

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

1999



2004

---

*Session document*

16 January 2003

B5-0060/2003

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Commission statement

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

by Benedetto Della Vedova and others:

Generoso Andria, Paolo Bartolozzi, Roberto Felice Bigliardo, Emma Bonino, André Brie, Renato Brunetta, Marco Cappato, Paulo Casaca, Michael Cashman, Raffaele Costa, Chris Davies, Gianfranco Dell'Alba, Giuseppe Di Lello Finuoli, Andrew Nicholas Duff, Olivier Dupuis, Carlo Fatuzzo, Jas Gawronski, Fiorella Ghilardotti, Christopher Huhne, Giorgio Lisi, Mario Mantovani, Claudio Martelli, Mario Mauro, Pietro-Paolo Mennea, Domenico Mennitti, Reinhold Messner, Marco Pannella, John Purvis, Amalia Sartori, Olle Schmidt, Charles Tannock, Franz Turchi and Maurizio Turco

on world hunger and the elimination of barriers to trade with the poorest countries

**European Parliament resolution on world hunger and the elimination of barriers to trade with the poorest countries**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the outcome of the World Food Summit held in Rome in June 2002,
  - having regard to the declaration adopted by the Ministerial Conference in Doha,
  - having regard to Regulation (EC) No 2820/98 applying a multiannual scheme of generalised tariff preferences (Generalised System of Preferences – GSP), as amended by Council Regulation (EC) No 416/2001 (the ‘Everything But Arms’ initiative),
- A. whereas, as made clear at the recent FAO World Food Summit in Rome, 900 people around the world die of hunger every hour and 800 million people, including 300 million children, do not have sufficient food, and whereas the FAO has pointed out that the situation is worsening in the poorest countries of southern Africa,
- B. whereas a recent World Bank study has shown that the liberalisation of international trade would be the only means of enabling over 320 million people to escape poverty by the year 2015, and whereas an Oxfam study has shown that a 1% increase in the volume of world exports accounted for by sub-Saharan Africa would generate additional annual income for those countries of some US\$ 70 billion, which is five times what they receive in aid, and would reduce by 20% (the equivalent of 60 million persons) the number of their inhabitants living below the poverty line,
- C. whereas growing inclusion in world trade over recent decades has enabled many countries, in particular in Asia, to launch and consolidate their own development and to reduce poverty drastically; and whereas, by contrast, in those countries, in particular in sub-Saharan Africa, which are excluded from international trade the scourges of hunger and poverty are continuing to spread,
- D. whereas the Commission’s recent ‘Everything But Arms’ initiative, which is aimed specifically at the 48 poorest countries in the world and which is intended to eliminate the duties imposed on their exports, excluding arms, to the EU, is due to be implemented over a period extending to the end of 2009,
- E. emphasising that ‘time’ is a crucial factor in any form of political action, but above all for the millions of people living in poverty, so that delaying measures which can help to combat that poverty will deny them real hope in their daily fight for survival,
- F. whereas, according to World Bank estimates, the high level of duties imposed by the developed countries on the products exported by the developing countries (which, according to Oxfam, are on average four times higher than those imposed by the developing countries on the products exported by the developed countries) cost the

developing countries around EUR 100 bn, or twice what they receive in aid,

- G. having regard to the fundamental role played by the primary sectors, and agriculture in particular, in the economies of the poorest countries,
1. Believes that the development of international trade has been a practical and effective instrument in the campaign to bring about a drastic reduction in poverty, and can be even more so in the future; deplores the fact that hitherto, as a result of the protectionist policies implemented by the rich countries, the poorest countries have been denied access to rich markets and, by extension, a possible way out of poverty;
  2. Reiterates the pressing need for the EU to eliminate immediately tariff barriers to and quotas for imports of products from the least-developed countries (LDCs) and to reduce across the board, if necessary unilaterally, the duties imposed on products from the developing countries, as a first step towards establishing a timetable for their elimination;
  3. Takes the view that the timetable for the implementation of the 'Everything But Arms' initiative – which, in view of the urgent, desperate nature of the fight against poverty, is excessively and unjustifiably long, in particular as regards commodities such as rice and sugar, the duties on which will be reduced by 50% only by the end of 2007 and completely eliminated only by the end of 2009 – seriously undermines its effectiveness; calls, therefore, for the relaunch of the 'Everything But Arms' initiative on the basis of its full implementation in 2003 and its extension to cover a larger number of countries;
  4. Takes the view that – in keeping with the ministerial declaration adopted in Doha, intended as the starting signal for a development round and which sets the objective of establishing a 'fair and market-oriented trading system' in the agricultural sector – an effective policy to combat hunger and underdevelopment presupposes a radical reform of the agricultural policies implemented by the developed countries, which give rise to surplus production capacity and, in particular through the granting of export subsidies, serious instances of dumping to the detriment of farmers from poorer economies;
  5. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments of the Member States.