

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

1999



2004

Session document

27 June 2002

B5-0384/2002

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Council and Commission statements

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

by Max van den Berg and Francisca Sauquillo Pérez del Arco

on behalf of the PSE Group

on the United Nations World Food Summit

European Parliament resolution on the United Nations World Food Summit

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the conclusions reached by the 183 nations attending the United Nations World Food Summit in Rome, Italy, between 10 and 13 June 2002, and to those previously reached by 185 nations at the 1996 World Food Summit,
- having regard to the Development Council Declaration of 8 November 2001 on the Preparations for the UN Conference on Financing for Development (FfD) and to the conclusions reached by EU Foreign Ministers on 17 June 2002 in Luxembourg on the World Food Summit and the World Summit on Sustainable Development and by the fifteen EU Heads of State or Government meeting in Seville, Spain from 21 to 22 June 2002,
- having regard to Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- having regard to Articles 24 and 27 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- having regard to the G-8 Summit held in Kananaskis, Canada, between 26 and 28 June 2002, which will focus on G-8 cooperation with Africa,
- having regard to the United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 2 to 11 September 2002,
- having regard to the European Parliament report of 6 April 2000 on the proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion on behalf of the European Community of the Food Aid Convention 1999,
- having regard to its resolution of 1 March 2001 on the European Community's development policy and to previous resolutions on debt reduction for developing countries and the coherence of EU policies, particularly its resolutions of 7 February 2002 and 25 April 2002 on the Monterrey Summit,
- having regard to the Development Council Declaration of 8 November 2001 on the Preparations for the UN Conference on Financing for Development (FfD), confirming 'the great importance which the European Union attaches to the success of FfD and the World Summit for Sustainable Development' to be held in Johannesburg in September 2002,
- having regard to the conclusions reached at the UN Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey, Mexico, between 18 March and 22 March 2002,
- having regard to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly's Resolution on security of food supplies adopted on 1 November 2001,

- A. whereas every human being has the right to have access to healthy and nutritional food and a fundamental right to be protected from famine,
- B. whereas water and biodiversity must be considered inalienable public assets,
- C. whereas 'food security and sustainable rural development strategies' are one of the six priorities of the European Union's development policy, and whereas they should be promoted by all international economic and financial institutions,
- D. whereas hunger and malnutrition do not result from the fact that there is simply not enough food in the world, but whereas they are, above all, the consequences of poor distribution and supply systems,
- E. whereas six nations in Africa - Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique - face an immediate crisis, with 14 million people suffering from food shortages and famine,
- F. whereas the 1996 World Food Summit in Rome set the deadline of 2015 by which to halve the number of people in the world - currently estimated at 815 million - who suffer from hunger, and whereas that deadline has now been declared unrealistic by both the Director-General of the FAO, Jacques Diouf, and the United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan,
- G. whereas the 2002 World Food Summit in June has to be considered a failure, and whereas the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg in September 2002, focussing on the need to integrate sustainable development and environmental policies, constitutes the key to progress towards action instead of unrealistic commitments;
- H. whereas the 2002 World Food Summit, inter alia, stated that:
- food should not be used as an instrument for political and economic pressure,
 - the commitments made under the Rome Declaration and Plan of Action approved in 1996 [namely support for food security, international agricultural trade, the sustainable management of natural resources, and rural development] should be reaffirmed,
 - hunger eradication is a vital step in alleviating poverty and inequality,
 - the difficulties faced by countries with economies in transition in addressing food security needs whilst conducting market-oriented reforms should be recognised,
 - food assistance plays an important role in situations of humanitarian crisis,
 - trade is a key element in achieving world food security,
- I. whereas the 2002 World Food Summit noted with concern the acute threat of the HIV-AIDS pandemic and the incidence of malaria, tuberculosis and other diseases in particular,

- J. whereas the Commission should commit itself to a coherent EU strategy as regards its agricultural and fisheries policies, its development policy and its trade policy within the framework of the WTO,
- K. whereas the President of the European Commission, Mr Romano Prodi - in a letter to the President-in-Office of the Council, Mr José María Aznar - wrote on 19 June 2002: We cannot allow the multilateral agenda to derail because of the US Farm Bill and developing countries' doubts about European sincerity in granting market access, finance and to reduce our trade distorting subsidies. The recent FAO World Food Summit in Rome was a disappointment. A failure in Johannesburg could have wider repercussions on growth and trade',
- L. whereas an International Alliance against Hunger and Poverty will require reform of EU development policy, which is funded through two separate instruments (the European Development Fund and the EU budget), so as to ensure better coordination in policy formulation, parliamentary scrutiny and implementation between the Commission, Parliament and the Member States and other international organisations,
- M. whereas EU leaders at the European Council in Seville concluded by:
- ◆ stressing the need for a successful outcome at the World Summit on Sustainable Development by adopting 'in Johannesburg clear and concrete political commitments with a precise time frame',
 - ◆ welcoming 'increased ODA commitments announced by Member States and other donor countries in Monterrey',
 - ◆ calling for 'successful replenishment of the Global Environment Facility',
 - ◆ supporting 'initiatives, particularly in the areas of drinking water and sanitation, energy (including renewable energy) and health',
 - ◆ underlining 'the importance, in the context of sustainable development, of maintaining the objective of food security as a basic component of the fight against poverty',
1. Considers that the decisions taken at Monterrey should have led to a renewed effort by all nations attending the World Food Summit in Rome and considers insufficient and harmful to the credibility of the international agenda in the field of development a simple reiteration of the commitments made by Heads of State in 1996; considers it now more than ever necessary to accelerate action to achieve the target of halving the number of people suffering from hunger by 2015 and warns that, without clear commitments on the basis of a clear timetable at the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, these commitments will appear ridiculous;
2. Regrets that only two out of the EU's fifteen leaders - the Prime Ministers of Spain, Mr José María Aznar, and of Italy, Mr Silvio Berlusconi - were able to attend the World Food

Summit in Rome and urges all EU Leaders to attend the Johannesburg Summit in September;

3. Whilst recognising the special legal status of UN meetings, regrets that the President of Zimbabwe - Robert Mugabe - was able to use the UN World Food Summit in Rome to flout EU smart sanctions and finds it particularly ironic that President Mugabe should address the conference on food security whilst his own ZANU-PF policies are destroying Zimbabwe's agricultural base;
4. Welcomes the conclusion reached at the 2002 World Food Summit that food should not be used as an instrument for political and economic pressure and warns the Zimbabwe Government to respect this commitment given in Rome when it is distributing food aid to millions of Zimbabweans;
5. Urges the European Council and Commission - working with the United Nations World Food Programme and other international donors - to draw up an emergency plan to tackle the growing crisis of famine and food shortages now facing some 14 million Africans;
6. Reaffirms its commitment to poverty eradication, sustainable development and the achievement of the development goals set out at the Millennium Summit and at the UN conferences; warns, however, that current data indicates that the number of undernourished is falling at an average rate of only 6 million per year - far below the rate of 22 million per year needed to reach the World Food Summit target - and calls on the Council and Commission to present a clear proposal for action;
7. Notes that hunger is both the cause and effect of extreme poverty which requires action to encourage the development of local markets, to ensure access to adequate and safe food and water and to focus on the need to improve agricultural productivity in developing countries by giving priority to local practices, which are adapted to local conditions and to the processing of food products locally, as well as ensuring that the developing countries are free to choose the agricultural technologies which they wish to use;
8. Warns that the global cost of not eradicating hunger - in terms of conflict, recurrent emergencies, international crime, the drugs trade, economic stagnation, illegal immigration and premature death - is enormous and requires the granting of development aid to be made subject to certain conditions instead of being misused to fight migration towards wealthier countries;
9. Deplores instances where the governments of food-insecure countries have let military expenditure prevail over the acute nutritional needs of their inhabitants;
10. Reaffirms that food aid must be reserved for emergencies and must be granted solely in the form of donations, with supplies being purchased locally whenever possible, while respecting food balances and habits, and that such food aid must be accompanied by measures which allow this aid to be withdrawn while encouraging the reconstruction of the productive potential of the regions affected;

11. Urges concrete action which will recognise:

- the need to translate commitments into action,
- the importance of food security and the economic, social and political cost of not eradicating hunger,
- the place of food security in poverty reduction strategies,
- the need to ensure efficient resource allocation to tackle short-term shortages,
- the need for longer-term investment to focus on sustainable agricultural development,

12. Calls on the industrialised nations to explore new and innovative ways to promote cooperation and technology transfer in the areas of agriculture, water management and sanitation, whilst the developing countries should be free to choose which technologies they want to use;

13. Underlines the need to encourage micro-finance and low-interest credit to help rural economic development for both farmers, local fisheries, fish farming, and the encouragement of local food processing facilities in developing countries and calls for the promotion of and respect for non-industrial fishing and local aquaculture;

14. Considers that the FAO should play an active role in deciding and implementing the international legal instruments required for the management and control of exploitation of shared resources,

15. Calls on the EU to ask its industrial partners to open up their markets to products from the 49 least-developed countries in particular and to comply with the 'Everything But Arms' initiative, deploras the catastrophic impact of the recent US Farm Bill on the agricultural production of these countries and calls on the EU to ensure through the DOHA process that agriculture in these countries may be protected against low world market prices;

16. Believes that the European Union's food safety standards are increasingly creating a barrier to trade for developing countries and calls on the EU both to agree reasonable derogation in this area and to give financial support to enable such countries to meet EU criteria;

17. Believes that a binding international code of conduct on the right to adequate food should be drawn up as soon as possible;

18. Emphasises the need to apply the rule of law, democracy and good governance when issues such as land reform are being determined;

19. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the European Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the EU Member States and applicant countries, the Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, the Secretaries-General of

the United Nations, African Union, Commonwealth, OECD and Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Presidents of the United Nations General Assembly, United Nations Security Council, United Nations Economic and Social Council, European Investment Bank, World Bank and International Monetary Fund, and the Directors-General of the Food and Agriculture Programme [FAO], World Food Programme [WFP] and United Nations Development Programme [UNDP].