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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Commission statement

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

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on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

on the third Asia-Europe meeting (ASEM 3) in Seoul

European Parliament resolution on the third Asia-Europe meeting (ASEM 3) in Seoul

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission working document 'Perspectives and priorities for the ASEM Process (Asia-Europe Meeting) into the new decade' (COM(2000) 241),
 - having regard to its resolutions of 4 May 1999 on the Commission working document on Perspectives and Priorities for the ASEM Process¹ (SEC(97)1239 – C4-0667/97) and of 12 March 1998 on the ASEM process (Europe-Asia relations)²,
- A. whereas the ASEM process aims in principle at building a comprehensive partnership among equal partners, based on the promotion of the three pillars of political dialogue, the deepening of economic relations and the reinforcement of cultural links between the peoples; whereas, however, in practice the efforts made in the past have essentially concerned the economic pillar alone,
- B. whereas greater attention is being paid today to the political pillar, but essentially only in relation to security questions, at a time when new challenges are facing Asia-Europe relations in more general terms in the political sector, as well as in relation to economic, financial and social issues and in the context of cultural and intellectual links directly involving the citizens of the two regions,
- C. whereas social questions, in particular, do not always receive the priority attention which they merit,
- D. whereas these new challenges should effectively be discussed within the ASEM process (and in particular at the Seoul Summit), by updating the cooperation framework established in London in April 1998,
- E. whereas the ASEM process is characterised furthermore by its informality, its emphasis on equal partnership and its high-level focus (including summits at heads of state and government level),
- F. whereas it is important that the ASEM process does not overlap with or replace other existing bilateral and multilateral relationships, such as the ASEAN-EU dialogue, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conferences (PMC),
- G. having regard to the importance of an ongoing North-South dialogue on the Korean peninsula,

¹ OJ C 279, 1.10.1999, p. 5

² OJ C 104, 6.4.1998, p. 106

- H. whereas the European Parliament and the national parliaments of the EU Member States have been informed only minimally and too late on the ASEM process, the issues involved and the preparation of the Seoul summit; whereas the Asia-Europe interparliamentary dialogue (ASEP) has also been neglected,
- I. whereas, for the occasion of ASEM 3, trade unions, associations and NGOs from Europe and Asia (notably from South Korea) are preparing a civil society forum, which will be held in Seoul and will consider Europe-Asia relations in the era of economic globalisation, means of achieving peace while responding more effectively to popular needs, and the fight against unemployment and poverty,
1. Calls on the Commission to take more forcible action on the commitment made in its working document 'Perspectives and Priorities for the ASEM Process (Asia-Europe Meeting) into the new decade' ('... the active involvement of civil society in the dialogue between our two regions should be further encouraged'); calls on it, therefore, to take account of the proposal emanating from civil society for a social forum in the context of the ASEM process;
 2. Considers, with regard to political and security issues, that clear commitments to human and social rights, democracy, good governance and the rule of law should be included in key ASEM documents, and that the so-called 'new security' issues (such as combating international crime and terrorism) should also be discussed in the context of this dialogue, as well as cooperation on analysis, planning and training in relation to conflict prevention and peacekeeping;
 3. Stresses, with regard to economic and financial issues, that both regions should aim at drawing all the necessary lessons from the 1997 financial crisis concerning both the importance and the means of acting to combat speculative capital movements, evaluating the damaging effects which IMF policies have had on people's living conditions and still-fragile democratic processes, and assessing the potential consequences of an unstable euro and the rise in petrol prices, with a view to improved future coordination of governments' efforts; in this context, a broader social dialogue should be conducted including subjects such as sustainable development and the protection of the environment, as well as employment and social security; cooperation on the reform of IFIs should also be envisaged;
 4. Recognises, in the cultural and intellectual field, the importance of enhanced dialogue and networking among civil society groups (including local government, social partners and NGOs), and supports the perspective of reaching a political commitment on producing a fivefold increase of student exchanges between our two regions within ten years; supports the activities conducted by the ASEF (Asia-Europe Foundation);

With regard to interparliamentary dialogue

5. Points out that interparliamentary dialogue is an essential element of any political dialogue, and, in this regard, calls for a clear role for the European Parliament and the national parliaments of Asia and Europe in the ASEM process; considers that the ASEP (Asia-Europe parliamentary meetings) process should be resumed.