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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on statements by the Council and Commission

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

by José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra and Giorgos Dimitrakopoulos

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on the Sixth Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) to be held in Geneva from 20 November to 8 December 2006

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European Parliament resolution on the Sixth Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) to be held in Geneva from 20 November to 8 December 2006

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the EU Joint Action of 27 February 2006 in respect of the BTWC with the objectives of promoting the universality of the BTWC and supporting its implementation by States Parties in order to ensure that States Parties transpose the international obligations of the BTWC into their national legislation and administrative measures,
 - having regard to the EU Action Plan in respect of the BTWC agreed in parallel with the Joint Action in which Member States undertook to submit confidence-building measures returns to the United Nations and lists of relevant experts and laboratories to the United Nations Secretary-General to facilitate any investigation of alleged chemical and biological weapons use,
 - having regard to Council Common Position of 20 March 2006 relating to the 2006 Review Conference of the BTWC with the objectives of strengthening further the BTWC and promoting a successful outcome to the Sixth Review Conference,
 - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the BTWC, which was opened for signature in 1972 and entered into force in 1975, is the first multilateral disarmament treaty banning an entire category of weapons, and whereas it currently has 155 States Parties, with a further 16 having signed but not yet ratified the Convention,
- B. whereas the Sixth Review Conference, which will take place in Geneva from 20 November to 8 December 2006, will be the first opportunity for States Parties to examine the operation of the Convention since the Fifth Review Conference ended in 2002, and whereas it will provide the States Parties with the opportunity to reconfirm their commitment to the complete prohibition of biological weapons and to address any problems or shortcomings in the operation of the Convention,
1. Underlines that the objective of the European Union should be to build on the success of the BTWC regime, to strengthen further the BTWC and to promote a successful outcome to the Sixth Review Conference;
 2. Attaches, therefore, great importance to a thorough and full review of the operation of the BTWC in order to identify, discuss and agree on the measures to be taken to further strengthen the Convention;
 3. Calls on the Council and Member States to promote the accession of all States to the BTWC, including by calling on all States not party thereto to accede to the BTWC

without further delay and working towards a declaration that the ban on biological and toxin weapons is a universally binding rule of international law;

4. Calls on the Council and Commission to promote full compliance with the obligations under the BTWC and, where necessary, strengthening of national implementation measures, including penal legislation and control over pathogenic microorganisms and toxins in the framework of the BTWC;
5. Calls on the Council and Member States to contribute to the improvement of the mechanisms verifying compliance by the States Parties by promoting efforts to enhance transparency through increased exchange of information among States Parties, including identifying measures to assess and enhance the country coverage and the usefulness of the Confidence Building Measures mechanism;
6. Calls on the Council and Member States to promote compliance with obligations under UN Security Council Resolution 1540, in particular to eliminate the risk of biological or toxin weapons being acquired or used for terrorist purposes, including possible terrorist access to materials, equipment and knowledge that could be used in the development and production of biological and toxin weapons;
7. Calls on the Council and Member States to promote consideration of, and decisions on further action on, the work undertaken to date under the intersessional programme during the period 2003 to 2005 and the efforts to discuss and promote common understanding and effective action in particular on: enhancing international capabilities for responding to, investigating and mitigating the effects of cases of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons or suspicious outbreaks of disease; strengthening and broadening national and international institutional efforts and existing mechanisms for the surveillance, detection, diagnosis and combating of infectious diseases affecting humans, animals and plants; the content, promulgation and adoption of codes of conduct for scientists in the field relevant to the Convention in order to raise awareness of the Convention and to help relevant actors to comply with their legal, regulatory and professional obligations and ethical principles;
8. Calls on the Council and Member States to support a further intersessional work programme during the period between the Sixth and Seventh Review Conferences, to identify specific areas and procedures for further progress under this work programme and to promote the convening of a Seventh Review Conference of the BTWC to be held no later than 2011;
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the governments and parliaments of the States Parties to the BTCW.