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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

by W.G. van Velzen

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on the outcome of the European Council (Brussels, 20/21 March, 2003)

European Parliament resolution on the outcome of the European Council (Brussels, 20/21 March, 2003)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission's Report to the Spring European Council on the Lisbon strategy of economic, social and environmental renewal¹, and to other documents submitted to the meeting,
 - having regard to its resolution of 12 February 2003 on the preparation of the Spring European Council,
 - having regard to the Presidency Conclusions of the Brussels European Council of 20/21 March 2003 concerning the Lisbon strategy and its implementation,
- A. whereas the intended purpose of the Spring European Council is to take stock, and to give political impetus to the agreed priority areas in the Lisbon agenda for the year ahead, which is now the fourth year, coinciding with the run-up to enlargement,
- B. whereas the outcome of the war in Iraq, together with the humanitarian and reconstruction needs, is as yet unknown, and the consequences for the world economy and the multilateral trading system have yet to unfold,
1. Considers that the European Council was right to seek to maintain focus on the Lisbon strategy, since the causes of economic stagnation, high unemployment rates and weak industrial and consumer confidence in Europe lie principally in past failures to reform labour, product and capital markets rather than in the current international situation;
 2. Welcomes the way in which the European Council has reviewed the strategy and put emphasis on competitiveness and on laying the basis for a more operational approach towards achieving the economic, social and environmental objectives for 2010;
 3. Reiterates that, to restore credibility to the Lisbon strategy, this must be followed through by determined action, especially by larger Member States, to advance in parallel the four priority objectives laid down by the European Council, and which the European Parliament can support;
 4. As regards raising employment and social cohesion, welcomes the endorsement of a results-oriented European Employment Strategy, and in particular the reference to combating undeclared work; welcomes the setting up of a European Employment Taskforce to identify the problems in reforming national labour markets which must be addressed without delay;

¹ COM(2003) 5

5. Supports the European Council's commitment to keep up the momentum of pension reform by Member States, given the interaction between pension reform, employment policy, sound public finances and social cohesion;
6. Welcomes the re-orientation of the strategy to give priority to innovation and entrepreneurship, thereby recognising that remedial action must be taken to create the conditions which ensure, inter alia, that our scientists and innovative companies stay in Europe; believes, moreover, that the European Council could have put more emphasis on the role of SMEs in creating jobs, and been more self-critical as regards the failures of Member States to implement the European Charter for Small Enterprises;
7. Backs the European Council in pressing forward with the programmes for connecting Europe and strengthening the internal market in areas such as transport, energy, telecoms and financial services; at the same time, notes that the European Council has required sectoral Councils to report in the run-up to the 2004 meeting on progress made in transposing the measures they have adopted, and trusts that this belated measure will incite Member States to remedy with vigour their failures to transpose in good time, and in line with better regulation principles;
8. Welcomes the linkage made in the priority of environmental protection for growth and jobs, thus recognising the contribution environmentally friendly technology can make to creating new jobs and to improving the quality of life; recalls that the environmental indicators as developed by the Commission and included in the list of structural indicators should be further elaborated and implemented with quantified sectoral targets;
9. Encourages Member States, when carrying out the EU's climate change policy aimed at implementing the Kyoto Protocol, to follow the same integrated approach adopted at EU level; asks the Commission and the Greek Presidency to give high priority to urging the Russian Federation to ratify the Kyoto Protocol;
10. Welcomes the European Council conclusions regarding the need to implement all measures aimed at enhancing maritime safety at the earliest opportunity; backs all internationally brokered initiatives seeking to increase the current ceiling on compensation for the victims of pollution and those seeking to afford better protection for coastal states, in particular through the establishment of specially sensitive areas;
11. Regrets the way in which the section 'Decisions and Actions for the Next Twelve Months' fails to take into account the role of the European Parliament both in its detailed legislative programming, especially under codecision, and in the drawing up and adoption of further Action Plans (Entrepreneurship; Better company law and corporate governance; R and D Action Plan; Environmental technologies), especially where these are expected to lead to proposed Community legislation accompanied by comprehensive impact assessments;
12. Points out that much has to be done to ensure that the Lisbon strategy (as supplemented

by the Göteborg environmental dimension), the Council's forthcoming multi-annual strategic programme and the Commission's annual policy strategy are dovetailed together in a way which brings the accession countries fully into the common endeavour, and therefore calls for a detailed roadmap from the Commission indicating how the agreed objectives will be reached by 2010;

13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the European Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States and accession countries.