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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Question for Oral Answer B6-0383/2007

pursuant to Rule 108(5) of the Rules of Procedure

by Tokia Saïfi, Robert Sturdy, Georgios Papastamkos, Vasco Graça Moura and Daniel Caspary

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on textiles

European Parliament resolution on textiles

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Memorandum of Understanding concluded in June 2005 between China and the Commission, expiring on 1 January 2008,
 - having regard to the decision of the Commission and the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs on a system of joint import surveillance in October 2007,
 - having regard to its previous resolutions on this matter, and in particular that of 6 September 2005 on textiles and clothing after 2005¹,
 - having regard to Rule 108(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the WTO Agreement on textiles and clothing came to an end in 2005, at which point the last restrictions on textile trade inherited from the Multifibre Agreement lapsed,
- B. whereas the Commission and China concluded a 'Memorandum of Understanding' imposing restrictions on Chinese imports of certain textile categories for a transitional period, which will expire on 1 January 2008,
- C. whereas the European Union and the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Trade decided on a system of joint import surveillance for the year 2008,
- D. whereas 70% of all counterfeit goods entering the European market come from China and half of all European customs procedures against counterfeiting relate to textile and clothing,
- E. whereas, following the accession of China to the WTO, the WTO members are authorised to adopt special safeguard measures in the form of quantitative restrictions on Chinese exports until the end of 2008 if the market were to be disrupted,
- F. whereas the European Union is the world's second largest exporter of textiles and clothing,

External competitiveness of the European-based textile sector

1. Emphasises that seeking better market access conditions in third countries is vital for the future of the European-based textile and clothing industry, especially for small companies;

¹ Texts adopted, P6_TA(2005)0321

2. Expresses its concern at high-tariff and non-tariff barriers in many third countries; calls on the Commission to guarantee the external competitiveness of the European textile sector, by securing better market access conditions in multilateral, regional and bilateral trade agreements;
3. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to actively support research, development and vocational training in the textile sector, particularly for small and medium-sized companies; considers it essential to take measures to support technological innovation; calls on the Commission to guarantee that the Globalisation Adjustment Fund will be used in a substantial way for the restructuring and retraining of the textile sector;

Unfair trade and counterfeiting

4. Recalls that trade defence instruments (in particular anti-dumping and anti-subsidy) are an important tool to tackle illegal imports from third countries, especially for the textile and clothing sector, which is now an open market without quota protection;
5. Is concerned at systematic violations of Intellectual Property Rights; urges the Commission to combat these violations, in particular counterfeiting, at multilateral, regional and bilateral level, including every form of unfair trade;
6. Calls on the Commission to exert political and economic pressure on the Chinese authorities for a relaxation of the artificially undervalued Chinese currency which facilitates the massive flow of Chinese textile and clothing imports;

Import surveillance

7. Welcomes a system of joint import surveillance that will carry out double checking of Chinese exports to the EU of eight textile and apparel products; expresses its deep concern, however, at how the system is to be set up; calls on the Commission to guarantee proper implementation of this double checking and to evaluate its effectiveness, so as to ensure a smooth transition to free trade in textiles;
8. Stresses that a system of double checking cannot be implemented solely in 2008 and that an effective surveillance system should be guaranteed for a long period; underlines that the product categories on which double checking will not be carried out must be submitted to customs surveillance;
9. Considers that the High-Level Group should ensure oversight of a surveillance system for textile and clothing imports into the European Union;
10. Stresses that the European Union can apply safeguard measures under WTO rules in case of market distortion until the end of 2008; calls on the Commission to do so if this is necessary;
11. Calls on the Commission to coordinate its efforts with the United States of America on the issue of textile imports from China so as to monitor the evolution of a global trade in textiles;

Developing countries and EU Mediterranean partners

12. Emphasises that the termination of import restrictions on textile will not only bring about radical changes in import trends on the EU market, but also risks having an impact on clothing and textile sectors in developing countries, including the EU Mediterranean partners;
13. Calls on the Commission to encourage the Mediterranean partners to take the necessary steps, allowing effective EuroMed integration with more complete South-South integration, in order to reduce the consequences of the liberalisation of the textile market;

Security and consumer protection

14. Urges the Commission to use its powers to ban unsafe products from the EU market, including in the case of textiles and clothing; reiterates its call on the Commission to improve inspection and customs cooperation with third countries, especially with China;

Inform the European Parliament

15. Requests that the Commission provide Parliament with full information about any significant developments in the framework of international trade in textiles;
16. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.