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*Session document*

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B5-0618/2002

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

further to the Commission statement

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

by Françoise Grossetête, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Francesco Fiori, James E.M. Elles, Ilkka Suominen, W.G. van Velzen, Othmar Karas and Hans-Gert Poettering

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on the Commission's legislative and work programme for 2003

**B5-0618/2002**

**European Parliament resolution on the Commission's legislative and work programme for 2003**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Rule 57 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the timetable and arrangements agreed between the Commission and Parliament concerning the European Union's legislative programme,
  - having regard to the presentation by President Prodi on 27 February 2002 of the Commission's annual political strategy for 2003 and the ensuing debate on 20 March 2002,
  - having regard to the Communication from the Commission (COM(2002) 427) on stocktaking of the follow-up to the Annual Policy Strategy for 2003,
  - having regard to the Commission's legislative and work programme (COM(2002) 590),
  - having regard to the presentation by the Commission of that programme on 20 November 2002 and the ensuing debate,
- A. whereas 2003 will be a decisive year of transition towards an enlarged European Union with 25 members,
- B. whereas this legislative programme is particularly significant as it is the first after the reform of the Council's operation, following the conclusions of the Seville European Council, which stated that the Council would during December 2002 adopt an operational legislative programme for the following year covering the two six-month periods of the presidencies concerned,
- C. whereas the annual legislative programme should be an interinstitutional instrument that is essential for the Union's efficient operation,

**General considerations**

1. Welcomes the three political priorities already defined in the document on the Commission's annual political strategy for 2003, namely making a success of enlargement, safeguarding the stability and security of European Union citizens, and setting up a sustainable and inclusive economy;
2. Underlines the importance of joint programming and close cooperation between the three Community institutions, to fulfil the objectives set out in the work programme as presented in the course of 2003;

3. Asks to be consulted if the Commission should intend to make reasoned alterations to its work programme in the course of 2003;
4. Points out that the structured dialogue was devised as the first stage in a process of interinstitutional cooperation designed to specify more clearly the Commission's political priorities for the coming year;
5. Considers that the 'Annual Political Strategy for 2003' presented by the Commission in February 2002 has not been sufficient to launch a (fruitful) dialogue (in the best possible conditions) between parliamentary committees and Commissioners;
6. Considers that the results of this structured bilateral dialogue – as a first exercise in progressive legislative planning – are rather half-hearted and that the dialogue has not contributed practically to the planning of the legislative and work programme for 2003;
7. Considers that it will be necessary to start looking into ways of improving the dialogue;
8. Notes that the preliminary presentation of an outline programming document on each specific legislative area for the coming year, by each Commissioner, would help substantially to improve the structure of the dialogue between Commissioners and the parliamentary committees;
9. Insists on the establishment of a single procedure, in which the European Parliament must be fully involved through an interinstitutional agreement, for a consistent forward look by the European Union; considers that the programming exercise of the Commission, based on the Annual Policy Strategy, and that of the Council, to be based on a three-year strategic programme, must be integrated;
10. Insists that the programming exercise gives due emphasis to the completion of legislative procedures already under way; considers that this is particularly relevant to the delivery of the 10-year modernising strategy agreed by the European Council at Lisbon in March 2000;
11. Welcomes the fact that the Council has recently stated that, starting in 2003, it will not consider substantial regulatory proposals without proportionate impact assessments, other than in exceptional circumstances; at the same time, regrets the fact that the Commission will not fully introduce impact assessments until the year 2004;

### **Making a success of enlargement**

12. Underlines the importance of correct application of the *acquis communautaire* to the enlarged European Union and supports any initiative that seeks to fulfil that objective;
13. Underlines the importance of ensuring that the *acquis communautaire* is available in the codified version in all the languages of the candidate countries, to ensure that it is applied by all the authorities in those countries;

14. Calls for the structures to be put in place in the candidate countries to extend the Community's anti-fraud arrangements, to include the creation of anti-fraud units to collaborate with the European Anti-fraud Office (OLAF), and the enhanced coordination of national audit bodies with the European Court of Auditors;
15. Supports the Commission in its determination to start recruiting officials from the new Member States as soon as possible;
16. Calls for the conditions to be put in place to ensure that there are harmonised information and education practices for consumers so as to safeguard the unhindered operation of the internal market after enlargement;
17. Considers that, from the quality point of view of enlargement, priority should be given to food security and integrating the environmental dimension into all other policies;

### **Safeguarding stability and security**

18. Welcomes the commitment of the European Commission to make progress towards the establishment of a European area of freedom, security and justice as one of the key objectives for 2003;
19. Considers that the improvement of security should be perceived globally and should apply not only to the field of civil protection, but also to the areas of food supply, industry, transport and energy (particularly nuclear energy) and to regional planning, so as to take account of the public health and environmental aspects;
20. Reminds the Commission of Parliament's repeated demands concerning the Communitisation of Europol, and the necessity for this institution to work in close cooperation with OLAF;
21. Welcomes the proposed measures to tackle the financing of terrorism and reaffirms the need to use all legal means to combat it; notes that effective implementation of criminal sentences in the Union, and the efforts to combat and prevent crime and terrorism, are essential to achieve a European area of security, freedom and justice, while at the same time ensuring the protection of individual rights;
22. Urges the Commission not to take any decision concerning the creation of a European Prosecutor, before having the final conclusions of the Convention on that point;
23. Asks the Commission to adopt as soon as possible its proposals on common European immigration and asylum policies, based on minimum standards; points out that a clear distinction must be made between asylum seekers, people seeking international protection and migrant workers; notes, however, that the lack of progress in the Council in these matters seriously jeopardises the achievement of such common policies, especially after the ratification of Nice Treaty;
24. Stresses the importance of the European Union bringing forward legislative or other

measures in order to set up an integrated system of border management, including measures to fight illegal immigration;

### **Setting up a sustainable and inclusive economy**

25. Welcomes the initiatives that the Commission is planning to take to improve legislation, particularly in the area of governance and impact analysis, in accordance with the ideas put forward by the Commission, Council and Parliament during negotiations on the interinstitutional agreement on better lawmaking;
26. Asks the Commission to be as rigorous as possible when drafting the spring report for the European Council (Lisbon process); considers the targets set out in Lisbon, Stockholm and Barcelona as being of the utmost importance for improving Europe's competitiveness in the global economy;
27. Welcomes the Commission's performance as far as the Financial Services Action Plan is concerned; points out that extension of the Lamfalussy procedure is premature until it has been tried and tested, in view of the fact that not one directive has gone through all the stages of this new process yet; reminds the Commission that further progress needs to be achieved, as far as the introduction of a formal call-back procedure for Parliament in a revised Lamfalussy procedure is concerned, which would also involve amendment of Article 202 of the Treaty;
28. Regrets that the proposal for a European Parliament and Council directive on the recognition of professional qualifications, COM(2002) 119, does not comply with the Commission's own ideas for better lawmaking, in view of its complexity and the inconsistencies that it contains;
29. Considers that there is a need to reduce the number of legislative acts by recasting and codifying them between now and 2004, and in any event in time to safeguard enlargement of the Union, to prevent an exponential increase in the body of law and an excessive workload in the area of transposition;
30. Calls on the Commission to introduce an exhaustive and systematic codifying and recasting programme, providing for constant updating, safeguarded primarily by identifying and eliminating laws that have been explicitly or implicitly repealed;
31. Wishes the Commission to draw up a plan of action for harmonising private and commercial law, on the basis of Article 95 of the Treaty;
32. Draws attention to the importance of the principles of the internal market in the field of consumer protection as elsewhere, to ensure that consumer protection legislation does not adversely affect the internal market and the free exchange of goods and services; in this context calls on the Commission and the Member States to step up their efforts to finally establish the single market in the field of services;
33. Considers that to translate the commitments made at Kyoto into adequate law, there is a

need to fulfil the conditions necessary to meet the Union's objectives in the preparatory meetings of the forthcoming COP;

34. Welcomes the Commission's intention to draw up and introduce seven thematic strategies, as indicated in the Sixth environmental action programme, and proposals concerning the integrated product policy and the new strategy for chemical substances;
35. Regrets the uneven treatment of the method of open coordination, which is only referred to in the case of the Social Policy Agenda;
36. In supporting the Commission's intention to promote a more effective method of open coordination in the field of employment policy, highlights the absence of any proposals for a more flexible labour market, which is a precondition for increasing employment opportunities;
37. Believes the Commission should prepare its own evaluation on how a move from EU-15 to EU-25 at the beginning of 2004 will affect the general thrust of the external policy of the Union, with particular reference to maintaining the end-2004 deadline for the conclusion of negotiations of the Doha trade round;
38. Regrets the absence of specific reference to creating a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area, following on from the Ministerial Conference in April 2002 in Valencia, and the absence of a reference to creation of a Euromed Parliamentary Assembly;
39. Welcomes the firm stand of the Commission concerning the Stability and Growth Pact, as well as its intention to strengthen the efficiency and the credibility of the pact;
40. Regrets that no mention of the tax package (code of conduct on business taxation, directive on interests and royalties between associated companies, and the directive on taxation of savings) is made in the Commission's programme; draws attention to the need to conclude agreements with a number of third countries, in order to be able to finalise the adoption of the directive on taxation of savings;
41. Regrets that no progress was made recently in the field of VAT as far as the adoption of the country of origin principle is concerned; urges the Commission to take a bolder approach as far as taxation issues are concerned;
42. Urges the Commission to take further steps leading to harmonisation of the tax base wherever this is necessary for the proper functioning of the internal market, whilst not trying to harmonise tax rates;
43. Considers that all possible measures in the field of taxation must be taken, while keeping as an objective the reduction of the overall tax burden, as well as reducing the administrative burden associated with taxation;
44. Calls on the Commission to submit as soon as possible an action plan on corporate governance, taking account of the results of the Winter report;

45. Calls for a follow-up to EU and Member States' activities with regard to the International Criminal Court, including a regular progress report;
46. Calls for further strengthening of the Transatlantic Dialogue;
47. Calls on the Commission to take the necessary measures in the prospect of negotiating and concluding association agreements with the countries of Central America and the Andean Community within the scheduled time limits;
48. Underlines the need to continue and step up the European Union's contribution to crisis management and stability in Afghanistan, the Middle East and the Balkans;
49. Calls on the Commission to publish a Green Paper on the new frontiers of the enlarged European Union and relations with the new neighbouring countries;
50. Calls for initiatives to be taken to start giving thought to the industrial aspects of the European defence policy;
51. Emphasises the critical importance of prioritising the internal reform programme of the Commission both in the context of enlargement and also of the efficient and effective execution of the Union's work, and specifically, the need to press for the adoption of the new Staff Regulations, the safeguarding of the independence of OLAF, the improved use of evaluation reports, the introduction of a binding code of conduct for the appointment of senior officials, the publication on the Internet of the financial interests of Commissioners and Directors-General, and the implementation of measures to encourage more openness and transparency when awarding contracts and grants;
52. Calls on the Commission to commit itself firmly, and to take all necessary measures to make the Doha WTO Round the 'development round', in order to ensure that the positive effects of globalisation are shared evenly between the North and the South, while respecting their cultural diversity and environmental heritage; in this context firmly supports the notion of special and differential treatment for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in the Doha Round;
53. Welcomes the Commission's declared intention to effectively address the eradication of poverty by committing itself firmly to the Millennium Development Goals, in particular those relating to health and education, and by reducing the debt burden in the context of the HIPC initiative; calls, however, on the Commission to make development aid and debt relief conditional on respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law, which constitute the essential elements of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement, as well as on good governance, which constitutes a fundamental element of the same Agreement, in order to ensure the best possible and efficient use of EU taxpayers' money;
54. Calls on the Commission to promote the establishment in the tax systems of each Member State of a 'Give As You Earn' scheme, which would enable EU taxpayers to make voluntary, tax-deductible contributions for charitable causes, a minimum amount of

which would be paid into a special development fund;

55. Calls on the Commission to present a new proposal, as soon as possible, for a regulation based on Article 191, making provision for establishing the statutes of political parties at European level, including rules on their funding;
57. Is broadly satisfied with the proposals in the area of European transport policy; calls, however, on the Commission, following the European Court of Justice judgment of 5 November 2002 against eight Member States for having concluded 'open sky' agreements with the United States, to submit as soon as possible a communication on the future establishment of bilateral agreements in the field of air transport;
58. Wishes the staff reform to be adopted within the scheduled time frame, underlines its call for integrating the secretariats of the political groups in the Staff Regulations, while safeguarding the necessary flexibility and mobility for their functioning, which is political rather than administrative;
59. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions, and the Parliaments of the Member States.