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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

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

by Jean-Louis Bourlanges, Bernard Lehideux and Johan Van Hecke

on behalf of the ALDE Group

on tariff preferences granted to special incentive arrangement (GSP+)
beneficiary countries

European Parliament resolution on tariff preferences granted to special incentive arrangement (GSP+) beneficiary countries

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 980/2005 of 27 June 2005 applying a scheme of generalised tariff preferences,
 - having regard to Commission Decision 2005/924/EC on the list of the beneficiary countries which qualify for the special incentive arrangement for sustainable development and good governance, provided for by Article 26(e) of Council Regulation (EC) No 980/2005 applying a scheme of generalised tariff preferences,
 - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the special incentive arrangement for sustainable development and good governance provided for in Commission Decision 2005/924/EC (GSP+) consists in granting preferential access to European markets to products from developing countries which implement certain international instruments relating to human rights and labour rights, environmental protection, the fight against drug trafficking and good governance,
- B. whereas, in its decision of 21 December 2005, the Commission granted a special incentive arrangement to Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Georgia, Guatemala, Honduras, Sri Lanka, the Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, El Salvador and Venezuela,
- C. whereas all GSP+ beneficiary countries have ratified and implemented the relevant international conventions on human rights and labour rights, with the exception of El Salvador, which has been granted a temporary special derogation pursuant to Article 9(2) of Regulation (EC) No 980/2005, on the grounds of specific constitutional constraints,
- D. whereas the new GSP+ scheme should encourage beneficiary countries, as well as applicant countries, to achieve development goals and continue to introduce significant changes to their legal system, in particular the establishment of institutions essential to the full exercise of the rights recognised in International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions, as Venezuela and Colombia have done by ratifying the ILO Convention on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in 2005,
- E. whereas, pursuant to Article 16 of Council Regulation (EC) No 980/2005, safeguard clauses and temporary withdrawal of tariff preferences may be applied in the event of serious and systematic violations of the principles laid down in the conventions listed in Part A of Annex III to the regulation,
1. Notes the Commission's decision to grant the GSP+ arrangement to the countries mentioned in its Decision 2005/924/EC; is concerned, however, at the fact that, to date, several of those countries have not yet fully implemented the basic ILO conventions;

2. Considers that, in general, granting preferential access to countries which do not respect human rights and international labour conventions will give them less incentive to comply with ILO standards;
3. Urges the Commission to take more determined action to effectively implement ILO conventions in GSP+ beneficiary countries;
4. Notes, however, that the economic development of GSP+ beneficiary countries and their economic integration into world trade mechanisms are also essential to the achievement of development goals, and to stability and good governance;
5. Calls on the Commission to provide it with information on methods for ensuring effective monitoring and supervision of the implementation of UN and ILO conventions and allowing due account to be taken of the opinions of the beneficiary countries within this procedure;
6. Calls on the Commission to provide it with information on effective implementation of UN and ILO conventions by GSP+ beneficiary countries and, in particular, to specify whether there are cases of serious and systematic violation of principles laid down in human and labour rights conventions in any of the current GSP+ beneficiary countries;
7. Calls also on the Commission immediately to open an investigation in order to determine whether temporary withdrawal of tariff preference arrangements under Article 16 of Council Regulation (EC) No 980/2005 is required and immediately to inform the European Parliament of its conclusions;
8. Calls on the Commission to reconsider the issue of assistance to countries affected by the natural disasters which have taken place since the tsunami in south-east Asia, such as the devastating earthquakes in Pakistan, Kashmir and Indonesia; encourages the Commission to apply, in such cases, tariff preferences to the countries affected under an expedited procedure, in line with the GSP+ time periods applied following the tsunami in south-east Asia;
9. Calls on the Commission to draw up a full report, on an annual basis, providing not only details of the situation in GSP+ beneficiary countries but also an indication of the measures taken by the Commission;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and the Council.