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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the European Council report and Commission statement

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

by Andrew Nicholas Duff, Jules Maaten, Cecilia Malmström and
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on behalf of the ELDR Group

on the results of the European Council meeting in Ghent on 19 October 2001

European Parliament resolution on the results of the European Council meeting in Ghent on 19 October 2001

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the declarations of the informal European Council of 19 October 2001,
 - having regard to the statements by the European Council Presidency and the European Commission on the results of the Ghent meeting,
- I. FOLLOW-UP TO THE SEPTEMBER 11 ATTACKS AND THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM
1. Declares its solidarity with the United States and shares its objectives of fighting terrorism;
 2. Reiterates the importance of close consultation and cooperation with the United States and gives its full support to the targeted and proportionate action taken in the context of legitimate defence; hopes for the full participation of the United Nations in the resolution of the crisis and in assisting with the establishment of a new regime in Afghanistan;
 3. Strongly believes that emergency humanitarian aid to Afghanistan is a priority for the EU and welcomes the initiative undertaken by the Commission to mobilise without delay aid amounting to more than € 320 million;
 4. Expresses its deep concern at the difficulties of transporting humanitarian aid into Afghanistan and supports the efforts of the UN specialised agencies, of the ICRC and of all humanitarian organisations in seeking practical and flexible solutions;
 5. Regrets that the leaders failed to give effect to the freezing of assets of terrorists as proposed by the Commission and expeditiously supported by the European Parliament;
 6. Expresses its concern at the damage done to humanitarian relief agencies in Taliban-controlled areas of Afghanistan and strongly urges all military forces in the country to ensure the safety of the representatives and assets of such agencies;
 7. Calls on the neighbouring countries of the region to facilitate by all means possible the humanitarian operations for hosting Afghan refugees, and calls on the Council and the Commission to do everything possible to assist these countries in doing so;
 8. Supports the points agreed by the Council regarding the Union's future proceedings on Afghanistan once it is freed of the al-Qa'ida network and its terrorists;
 9. Calls for the establishment in Afghanistan of a stable, legitimate and broadly representative government expressing the will of the people and taking into account ethnic diversity, gender balance and respect for fundamental rights;

10. Urges the full involvement of the UN and the European Commission in coordinating international responses to bio-terrorism;
11. Calls on the Union to intensify and strengthen its relations with the countries neighbouring Afghanistan such as Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Iran, Pakistan and India in order to contribute to the stability of the whole region, and to provide appropriate budgetary resources;
12. Invites the Council and its Presidency to continue a close and coordinated political dialogue with its Arab and Muslim partners and to consult the European Parliament;
13. Insists on the urgent need to relaunch the Middle East peace process without preconditions, and calls on the Council to work closely with the US, Russia and all players in the region to bring the parties to the conflict to work towards the establishment of a viable Palestinian state and the right of Israel to live in peace and security;
14. Welcomes the fact that the Presidency of the European Council is instructed, together with the High Representative and the Commission, to visit the countries directly concerned, and that the Union will attach special importance to reviving economic activity and investment in Palestinian territory;
15. Strongly believes that the Union should be more effective in developing the Common Foreign and Security Policy and making the European Security and Defence policy operational as soon as possible, and hopes that a firm decision on the readiness of the European Rapid Reaction Force can be reached at the Brussels-Laeken European Council;
16. Judges the separate meeting by three larger Member States just before the European Council to be injudicious;

II. PREPARATION FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF THE EURO

17. Urges all Member States to make final, major efforts to provide even more information to citizens about the implications of the changeover to the euro, with advice on how the citizens of the euro-zone can best help to make the changeover smooth;
18. Recommends continued study and dissemination of best practice in the euro zone, so as to deal with ATMs, opening hours, 'piggy banks', hoarded money, sales and other practical issues in the most efficient way;
19. Stresses that the euro will facilitate cross-border comparison of prices, increase competition and generally encourage industry to improve quality and lower prices; calls nevertheless on both the private and the public sectors not to abuse people's lack of experience of the euro in the initial phase by introducing hidden price hikes;

III. ENLARGEMENT

20. Considers that Accession Treaties must be concluded on a case-by-case basis reflecting the progress made by each of the candidate countries, in order that the European Union's historic commitments may be fulfilled;

21. Reiterates its calls to the Commission and the governments of the Member States and the candidate countries to do everything in their power to ensure that the prospect of citizens of the candidate countries participating in the 2004 European elections becomes a reality;
22. Invites both Member States and candidate countries to intensify the public information campaign on enlargement in order to increase the awareness of Europe's citizens of the advantages and obligations of EU membership;

IV. THE FUTURE OF THE UNION AND THE LAEKEN DECLARATION

23. Welcomes the progress towards the drafting of a successful Laeken Declaration and the broad agreement between the leaders on the holding of a Convention to prepare future reforms of the EU;
24. Looks forward to the start of the work of the Convention in spring 2002 and welcomes the decision to conclude its work in time for the IGC to accomplish the treaty reforms in good time for the European Parliament election campaign in June 2004;
25. Welcomes the fact that the public demonstrations in Ghent were peaceful, and hopes that all future meetings of the European Council will be managed in a similar way;
26. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.