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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the European Council report and the Commission statement

pursuant to Rule 103(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Hans-Gert Poettering, João de Deus Pinheiro, José Albino Silva Peneda, Ville Itälä, Jaime Mayor Oreja, and Marianne Thyssen

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on the outcome of the European Council meeting in Brussels of 4-5 November 2004

European Parliament resolution on the outcome of the European Council meeting in Brussels of 4-5 November 2004

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Presidency Conclusions following the European Council meeting of 4-5 November 2004,
- having regard to the European Council report and the Commission statement on the European Council meeting of 4-5 November 2004,
- having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

I. On the preparation of the mid-term review of the Lisbon strategy and the High Level Report

High Level Report

1. Welcomes the report of the High Level Working Group, especially its clear diagnosis of the EU's weaknesses in implementing the Lisbon agenda and its call to refocus on the key policies for restoring economic growth and increasing employment, involving European, national and regional authorities;
2. Notes the report's view that the overall goals and timescale for Lisbon should be retained; but also reiterates its call for very urgent and targeted actions by Member States if the objectives are to be achieved;
3. Agrees with the report's conclusion that Parliament must be more closely engaged in the process of monitoring and encouraging the delivery of the Lisbon agenda;
4. Confirms that Parliament will hold a full debate on the findings of the report at a future plenary session;

The Lisbon strategy

5. Agrees with the Council on the validity and aims of the Lisbon process; deplores the fact that the strategy has failed up to now to produce most of the expected results;
6. Welcomes the Commission's intention to make implementation of the Lisbon strategy a key component of its policy; looks forward to the necessary proposals for the mid-term review to be brought forward by the Commission; expects to be fully associated in the formulation and implementation of this exercise;
7. Insists that structural reforms must be completed in areas such as the opening-up of markets and the modernisation of social policy, pensions and healthcare systems, as

well as promotion of the adaptability of labour markets and education systems; welcomes the efforts that will be undertaken to reduce the administrative burden and engage in the process of simplification of existing Community legislation, and encourages finding ways of better regulation in the context of the mid-term review;

8. Considers that the stability of public finances is a precondition for getting the results expected from the Lisbon strategy;
9. Welcomes the progress made by the European Council on priorities in the field of simplification of Community legislation, notably for the environment sector;
10. Believes the European Council should give emphasis to the environmental dimension and notably to the countering of climate change under the Kyoto agreement, and underlines the need to fully integrate the revision of the sustainable development strategy into the Lisbon strategy;
11. Welcomes the recognition of demographic factors and asks that the ageing of the population of Europe be considered a priority;
12. Stresses the key role of cohesion policy in implementing the Lisbon objectives; believes, accordingly, that the budget envelope for the programming period 2007-2013 must be adequate to the challenges of the Lisbon agenda, especially regarding cohesion policy and sustainable development;

Joint initiative on better regulation

13. Commends the Council for its attention to the 'better regulation' agenda, and notes the support given to Parliament's role in this process;
14. Endorses the call made on the Commission to implement a common methodology for measuring administrative burdens, and the need for pilot projects in this area;
15. Supports the need for an early start on proposals to simplify existing Community legislation, and confirms its willingness to work with the Commission and Council so as to push ahead with priority proposals;

II. On the area of freedom, security and justice: the Hague Programme

16. Welcomes the importance which the Council attaches to developing an area of freedom, security and justice, especially in the light of the terrorist attacks in the US on 11 September 2001 and in Madrid on 11 March 2004;
17. Welcomes the Hague Programme which the European Council adopted at its meeting of 4-5 November 2004 as the basis for the Union's activities for the next five years; warmly supports the setting of deadlines for specific proposals, with an annual review, fully respecting the importance of transparency and the involvement of Parliament, and calls on the Council and Commission to ensure that full implementation of the measures by the Member States takes place within the timetable laid down;

18. Welcomes the recognition by the European Council of the evaluation by the Commission of the recommendation on the use of qualified majority voting and the codecision procedure adopted by Parliament on 14 October 2004, and urges the Council to ensure that the transition to full codecision on measures under Title IV takes place as soon as possible;
19. Stresses the importance of ensuring that the area of freedom, security and justice receives sufficient resources under the new financial perspective to ensure that the measures foreseen under the Hague Programme can be fully carried out;

III. On Communicating Europe

20. Welcomes the European Council's priorities in the field of communication policy and its stress on national and European politicians' responsibility to communicate the relevance of the European project and to involve Europeans in decision-making;
21. Calls on the Commission to base its forthcoming strategy paper for the June 2005 European Council on the right of citizens to have access to continuing, full and objective information on the EU (basic and specific information, notably focused on target groups), ensured by appropriate instruments (centralised and decentralised public information activities) and by an adequate budget;

IV. On Iraq

22. Welcomes the European Council's unanimous declaration on the relations between the EU and Iraq, and fully shares its commitment and determination to assist Iraq's reconstruction and transformation and its reintegration into the international community as a sovereign, independent, secure, unified, prosperous and democratic partner country; particularly welcomes the comprehensive package of EU assistance to Iraq presented to Mr Allawi, including the perspective of negotiating an agreement between the EU and Iraq and EU support for the preparation of the elections; in this regard, demands that the elections for the transitional National Assembly planned to be held by January 2005 include the broadest possible participation from the political spectrum and be free and fair;
23. Points out the incoherence of the Council's position when it takes an extremely restrictive attitude with regard to additional funds for the EU budget while at the same time endorsing various new programmes and policies;

V. On the Middle East

24. Declares once again, and precisely at this particular delicate moment, that a solution to the Middle East conflict is only possible through the negotiation of a firm and final peace agreement as laid out in the Roadmap, without prior conditions, based on the existence of two democratic, sovereign and viable states – Israel and Palestine – coexisting peacefully side by side within secure and recognised frontiers within which the peaceful coexistence of Christians, Muslims and Jews is guaranteed;

25. Expresses its confidence that the Palestinian leaders and the PNA will manage to guarantee the normal functioning of the institutions, organise the elections according to international standards, and keep the situation under control, in order to preserve law and order during the process; expresses the EU's commitment to assisting the PA to organise elections in the Palestinian Territories, and calls on Israel not to interfere and to facilitate these elections;
26. Supports, especially, the set of practical suggestions concerning security, reforms and EU financial assistance made by the High Representative for the CFSP and endorsed by the European Council, with a view to reactivating and relaunching the implementation of the Roadmap for peace in the Middle East;

VI. On Sudan

27. Shares the Council's grave concern, as set out in its conclusions of 2 November, at the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in the Darfur region resulting from renewed violence by rebels and militia; strongly urges all parties to the conflict to put an immediate end to military operations and to respect the N'Djamena ceasefire agreement of 8 April in its entirety, as well as UN Security Council resolutions 1556 and 1564;
28. Calls on the EU and its Member States to support, and on all parties to the conflict to fully cooperate with, the UN Commission of Inquiry's investigations into violations of international humanitarian law and human rights, allowing it also to confirm whether acts of genocide have occurred and to identify the perpetrators of such violations;
29. Calls on the EU and its Member States to continue their support for the African Union mission in Darfur and for the ongoing Abuja and Naivasha peace processes, in order to avoid the risk of what the UN Special Representative in Sudan, Jan Pronk, describes as 'a state of anarchy, a total collapse of law and order';
30. Calls on the UN Security Council to decide on a global arms embargo against Sudan, and to put into effect targeted sanctions against those responsible for massive abuses of human rights and other atrocities, in view of recent breaches of ceasefire and peace process commitments, and to ensure that any such sanctions do not add to the suffering of the population of Sudan;

VII. On Iran

31. Joins the Council in underlining the importance of building confidence in the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme and the need for transparency and compliance with the IAEA Board of Governors' resolutions, and calls for a full and sustained suspension of all enrichment and reprocessing activities; hopes that the breakthrough reported in the talks of 6 November in Paris between the EU and Iran will be confirmed and that an agreement outlining future cooperation between Iran and the EU in the political, economic, security and confidence-building spheres will be finalised before the next meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors on 25 November in Vienna, thereby avoiding the need to refer Iran's nuclear programme to the UN Security Council for possible sanctions;

VIII. On Ukraine

32. Shares the Council's assessment of Ukraine as a key neighbour and partner, while regretting the fact that the first round of presidential elections on 31 October did not meet international standards for democratic elections;
33. Calls, therefore, on the Ukrainian authorities to address the noted deficiencies in good time before the second round, and to create the necessary conditions for free and fair elections, in particular by ensuring equal access to state media for both candidates;
34. Is strongly encouraged by the high turnout, as well as by the Ukrainian people's interest in and serious approach to their presidential election, and therefore calls on the Council and Commission to put the Action Plan for Ukraine into effect as soon as possible, and in particular to give a strong focus and priority to the development of the institutions of civil society;
35. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the national parliaments of the Member States and the accession countries.