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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Commission statement

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

by Francis Wurtz

on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

on preparation for the 5th WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancun

European Parliament resolution on preparation for the 5th WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancun

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the 5th Ministerial Conference to be held in Cancun, Mexico from 10 to 14 September 2003,
 - having regard to its resolution of 25 October 2001 on openness and democracy in international trade,
 - having regard to its resolution of 12 February 2003 on the WTO agricultural trade negotiations,
 - having regard to its resolution of 12 March 2003 on the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) within the WTO, including cultural diversity,
 - having regard to the declaration adopted by ministers from the least developed countries in Dhaka on 2 June 2003,
 - having regard to the paper entitled ‘The Doha Agenda: Towards Cancun’ (TN/C/W/13), submitted to the WTO by 26 developing countries on 4 June 2003,
- A. whereas the WTO negotiations launched in Doha have been labelled the ‘Development Agenda’, since social movements and developing countries have pointed to the widening gap between rich and poor caused by the international trade system over which the WTO presides and by mass liberalisation,
- B. whereas, however, the promises made with regard to the developing countries have hitherto proved hollow, and whereas there has been no progress on any aspect of the timetable for the Development Agenda established for the period between Doha and Cancun – access to medicines, implementing issues, special and differential treatment or agricultural trade,
- C. whereas if the Commission, rather than focusing its efforts on these issues, continues to insist on the inclusion of new topics such as investment, competition and government procurement, it will merely add to the legitimate discontent of developing countries,
1. Regrets the failure to keep to the timetable and the lack of progress in the negotiations on the issues of greatest importance to developing countries;
 2. Calls on the Commission and Member States to focus on the Development Agenda and on protecting the well-being of populations;
 3. Opposes any new liberalisation process that is not accompanied by an assessment of its

impact on development and inequalities amongst and within countries; also opposes extending the WTO's mandate to new issues such as the Singapore issues, given the WTO's failure to prove that it can keep to its timetable and of deal with the issues entrusted to it in an appropriate and balanced fashion;

4. Considers it vital that the special and differential treatment clause for the developing countries should at last be given real substance at Cancun;
5. Believes that the European Union should ally itself more closely with the developing countries and defend their right to non-reciprocal relations with it under regional agreements such as the ACP-EU partnership agreements;

Public Health and TRIPS

6. Reiterates that the right to health must come before commercial interests and the profits of the major pharmaceutical companies;
7. Insists that, at Cancun if not before, the WTO must honour its promise on extending the benefits of the Doha declaration on TRIPS and public health to countries with little or no pharmaceutical industry, and deplores the blocking by the United States of an agreement on this accepted by all other WTO members;
8. Opposes the recent US moves to pressurise certain developing countries into renouncing their rights to import generic medicines;
9. Reiterates that to impose new constraints on the right of developing countries to tackle public health problems either by limiting the categories of illnesses or the categories of countries to which the compulsory import licence mechanism applies would violate the declaration and be justifiably seen by developing countries as evidence of bad faith;

Agricultural trade

10. Believes that the liberalisation of agricultural prices is leading to the collapse in the world prices, which are so low that neither farmers in the South nor those in the North can survive;
11. Believes that the agricultural negotiations must be thought out and conducted in such a way that they strengthen the social fabric and economic activity in rural areas, the environment, sovereignty and food safety in developing countries and in industrialised nations;
12. Believes that the major producer countries – including the USA and the Cairns Group – must show greater flexibility in order to restore the prospect of reaching agreement; deeply regrets the adoption by the United States of the Farm Bill, which provides for spectacular increases in agricultural subsidies and marks a step away from the undertakings set out in the Doha declaration to which the US signed up;
13. Believes that at Cancun the European Union must strive to contribute towards the abolition of all export subsidies in industrialised countries that lead to dumping and distort

markets in the developing countries;

14. Considers it vital that account be taken of the non-trade aspects of agricultural policies, including the issue of the multifunctionality of small-scale farming, consumer protection, public health and labelling; takes the view that, unless results are achieved in these areas, there should be no further access for imports to the European Union market;
15. Believes that further access to the EU market merely benefits distribution, trade and the food industry, whilst consumers and farmers in the least developed countries and the EU lose out; sees the need for the EU to be more selective and open its market to products that further sustainable development in poor countries;
16. Expresses its concern at the collapse in the prices of products that are vital to development, such as coffee; believes that the EU must defend the right to establish guaranteed-price mechanisms for products that are vital to development;
17. Considers it necessary to extend the scope of indications of geographical origin to protect product quality and certain specific production methods and to facilitate rural development; believes that the Commission ought to secure agreement on the establishment of a system of notification and registration of such products in addition to that for wines and spirits;

Precautionary principle

18. Believes that the precautionary principle as adopted at the Rio Environment Conference must be made explicit in WTO rules;
19. Asserts that it is the right – and indeed the duty – of any country not to import products that put the health of its population or the environment at risk; believes that it is the responsibility of the seller seeking additional profit to furnish proof that his product is harmless;
20. Condemns the US campaign at the WTO – including its complaint to the latter – aimed at foisting its GM products on countries that do not want them; deplores the forcible inclusion by the United States of such products in its food aid;

Services, GATS

21. Believes that it is not the Commission's role to encourage liberalisation and privatisation in the EU or in third countries, and reiterates its commitment to the public services, especially in areas vital to development such as access to water, the right to mobility and energy, public health and education; reiterates further its commitment to maintaining the exemption for culture;
22. Calls for a moratorium on the negotiations on services, and calls for the WTO first to enforce Article XIX of the GATS, which provides for a study into the impact of the liberalisation of services, and alongside this to implement the Doha Development Agenda;
23. Notes the fact that the Commission has excluded the audiovisual, health and education

sectors from its offers of liberalisation; nonetheless fears that these sectors may be opened up to liberalisation gradually, and opposes such a scenario; believes that all cultural sectors – including cultural, recreational and sports services – must be excluded from EU offers;

24. Hopes to see the European Union take steps at the United Nations to establish a definition of global public goods such as water, since they are vital to development and the well-being of all and cannot be hijacked for mercenary ends;

Democracy and transparency

25. Regrets the Commission's use of an outdated, pre-Seattle mandate for the Geneva and Cancun negotiations; believes that the Commission ought to seek a new mandate that takes account in particular of the EU's new undertakings, such as those given in Johannesburg, and of the new development priorities that are becoming increasingly evident;
26. Takes the view in this regard that the draft EU constitution should include a formal role for Parliament whenever international negotiations are opened;
27. Reiterates its calls for the democratisation of WTO procedures and its specific proposals in that regard, as contained in its resolution of 25 October 2001; insists that the Commission should ensure that these issues feature on the agenda at Cancun;
28. Insists on the need for democracy and transparency to govern the Cancun negotiations, in contrast to the events in Doha, which provoked discontent amongst a number of developing countries;
29. Asks that the specific calls by 22 developing countries in April 2002 for the democratisation of, and greater transparency in, the WTO's negotiating procedures be heeded;
30. Calls on the Mexican Government, as the conference host, fully to uphold the right of assembly and of democratic expression of the social movement and NGOs during the conference;

Global governance

31. Favours the democratisation of the international trading system and a realignment of the authority and force of norms of the WTO vis-à-vis those of other United Nations bodies with a view to ensuring that crucial issues such as health, work, the environment and development take precedence and thus constitute major aims that are put before trade;
32. Calls for the dispute settlement mechanism to be revised and democratised and for the issue of the hierarchy of norms and of the respective role of each of the United Nations agencies to be discussed and settled at the UN Assembly;
33. Expects the EU to contribute towards curbing the power of transnational companies and to support OECD and UN efforts to compel those companies to uphold human rights and the

rights of local communities;

New issues (Singapore issues)

34. Opposes extending the WTO's negotiating mandate to new issues such as investment, government procurement or competition;
35. Draws attention to the request formulated by African countries, presented by Mauritius, and recently by a group of 26 developing countries, not to include these new issues in the negotiations in this round;

Intellectual property – TRIPS

36. Supports the request by those African countries which have expressed opposition to the patenting of any living matter;
37. Expresses its concern about biopiracy and draws attention to paragraph 19 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration, which instructs the Council for TRIPS to clarify the relationship between the TRIPS Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity and the protection of traditional knowledge and folklore, whilst fully taking into account the development dimension;
38. Supports the various developing countries which have argued that licence applicants who make use of biological resources and traditional knowledge should make the source of the said resources and knowledge public and should demonstrate that they have obtained the necessary consent (PIC) and have met the requirements under national law with regard to profit-sharing;

Environment

39. Believes that WTO rules and decisions ought to support rather than undermine environmental protection aims and MEA effectiveness; considers paragraph 31(i) of the Doha Ministerial declaration to be too restrictive; believes that the Commission ought to take the initiative and propose a discussion on WTO-MEA relations outside the WTO, preferably under the auspices of the United Nations as the most neutral and appropriate forum for addressing those relations;

Social rights and basic employment rights

40. Considers it unacceptable that trade liberalisation continues to chip away at social rights, and indeed basic labour rights, the world over, thus giving rise in some instances to new forms of slavery;
41. Calls on all WTO members to adhere to ILO conventions on basic labour rights;
42. Believes that WTO rules and decisions ought to contribute towards respect for social rights and basic labour rights; calls on the WTO and the ILO to enter into contact under UN auspices with a view to making progress towards a realignment of the authority of each institution and of their rules;

Technology transfers

43. Considers that the EU ought to put forward new proposals in respect of technology transfers, with a view to bridging the gap between the industrialised nations and the developing countries;

Textiles and clothing

44. Expresses concern at the situation in the EU textile sector, a direct source of employment for more than 2.5 million people in the EU (post-enlargement); regrets the fact that gradual liberalisation, the end of the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing, the non-reciprocity of the sector and bilateral agreements resulted in the loss of 850 000 jobs between 1990 and 2001;
45. Favours a sectoral approach to negotiations for this sector, so as to guard against allowing one sector to be sacrificed to benefit another, and sees the need to ensure protection for the textile industry and its employment potential;
46. Calls for a thorough assessment of the impact of liberalisation and China's accession to the WTO; calls for the introduction of a Community programme for the sector, and for the least favoured regions in particular, to support research, vocation training and small and medium-sized enterprises;
47. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the WTO and the ACP.