

PROPOSITION DE RESOLUTION

avec demande d'inscription au débat sur des problèmes d'actualité,
urgent et d'importance majeure

50 du règlement

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au nom du groupe Green/EFA

sur the year 2000 computer problem and possible Europe-wide
consequences

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the responsibilities of the EU in the areas of major accidents and their consequences, relating to radioactive and chemical pollution, and its role in nuclear safety under the Euratom Treaty,

- having regard to the report of Parliament on the 'Year 2000 problem, which requested a 3 monthly update from the Commission, as well as various reports from the Commission, and the conclusions and the resolution of Council, as well as the work of the G8 and the IAEA,

- having regard to the update given by the Commission to the Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy Committee on November 8th,

A. whereas the reports to date give a rather mixed picture of confidence within the EU, with some exceptions regarding infrastructure, but serious concerns to the East, the subject of ongoing serious concern by the Commission and Council,

B. noting growing concern worldwide that the failure of computers to recognize the year 2000 date change could affect control systems at nuclear and chemical plant, and off-site electrical supplies from the networks to such plant, as well as command, control, communications and intelligence systems of nuclear forces,

C. whereas there is increasing acceptance about the infeasibility of bringing all such computerised systems to year 2000 computer compliance,

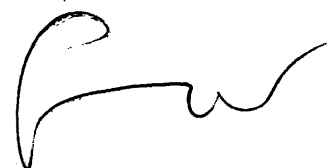
D. noting that as a result, according to respected analysts, there exists a small but unacceptable risk of serious nuclear or chemical accidents, especially in Central and Eastern Europe, and the NIS, which could have Europe-wide or even global consequences, especially where nuclear plant use plutonium fuel, and similar risk of an accidental nuclear war,

E. whereas there are hundreds of operating nuclear plants and research reactors and thousands of chemical plants around the globe, and the United States and Russia currently maintain thousands of nuclear weapons on "hair-trigger" alert, such that they can be fired within minutes,

F. whereas data errors have caused mishaps and near accidents at nuclear power stations in the past, and false signals of missile attacks have triggered a process in which national leaders had to decide in only a few minutes whether to fire nuclear weapons,

G. noting that all EU Member States have either nuclear power or research reactors or chemical plant, and two

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European Union member states have nuclear forces which may be affected by year 2000 computer problems,

H. welcoming the efforts of governments and plant operators around the world to tackle the problem, and in particular the UK government's announcement that it has relaxed the notice to fire of its nuclear forces from minutes to days,

I. noting that in 1996 the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons recommended that all nuclear forces be taken off hair-trigger alert, preferably by physical separation of the warheads from delivery vehicles,

J. noting that a number of resolutions in the UN General Assembly, notably Resolution 53/77Y "Towards a nuclear weapon- free world: the need for a new agenda", have called for nuclear forces to be de-alerted,

1. Calls on all governments to instruct the operators of all nuclear or chemical plant not able to verifiably demonstrate their complete Y2K compliance, that such plant must be at least temporarily shut down at the Millennium, permanently in the case of nuclear plant, and that in any case stand-by electrical power should be available for up to 60 days at all nuclear plant to operate cooling pumps and safety systems, and longer term back-up must be provided for spent fuel cooling ponds;

2. Calls on the OECD Members to urgently provide specific resources to Central and Eastern European countries and the NIS for the purpose of replacing their nuclear power plants at the Millennium and in the medium term, either to fund alternative fuels or electricity imports, especially where the dependence on nuclear power is high, for example in Lithuania;

3. Calls on all governments of the nuclear weapon states plus India, Israel and Pakistan to take whatever steps are necessary to absolutely avoid any accidental or unintended firing of weapons, as soon as possible, and at latest before 31 December 1999, by taking them off 'alert' as a first step towards de-commissioning these illegal weapons;

4. Calls on all non-nuclear Member States of the European Union to make vigorous representations to that effect, and to use the opportunity of the Telecommunications Council on November 30, and ultimately the Helsinki European Council, to do so;

5. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the UN Security Council, the IAEA, the governments of the Member States and the applicant states and the OECD, and the governments of Russia, China, Israel, India, Pakistan, Argentina, Brazil, Kazakhstan, Mexico, South Africa, Switzerland, and Ukraine.