latin American countries in favour and those against was not so significant. At the same time, it was necessary to factor in the size, surface area, GDP and population of each of the countries casting their votes (rather than simply calculating one country one vote).

Ana Ayuso concluded by underlining the importance of the Association Agreements, which contained political and cooperation provisions and were not just economic in nature.

Speakers: Carlos Malamud, Anna Ayuso Pozo, Leopoldo López Gil, Maria Manuel Leitão-Marques, Jordi Solé, Mónica Silvana González, Clara Aguilera.

6. Preparations for the next EuroLat meeting, to be held from 30 November to 2 December in Brussels

The Chair indicated that the next EuroLat meeting, would be held from 30 November to 2 December in Brussels. He confirmed having invited President Roberta Metsola and Vice-President and High Representative Josep Borrell to attend. He announced that there would be a group photograph. Work was ongoing on the draft declaration, which would address issues such as the consequences of the invasion of Ukraine, the strengthening of peace and multilateral relations, the food crisis, the energy crisis and macroeconomic distortions.

Civil society representatives would be invited to attend.

7. Other business

8. Date and place of next meeting

The meeting closed at 18.57.

**ПРИСЪСТВЕН ЛИСТ/LISTA DE ASISTENCIA/PREZENČNÍ LISTINA/DELTAGERLISTE/
 ANWESENHEITSLISTE/KOHALOLIJATE NIMEKIRI/KATASTAΣH ΠΑΡΟΝΤΩΝ/RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/
 LISTE DE PRÉSENCE/POPIS NAZOČNIH/ELENCO DI PRESENZA/APMEKLĒJUMU REĢISTRS/DALVIŲ SĀRAŠAS/
 JELENLÉTI ÍV/REĢISTRU TA' ATTENDENZA/PRESENTIELIJST/LISTA OBECNOŚCI/LISTA DE PRESENÇAS/
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Javi López (P), Jordi Cañas (VP), Sandra Pereira (VP)
Членове/Diputados/Poslanci/Medlemmer/Mitglieder/Parlamendiliikmed/Bouλευτές/Members/Députés/Zastupnici/Deputati/Deputāti/Nariai/Képviselők/Membri/Leden/Posłowie/Deputados/Deputati/Jäsenet/Ledamöter
Clara Aguilera, Marc Angel, Ibán García Del Blanco, Mónica Silvana González, Alicia Homs Ginel, Maria-Manuel Leitão-Marques, Sabrina Pignedoli, Jordi Solé, Veronika Vrecionová
Заместници/Suplentes/Náhradníci/Stedfortrædere/Stellvertreter/Asendusliikmed/Αναπληρωτές/Substitutes/Suppléants/Zamjenici/Supplenti/Aizstājēji/Pavaduojantysnariai/Póttagok/Sostituti/Plaatsvervangers/Zastępcy/Membros suplentes/Supleanți/Náhradníci/Namestniki/Varajäsenet/Suppleanter
Nicolás González Casares, Enikő Győri, César Luena, Inma Rodríguez-Piñero

209 (7)	
216 (3)	
56 (8) (Точка от дневния ред/Punto del orden del día/Bod pořadu jednání (OJ)/Punkt på dagsordenen/Tagesordnungspunkt/Päevakorra punkt/Σημείο της ημερήσιας διάταξης/Agenda item/Point OJ/Točka dnevnog reda/Punto all'ordine del giorno/Darba kārtības punkts/Darbotvarkēs punktas/Napirendi pont/Punt Aģenda/Agendapunt/Punkt porządku dziennego/Ponto OD/Punct de pe ordinea de zi/Bod programu schôdze/Točka UL/Eesityslistan kohta/Punkt på föredragningslistan)	
• Paolo Garzotti, Head of the Trade Relations with Latin America Unit, DG TRADE, European Commission (via video conference);	Item 4
• Carlos Malamud, senior researcher at the Elcano Royal Institute; Professor of American History at the National University of Distance Education (UNED) (via video conference) • Anna Ayuso Pozo, senior researcher at the Barcelona Centre for International Affairs (CIDOB) (via video conference);	Item 5

Наблюдатели/Observadores/Pozorovatelé/Observatører/Beobachter/Vaatiejad/Παρατηρητές/Observers/Observateurs/Promatrači/Osservatori/Nověrotáji/Stebétojai/Megfigyelők/Osservaturi/Waarnemers/Obserwatorzy/Observadores/Observatori/Pozorovatelia/Opozovalci/Tarkkailijat/Observatörer

По покана на председателя/Por invitación del presidente/Na pozvání předsedy/Efter indbydelse fra formanden/Auf Einladung des Vorsitzenden/Esimene kutsel/Mε πρόσκληση του Προέδρου/At the invitation of the Chair/Sur l'invitation du président/ Na poziv predsjednika/Su invito del presidente/Pēc priekšsēdētāja uzaicinājuma/Pirmininkui pakvietus/Az elnök meghívására/ Fuq stedina tāc-'Chairman'/Op uitnodiging van de voorzitter/Na zaproszenie Przewodniczącego/A convite do Presidente/La invitación președintelui/Na pozvanie predsedu/Na povabilo predsednika/Puheenjohtajan kutsusta/På ordförandens inbjudan

Съвет/Consejo/Rada/Rådet/Rat/Nõukogu/Συμβούλιο/Council/Conseil/Vijeće/Consiglio/Padome/Taryba/Tanács/Kunsill/Raad/Conselho/Consiliu/Svet/Neuvosto/Rådet (*)

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Paolo Garzotti

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EESC Josep Puxeu

Други участници/Otros participantes/Ostatní účastníci/Endvidere deltog/Andere Teilnehmer/Muud osalejad/Επίσης παρόντες/Other participants/Autres participants/Drugi sudionici/Altri partecipanti/Citi klátesošie/Kiti dalyviai/Más résztvevők/Parteicipanti ohra/Andere aanwezigen/Inni uczestnicy/Outros participantes/Altı participantı/Iní účastníci/Drugi udeleženci/Muut osallistujat/Övriga deltagare

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S&D	Luca Fossati
Renew	Itziar Munoa Salaverria, Ursula Pondelek
ID	Monia Albertini
Verts/ALE	
ECR	
The Left	Simon Neyhouser
NI	

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David Chico Zamanillo, Stefania Boschetto	
Сътрудник/Asistente/Asistent/Assistent/Assistenz/Боŋόć/Assistant/Assistente/Palīgs/Padējējas/Asszisztens/Asystent/Pomočník/ Avustaja/Assistenter	
Rebecca Alrutz, Rocio Rodrigo Muñoz	

- * (P) = Председател/Presidente/Předseda/Formand/Vorsitzender/Esimees/Πρόεδρος/Chairman/Président/Predsjednik/Priekšsēdētājs/
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