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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 Françoise Grossetête and Hans-Gert Poettering

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on the Commission Legislative and Work Programme for 2007

European Parliament resolution on the Commission Legislative and Work Programme for 2007

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolution of 16 December 2004 on the strategic political orientations of the Barroso Commission,
 - having regard to the Commission communication on the Annual Policy Strategy for 2007 'Boosting Trust through Action' (COM(2006) 122),
 - having regard to its resolution of 18 May 2006 on the Commission's Annual Policy Strategy for 2007,
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 24 October 2006 on its legislative and work programme for 2007 (COM(2006) 629),
 - having regard to the Framework Agreement of 26 May 2005 on relations between the European Parliament and the Commission and to the 'structured dialogue' established in that framework,
 - having regard to Rules 33 and 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. having regard to the importance of the Legislative and Work Programme (LWP) of the Commission for 2007, which, 50 years after the signing of the Treaties of Rome, reflects both the ambitions of the European Union and the challenges that the enlarged Europe has to face,
- B. having regard to the dilemma in which the Union finds itself, striving to achieve ambitious political, economic and social goals for its citizens with means which, in the framework of the new Financial Perspectives, are insufficient to meet the challenges ahead,
- C. having regard to the urgency, underlined again at the Lahti European Council, of the Member States ensuring a proper environment for the development of research and innovation,
- D. whereas the Commission has placed strong emphasis on the improvement of the quality of life of European citizens and on the promotion of a cleaner environment,
- E. having regard to the need to closely match political priorities with available financial resources,
- F. having regard to the strong emphasis placed by the Commission on ensuring the quality and cost-effectiveness of European legislation, in order to meet the expectations of citizens and business for a simple and effective regulatory environment,

- G. having regard to the utmost importance of carrying out comprehensive and independent impact assessments on proposed EU legislation,
- H. whereas nothing undermines support for the European Union more than cases of mismanagement, incompetence or fraud,
1. Welcomes the general approach of the Commission's Legislative and Work Programme for 2007 and underlines the relevance of its political priorities, especially the emphasis placed on the modernisation of the European economy, on the improvement of the well-being of citizens in terms of security, health and a cleaner environment, on the promotion of a secure, competitive and sustainable energy supply, on better management of migration flows, on the visibility and effectiveness of Europe as world partner, and on improved communication with European citizens;
 2. Notes with satisfaction the Commission's decision in principle to draw a distinction between a manageable number (21) of 'strategic initiatives' - which the Commission commits to deliver in 2007 - and a longer list of (60) 'priority initiatives', which will be delivered if possible in this timescale; believes that such a distinction increases the clarity and credibility of the Legislative and Work Programme as an instrument for proposing and adopting a coherent legislative agenda for the coming year;
 3. Considers, however, that the specific 12- to 18-month timescale suggested by the Commission for the delivery of its 60 'priority initiatives' is less satisfactory than a simpler 12- to 24-month distinction, which it recommends for the LWP in future years;
 4. Welcomes the fact that the Commission has endorsed a range of contributions made by the committees of the European Parliament in the framework of the new 'structured dialogue' and outlined in the summary report of the Conference of Committee Chairmen; believes, however, that the operation of the Framework Agreement on relations between Parliament and the Commission can and should be improved by involving the political groups more consistently and at every stage in the procedure;
 5. Recalls its resolution on the Commission's Annual Policy Strategy, and the political priorities set out in the 2007 budget, in particular its intention to ensure improved value for money by better focusing budgetary and human resources;
 6. Regrets the lack of interaction between the LWP and the budget procedure; in line with the Framework Agreement between the EP and the Commission, wishes to improve the sequencing of the two procedures, so that both run more effectively in tandem, with the aim of a final Union LWP being presented to Parliament each February;

Priorities for 2007

Modernising the European economy

7. Welcomes the strong emphasis in the Commission's LWP on the continuing need for modernisation of the European economy, to render it more dynamic and competitive in the face of growing challenges from around the world; reiterates its strong support for pursuit of the Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs and for economic reform and renewed

efforts to complete the single market as foundation-stones for policy at European level;

Research and development

8. Believes that the establishment of the proposed European Institute of Technology (EIT) could contribute to the competitiveness of the European economy, provided that it is based on the right principles; insists that no funds previously allocated to the 7th Framework Programme of Research should be used to finance EIT activities;
9. Reiterates the urgency of fostering cooperative research to improve the competitiveness of the European economy, in particular in the areas of advanced technologies and defence industries, with the main aim of overcoming the division between research for civilian and defence purposes;

Defence markets and industries

10. Welcomes the Commission's initiatives aimed at increasingly including defence industries within the scope of the internal market and at overcoming the fragmentation of defence markets, which could lead to enhanced synergy between military and industrial needs in relation to defence-related products;

Space policy

11. Underlines the strategic significance of the rapidly developing space sector, and thus fully supports the Commission in its initiative to develop a coherent and comprehensive European Space Policy; stresses in that context the need for a common system of satellite and airborne intelligence, at the disposal of the military, police and disaster management services;

Telecommunications and information technologies

12. Urges that enhanced coordinated efforts be undertaken to promote the telecoms and information society technology sectors, and that these should be put high on the policy agenda, if the European Union is to play a major role in this highly competitive area;

Internal market

13. Strongly underlines the importance of finalising the Single Market Strategy for 2007-2014, with the aim of moving rapidly to complete the internal market in goods and services; suggests complementing this by developing an implementation plan for the Services Directive, which would provide the Member States with support in complying with its provisions;
14. Believes that a closer link should be established between the internal market and consumer policies, by creating a new combined approach in the framework of the Single Market strategy; points out in that context that legislation on consumer protection should by no means constitute a channel for the creation of new barriers within the internal market, but ensure instead that consumers in all the Member States benefit from the high level of protection already achieved;

15. Reiterates its request to the Commission that it should explore all possible ways of improving the patent and patent litigation systems;
16. Stresses that a key priority for 2007 in the field of financial services legislation should be the proper implementation and timely application of legislation already adopted in recent years;
17. Expresses its serious concern at the fact that the ECB intends to provide settlement services in central bank money, and reminds the ECB that its independence is limited to monetary policy decisions; insists that the Commission should maintain the leading role in proposing financial services legislation;

Agriculture and fisheries

18. Welcomes the stepping-up of simplification initiatives in the field of the CAP and attaches particular importance to the Commission's commitment to report on the operation of the Cross Compliance system; expresses its support for the Commission's intention of recasting and modernising existing feed labelling requirements;
19. Welcomes the proposed regulation aimed at stepping up the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, given in particular the considerable losses it causes to coastal communities and to legally-operating fishermen; regrets, however, the general lack of initiative and political impulse in the CFP field, which are necessary to face new challenges both within the EU and internationally;

Addressing the challenges of European society

20. Urges the Commission to assess the implementation of the Structural Funds (2007-2013) in the context of national strategic reference frameworks and to report to the EP on possible delays in the process;
21. Believes that new impetus needs to be given to the negotiations within the Council on the European Solidarity Fund, in order to remedy certain deficiencies contained in the regulation thereon, which hinder the effective implementation of the Fund;

Better management of migration flows

22. Supports the initiatives of the Commission in the field of management of migration flows, notably its aim of establishing a clear and safe regime for economic immigrants, with specific attention given to highly skilled workers;

Secure, competitive and sustainable energy

23. Underlines the strategic significance of the initiatives undertaken by the Commission to foster a more effective energy policy, with the aim of guaranteeing the security of energy supply - notably through better coordination of national energy policies - and establishing a genuine European energy policy in due course;

Making Europe a better place to live

The environment and sustainable development

24. Calls on the Commission to maintain a leading role in the fight against climate change, especially by developing the concept of 'green diplomacy';
25. Calls on the Commission to take the necessary initiatives to enable the creation of a better environment for developing non-CO₂ energy sources; underlines that climate change has consequences not only for the environment but also for health and therefore calls on the Commission to address new threats and long-term effects (e.g. consequences of natural disasters: heat-waves, floods, vector-borne and food-borne diseases);
26. Stresses the need for the European Union to retain international leadership in the field of eco-innovation, which is a core component of the fight against global warming, as well as industrial and urban pollution;
27. Regrets that the protection and conservation of biodiversity in the EU has not been highlighted as a priority for 2007, and all the more warmly encourages the Commission to take the lead in facing the global challenge of biodiversity loss, whilst ensuring the proper management of the NATURA 2000 network, especially in marine zones;

Health

28. Welcomes the Commission's contribution to shaping health policy in Europe, and strongly believes that protection and promotion of health should constitute an underlying component of all EU policies;
29. Underlines the fact that an effective European health strategy calls for improved collaboration between health services, in particular as regards patient mobility and patient safety (e.g. drug counterfeiting), information for patients on pharmaceuticals and lifestyle changes, and in addressing the challenges of healthy ageing;

Social policy

30. Calls on the Commission to put forward a communication on the social advantages of the completion of the internal market;
31. Calls on Commission and Council, in respect of items already within the legislative process, to pursue efforts aimed at reaching an agreement on directives on working time and temporary work;
32. Reiterates, not least in relation with the challenges resulting from demographic change, its request for an action plan aimed at better reconciling the competing needs of working life and family life;

Education and sport

33. Stresses that further initiatives will need to be undertaken by the Commission to promote excellence in European universities, and expresses its warm support for the proposals for

Erasmus Mundus II, aimed at fostering cooperation with third countries in the field of higher education;

34. Calls on the Commission, with the aim of European action in the area of sports, to present a white paper designed to help ensure legal certainty and a 'level playing-field';

Security of citizens

35. Strongly supports the Commission in its intention to update the framework decision on the fight against terrorism, in particular by addressing the problems of the spread of explosives and the transmission of expertise, and by combating terrorism propaganda;
36. Insists on the need to tackle cyber-crime, as well as to improve border controls and the management of visa requests, whilst emphasising the importance of the rapid entry into force of both SIS II and VIS;

Europe as a world partner

Enlargement

37. Whilst endorsing the emphasis on consolidation and conditionality as guiding principles for the EU's enlargement strategy, regrets that the Commission fails either to provide a serious analysis of the issues that need to be resolved before the Union can proceed with further enlargements or to develop with sufficient substance and clarity the concept of 'integration capacity';
38. Reiterates in parallel that the progress of any candidate country towards accession to the EU will depend on that country's own achievements in the reform process and on fulfilment of the conditions set out at the European Council in Copenhagen in 1993, with particular emphasis on compliance with the political criteria, including in the area of the rule of law;

Stability and democracy in South-East Europe

39. Notes that the countries of South-East Europe are coming closer to acquiring the accession momentum referred to in the 'Thessaloniki Declaration', and expects the Union to take a leading role in consolidating stability and increasing prosperity in the Western Balkans, thus helping the countries of the region on their way to EU membership;

Bilateral relations

40. Stresses the significance of the EU Neighbourhood Policy in avoiding new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and the EU's neighbours, but expresses the view that certain features of the policy ought to be revised, in order to take account of the expectations of the various countries concerned and tailor arrangements better to their needs,
41. Expresses its concern that the transatlantic relationship receives no priority status, or indeed even mention, in this year's LWP; reiterates its view that vibrant transatlantic relations should be underpinned by a strong framework agreement between the United States and the EU and the removal of remaining barriers to trade and investment, to create

a genuine transatlantic market, within a defined timescale;

42. Reiterates the importance of the EU agreements with major partner countries, such as India, China and the Euromed countries, as well as the ASEAN countries or Latin America, but insists with regard to trade aspects on the importance of open markets and respect for intellectual property rights;

Regional issues

43. Awaits with interest the Communication on addressing transregional security threats through the Stability Instrument, and encourages the Commission to take stock of EU assistance efforts aimed at alleviating and preventing security threats, and to propose ways of improving the effectiveness and coherence of EU external assistance in areas related to security policy;

Development policy

44. Believes that, in order to enable the ACP countries to attain development goals, the regional development aspect should prevail in the framework of the negotiations on Economic Partnership Agreements;

Trade policy and WTO negotiations

45. Deplores the suspension of the WTO Doha Round and urges the Commission to define ways of overcoming the stalemate in the WTO negotiations and of reaching a balanced agreement on each of the main topics under discussion;
46. Requests, as a corollary to the increased opening up of markets worldwide, that priority be given to an update of transparent trade defence instruments;

Horizontal issues

47. Acknowledges the need for increased flexibility in the planning and preparation of proposals for legislation as provided for in the LWP, but points out that the listing of two distinct sets of priorities for 2007 should not result in delays in presenting initiatives and/or in reduced performance in the execution of the programme;

Better Law-Making to improve and simplify legislation

48. Welcomes the Commission's stepped-up drive to simplify and modernise the European regulatory framework, as well as the fact that initiatives aimed either at simplifying EU law or at withdrawing pending legislation will henceforth constitute an integral part of the LWP;
49. Insists that all simplification initiatives comply fully with all the principles and conditions outlined in its resolution of 16 May 2006 on the strategy for simplification of the regulatory environment;
50. Takes note of the fact that, whilst the Commission had announced major simplification initiatives in a wide range of policy areas, it appears that the list of simplification

proposals is disproportionately dominated by the field of agricultural legislation, together with a limited number of initiatives related to product regulation, and that none relate to labour markets;

Impact assessments

51. Welcomes the assurance given by the Commission that it will conduct comprehensive impact assessments on all legislative measures proposed as either strategic or priority initiatives in 2007;
52. Believes that successfully applying the impact assessment process is critical to ensuring the Better Law-Making culture in the European Union to which all its institutions aspire; reiterates that the continued development of a common methodology between the institutions in applying impact assessments is an important objective for coming years;
53. Expresses doubts, however, about the independence of an impact assessment support and quality function which would operate under the direct authority of the Commission President;
54. Believes that legislation adopted under the comitology process should meet the same quality requirements as any other legislation being adopted and implemented, and should therefore also be subject to impact assessment;

Soft law

55. Calls on the Commission to submit all 'soft law' measures, such as recommendations and interpretative communications, to the EP for an opinion before their final adoption, and to complement the process by carrying out an independently-scrutinised process of impact assessment;

Monitoring of the implementation and enforcement of the acquis

56. Applauds the emphasis put in this year's LWP on ensuring delivery and efficient implementation, which are of paramount importance for a 'Europe of results', capable of responding to the expectations of citizens;
57. Encourages the Commission, in the process of monitoring transposition and enforcement of the *acquis* by the Member States, not to rely solely on lengthy infringement procedures, but to work more closely with national parliaments and to extend its 'advisory role' by providing the Member States with guidelines for implementation;

EU agencies

58. Welcomes the fact that the LWP for 2007 does not contain proposals for the creation of any new EU agency; nevertheless, given the concerns regularly voiced about the relevance of the activities of a number of such agencies, requests the Commission to proceed with an overall evaluation of the role, functioning and effective output of both regulatory and executive agencies, and also to assess whether a revision of the provisions relating to executive agencies might be appropriate;

Budgetary responsibility

59. Expects all new reforms set out in the new Interinstitutional Agreement on budgetary discipline and sound financial management of 17 May 2006 to be fully implemented in the course of 2007, thus enabling a swift impact in terms of higher-quality implementation of the budget;
60. Deplores the fact that the LWP for 2007 suggests that the Commission may have downgraded the internal reform programme established in the aftermath of the collapse of the Santer Commission;
61. Calls on the Commission and all the other institutions to submit reports assessing the reform of the Staff Regulations of Officials and Other Servants of the European Communities, including comparative data in relation to similar administrations within the Member States;
62. Insists that, in the performance and management of EU tasks, the Commission should give priority to progress on the reform agenda, more specifically in relation to the Action Plan for an Integrated Internal Control Framework and the Transparency initiatives;

Bringing Europe Closer to its Citizens

63. Calls on the Commission to review its communication strategy, with the aim of increasing the visibility of the benefits of the EU at regional and local level, and to also include a greater role for Members of the European Parliament, as forefront communicators at the local level, in the process; furthermore, urges the Commission to cooperate closely with Parliament on the operational proposals resulting from the White Paper on Communication;
64. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the parliaments of the Member States.