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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Council and Commission statements

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

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on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

on the use of depleted uranium munitions (Balkans syndrome)

European Parliament resolution on the use of depleted uranium munitions (Balkans syndrome)

The European Parliament,

- A. deeply shocked by the consequences of the use of depleted uranium munitions by the NATO countries during the Gulf War (1991), in Bosnia (1994-5) and in Kosovo (1999) with the many deaths of military personnel and inhabitants of the bombarded areas and environmental damage, which completely undermines the concept of a 'clean war',
- B. whereas the UNEP assessment team led by Pekka Haavisto which took samples at sites in Kosovo hit by DU bombs found that these sites were contaminated and still have traces of radioactivity, and pointed out that the possibility could not be ruled out that the health of some individuals might have been seriously affected by this type of munition,
- C. whereas the political and military authorities in the NATO member countries are aware of the risk presented by DU munitions to the military personnel handling them and the civilian population of the areas bombarded,
- D. whereas the Rand Corporation, an expert US body conducting strategic research for the Pentagon, acknowledged in spring 2000 that DU munitions cause radiological damage to the lungs and digestive system and clinical damage to the kidneys,
- E. whereas certain EU Member States, France, the UK, Greece and Portugal, possess or have already tested DU munitions,
- F. whereas in 1991 during the Gulf War and in 1999 during the Kosovo conflict parliamentarians, political parties, trade unions, associations and journalists had condemned the harm caused to military personnel and civilian populations by the use of DU weapons,
- G. having regard to the establishment by the French Government of an information mission on the health risks linked to the Gulf syndrome,
- H. whereas the harm to human health and the environment caused by the use of depleted uranium has been added to the damage caused by exposure to toxic chemicals, (solvents, benzene, fuel) and by the bombardment of chemical plant and power stations,
- I. whereas the contamination by depleted uranium may progressively spread beyond the areas hit and have an impact lasting for decades,
 - 1. Expresses its solidarity with the families of the civilian and military victims and all those who are continuing to suffer since the end of the conflict;
 - 2. Repeats its condemnation of the UN bombardment in the Balkans, especially those using depleted uranium munitions;

3. Draws attention to the responsibility borne by the political and military authorities of the NATO countries and Mr Solana, former Secretary-General of NATO, who decided to use DU weapons despite the serious risks to the health of military personnel and civilian populations, of which they were fully aware;
4. Condemns NATO's delay in giving the UNEP assessment team the list of the sites hit in Kosovo by depleted uranium weapons;
5. Considers that it is not nearly enough to set up a special committee to study within NATO the effects on the health of soldiers sent to the Balkans; considers that this decision is a delaying tactic by NATO which is refusing to bear its responsibilities and reveal the whole truth;
6. Calls for a ban on the manufacture, testing, use and sale of depleted uranium munitions and calls for the signature of an international treaty banning them;
7. Calls on the Secretary-General of the UN to conduct an independent, comprehensive and transparent inquiry into the impact of the use of depleted uranium on health and the environment and to provide full information on the situation in order to protect the population of the affected areas;
8. Calls on the NATO member countries to implement a medical surveillance programme for armed forces personnel who had taken part in operations in the Balkans, members of humanitarian organisations who worked there and the civilian population of the regions hit;
9. Calls on the NATO member countries to bear the cost of compensating the families of the victims, action to decontaminate the polluted areas and to prevent the spread of the contamination;
10. Instructs its President to consider the desirability of setting up a parliamentary committee of inquiry which might in particular be instructed to examine the application of the Euratom Directive laying down Basic Safety Standards for protection against radiation;
11. Calls on the Commission to take greater account of health and environmental aspects in the aid programmes to the Balkan countries;
12. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the Member States and the Secretaries-General of NATO and the United Nations.