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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

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on behalf of the EPP-ED Group

on the preparation of the European Council, including the Social Summit,
Brussels, 12-13 December 2003

European Parliament resolution on the preparation of the European Council, including the Social Summit, Brussels, 12-13 December 2003

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Council and Commission statements on the preparation of the European Council in Brussels (12-13 December 2003),
- having regard to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure,

Economic growth

1. Considers that economic policies should continue to be aimed at producing job-creating and sustainable growth, welcomes the European Growth Initiative and considers it essential to act within the framework established by the Stability and Growth Pact as well as the current Financial Perspective;
2. Regrets that ten years after Delors' White Paper and three years after the launch of the Lisbon strategy, the necessary decisions needed to promote economic growth have been delayed; calls on the European Council to give a new impetus to this process;
3. Considers it essential for the success of the European Growth Initiative to focus on projects that are sustainable, economically and financially viable, with a high level of co-financing and having a clear European value; the initiative must be complementary to the aims and means of the Internal Market;
4. Emphasises that it is now for the European Council to establish the priority projects, and to identify the sources and methods of their financing;
5. Points out that the European Growth Initiative is also dependent on removal of regulatory and administrative barriers to many aspects of cross-border cooperation, thus highlighting that much remains to be done in completing an enlarged Internal Market, conducive to Europe-wide research, innovation and entrepreneurship;
6. Endorses the Commission's assessment that there is no evidence that the EU economy is showing signs of de-industrialisation; considers that, in order to avoid such a process ever emerging, the European Council must keep competitiveness high on the EU's agenda, while promoting constructive solutions for restructuring operations for enterprises and those who work within them;
7. Expresses its concern about the decisions taken by the ECOFIN Council on 25 November 2003 concerning the implementation of the Stability and Growth Pact;
8. Welcomes the apparent political will to speed up the implementation of European-wide investment activities in key areas such as transport, energy, telecoms, IT and R&D;

stresses that boosting investments in key projects cannot alone solve either the immediate nor the long-term problems facing the European economy; and considers that the European Council in December should focus on achieving the existing objectives in the Lisbon agenda in order to make the Union the most competitive knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010;

9. Calls, furthermore, on the European Council not to take any concrete decision on a so-called 'quick-start programme' on the trans-European transport network, since this would infringe Parliament's rights in the codecision process on the revision of the TEN (transport);
10. Notes the initiative to develop the social dimension, and welcomes the wish to ensure the sustainability of pensions systems;
11. Strongly emphasises that, along with necessary pension reforms, Member States must increase the labour market participation of underemployed sections of the population, such as women, immigrants, older workers and disabled people, for example through targeted integration measures, measures for the reconciliation of work and family life and incentives to promote a longer working life;
12. Notes that the European Employment Taskforce has identified the requirement of increasing the adaptability of enterprises and workers as one of four essential areas for reform; will take up all the Task Force's findings and the outcome of the Tripartite Social Summit in the context of the 2004 employment guidelines package; is of the opinion that the social partners can be an important medium for achieving the Lisbon objectives;

Freedom, Security and justice

13. Welcomes the willingness of the Council to find an agreement on a European border agency, but recalls that its preference is for a coordination and control unit situated within the Commission;
14. Takes note of the Council's desire to develop relations with countries of origin or transit for migration flows, but asserts again that progress has been very limited as regards the negotiation of readmission agreements at European level, with possible consequences for the emergence of bilateral readmission agreements, and asks that concluding these agreements at EU level should not be solely a question of easing visa requirements;
15. Recalls its concern about the need for a real and comprehensive action from third countries of origin and transit in the management of their migration flows, in order to stop the tragedies we daily see off the Mediterranean coast; welcomes, therefore, the agreement of the Council on the creation of two centres for the coordination of the maritime borders of the European Union;
16. Agrees with the importance given by the Council to the fight against drug trafficking, and reiterates that measures envisaged should directly affect traffickers and criminal or terrorist organizations, which finance their illegal activities with the proceeds of the illegal drug trade;

17. Recalls that the framework decision on the European arrest warrant should enter into force on 1 January 2004, but expresses its concern that very few Member States have transposed this proposal at national level;

Enlargement

Enlargement

18. Welcomes the progress achieved by the ten acceding countries in adopting, implementing and enforcing the 'acquis' five months before the envisaged date of accession, underlines that the acceding countries must be fully prepared for membership from the date of accession and therefore insists that a number of serious gaps in the preparation for membership, especially those affecting the internal market and the delivery of EU funds to beneficiaries in the new Member States, must be filled between now and accession, and that this can be achieved; notes that the deficiencies in the degree of adaptation to EU legislation and policy threaten the possibility of the accession countries benefiting from EU subsidies and exporting food products; and is confident that enlargement will take place on 1 May 2004 under good conditions;

Framework for the conclusion of accession negotiations with Bulgaria and Romania

19. Recalls that the Thessaloniki European Council supported Bulgaria and Romania in their efforts to achieve the objective of concluding negotiations in 2004, insists that the negotiations must advance to their overall conclusion on the basis of the existing principles set at the beginning of the negotiations, which are the same as those that applied to the ten acceding countries, and underlines that meeting the target date will depend on the real progress made not only in the negotiations but also on the ground, on the basis of each country's own merits, which requires a considerable stepping-up of their efforts and preparations;

Turkey

20. Condemns the terrorist attacks which have taken place over the past few weeks in Turkey, is appalled at these criminal acts, expresses its solidarity with the Turkish authorities and people, and with the families of the victims, and calls on the Council to consider including the IBDA-C Turkish militant Islamic group on the list of terrorist organisations drawn up by the EU;
21. Welcomes the domestic reforms already initiated by the Turkish Government, but reiterates, in parallel with the Commission's evaluation, its request and encouragement to the Turkish authorities to persevere and continue the reforms, which will enable it to be judged on the basis of their implementation, aimed at meeting the Copenhagen criteria;

Cyprus

22. Considers that, because of the military occupation of the northern part of the island, Cyprus' future membership of the EU will be restricted de facto to the area governed by the internationally recognized Government of the Republic of Cyprus; calls on the parties involved to make progress towards a settlement which should be established within the framework of the UN and based on the UN Secretary-General's Plan;

23. Is convinced that, in this framework, the solution of the Cyprus problem and the reunification of the island will benefit all its inhabitants and will be seriously taken into account when deciding on the possible opening of accession negotiations with Turkey;

External Relations, CFSP and ESDP

EU Security Strategy

24. Considers that, based on the discussion paper submitted by High Representative Javier Solana, the EU must find its way to a clear prioritisation of its foreign and security interests and objectives, jointly define them and also designate them geographically; underlines that an EU Security Strategy can be developed only on the basis of multilateralism and within the UN system; is convinced of the great contribution which an EU Security Strategy, based on a global concept going beyond the strictly military dimension and ensuring the deployment of a whole package of political, economic, social and military measures, can make to prevent, mitigate and resolve conflicts;

WMD

25. Welcomes the progress already made in the implementation of the Action Plan against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and calls on the Council to advance further the work on the EU's emerging strategy on WMD proliferation as encompassed in the Presidency conclusions of the Thessaloniki summit and the Basic Principles agreed on 16 June, by focusing in particular on:
- universalising further the key disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and, where necessary, strengthening them as well as the means of ensuring compliance with their provisions;
 - enhancing the EU's political, financial and technical support for agencies in charge of verification;
 - strengthening export control policies and practices within the European Union and beyond;

ESDP

26. Pays tribute to the first three crisis operations successfully carried out within the framework of the ESDP, welcomes the establishing of an EU Agency for Research and Armament and calls upon the Council to advance further the setting-up of a comprehensive and credible European defence identity, including a European collective capacity for planning and command of EU operations, able to act independently of NATO while not undermining the alliance or unnecessarily duplicating structures; insists that it be consulted in advance of decisions on ESDP operations and points out that only a well-informed Parliament is in a position to take the requisite personnel and budgetary decisions swiftly and efficiently;

Arab World

27. Welcomes the proposed Work Programme on relations with the Arab World;

Implementation of the EU's Common Strategy on Ukraine

28. Considers that Ukraine, by virtue of its size, geographical location, profound historical, cultural and economic and other links with western and central Europe, as well as with

Russia, and its potential to become an ever more valuable partner of the EU in essential areas, must be given a particularly important role in the foreign relations of the EU and especially in the context of the EU's Wider Europe - Neighbourhood policy;

29. Reiterates its support for Ukraine's ambition for EU-integration and the Council's and the Commission's current focusing on extending the EU's Common Strategy on Ukraine and preparing an action plan for this country;

Transatlantic Dimension

30. Is mindful that, over the eight years since the adoption by the European Union and the United States of the New Transatlantic Agenda (NTA), the forces of globalisation have significantly altered the political, economic and security conditions upon which the NTA was drawn up, and that changes agreed by the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) now convened should further enhance the EU's capacity for unified action and, therefore also, an effective partnership with the United States; calls upon the European Council to request the European Commission, once the IGC is completed, to engage the United States Government in a joint review of transatlantic relations, with a view to replacing the NTA with a Transatlantic Partnership Agreement by 2007, responsive to the real common interests and capabilities of the partners;

Guantanamo

31. Reiterates its call for the Council Presidency to raise the issue of the right of prisoners detained at Guantanamo Bay to a fair trial with the US authorities and to enter this issue on the agenda for the next summit between the European Union and the United States;
32. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the European Council, and the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the candidate countries.