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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 Reino Paasilinna, Riitta Myller and Ulpu Iivari

on behalf of the PSE Group

on the Second Northern Dimension Action Plan, 2004-2006

European Parliament resolution on the Second Northern Dimension Action Plan, 2004-2006

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission's Action Plan for the Northern Dimension in the external and cross-border policies of the European Union 2000-2003,
 - having regard to its resolution of 16 January 2003 on the Northern Dimension - New Action Plan 2004-2006,
 - having regard to the Commission's Communication of 11 March 2003 on Wider Europe - Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours (COM(2003) 104 final),
 - having regard to the Commission's Second Northern Dimension Action Plan, 2004-2006 (COM (2003) 343 final) of 10 June 2003,
 - having regard to the Commission's Communication of 1 July 2003 on 'Paving the way for a New Neighbourhood Instrument' (COM(2003) 393 final),
 - having regard to the Presidency Conclusions of 16-17 October 2003 on the Second Northern Dimension Action Plan, 2004-2006,
 - having regard to the joint statement of the EU-Russia Summit, held in Rome on 6 November 2003,
- A. whereas, since its creation in 1999, the Northern Dimension has proved efficient and of great, political, economic and social value, and whereas the region covered by the Northern Dimension Action Plan is one of the most challenging regions of Europe,
- B. whereas the principal objective of the future Northern Dimension policy will be to address the opportunities and challenges posed by the historic event of enlargement, which will extend the EU border with Russia and make Belarus and the Ukraine new neighbouring countries of the EU, and whereas several of the Northern Dimension partner countries will become members of the EU,
- C. whereas these new border regions have great human and economic potential and whereas, in this perspective, it will be important to strengthen efforts in the region to stimulate trade, investment and infrastructure, to exploit energy resources, to facilitate the movement of people and goods across borders while working closely together to combat organised crime, to protect the environment, to develop new structures for health and social questions and to promote productive employment as well as social and cultural exchange,

- D. whereas increased interaction at all levels between Russia and the EU in the context of the Northern Dimension is essential to achieve these overall objectives and will act as a catalyst for closer ties between the EU and Russia,
1. Welcomes the Commission's Second Northern Action Plan, 2004-2006 as an important contribution to developing the full potential of the region and to carrying forward the Union's new neighbourhood policy;
 2. Underlines that the successful conclusion of the accession negotiations and the signing of the Accession Treaty with 10 acceding countries, including those involved in the Northern Dimension, takes the Northern Dimension into a new phase and faces its partners with the huge task of addressing the opportunities and challenges posed by this historic event and of helping ensure that it benefits the entire region;
 3. Recalls that the added value of the Northern Dimension lies in the synergy and coherence that it creates across the activities implemented by all partners and stresses that the effectiveness of this interaction will be crucial to the achievement of the common objectives;
 4. Emphasises the key purpose of the present Action Plan, which is to provide a clear operational framework for all Northern Dimension stakeholders, setting out strategic objectives and priorities;
 5. Emphasises that, to achieve the objectives of the Action Plan, adequate financial resources are necessary, and therefore requests the establishment of a separate budget line for the Northern Dimension;
 6. Supports the present Action Plan's specific activities, taking into account all major points made by the EP in its previous resolutions and covering five broad priority sectors:
 - economy, business and up-to-date infrastructure;
 - human resources, education, scientific research and health and social questions;
 - energy cooperation;
 - the environment, nuclear safety and natural resources;
 - cross-border cooperation and regional development;
 - justice and home affairs;as well as paying special attention to regions with specific needs such as Kaliningrad and the Arctic region;
 7. Calls on all parties to work actively to connect the EU and Russian energy, transport and information networks, which will require a greater involvement of the European Investment Bank; calls on the Council to establish a broader mandate for the EIB as soon as possible so as to enable it to become even more involved in Russia;

8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the accession countries, Russia, Belarus and the Ukraine.