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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 Jorgo Chatzimarkakis

on behalf of the ALDE Group

on the future of the car industry

B6-0154/2009

European Parliament resolution on the future of the car industry

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Presidency Conclusions of the Lisbon European Council of 23 and 24 March 2000,
 - having regard to the Communication to the Spring European Council of 2 February 2005 'Working together for growth and jobs - A new start for the Lisbon Strategy' (COM(2005) 24 final),
 - having regard to the Conclusions of the CARS 21 High Level Group of 12 December 2005 and the CARS 21 Mid-Term Review High Level Conference Conclusions of 26 October 2008,
 - having regard to its resolution of 15 January 2008 on CARS 21: A Competitive Automotive Regulatory Framework (A6-0494/2007),
 - having regard to the Presidency Conclusions of the Brussels European Council of 15 and 16 October 2008,
 - having regard to the Communication from the Commission of 29 October 2008 'From financial crisis to recovery: A European framework for action' (COM(2008) 706 final),
 - having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the European Council of 26 November 2008 'A European Economic Recovery Plan' (COM(2008) 800 final),
 - having regard to the Council and Commission statements on the impact of the financial crisis on the car industry of 4 February 2009,
 - having regard to the conclusions on the automotive industry of the Competitiveness Council of 5 and 6 March 2009,
 - having regard to the Communication from the Commission of 25 February 2009 on 'Responding to the crisis in the European automotive industry' (COM(2009) 104 final),
 - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Europe is facing an exceptional and deep financial and economic crisis,
- B. whereas the European financial market is currently not functioning properly, notably with regard to its lending activities,
- C. whereas the European automotive industry and its supply-chain industries are particularly affected by the current crisis, being a key sector of the European economy which contributes to employment, innovation and competitiveness throughout the economy,

- D. whereas 2009 is expected to witness a further significant drop in vehicle demand and consequently in vehicle production, inevitably raising pressure on employment and investment levels in the EU,
- E. whereas the European automotive sector is the largest private investor in R&D in the European Union, and whereas European passenger car and commercial vehicle manufacturers must sustain high levels of investment in the light of regulatory and market requirements, in particular with regard to ensuring the transition to a low-emission fleet,
- F. whereas the European automotive industry directly or indirectly employs 12 million workers, or 6% of the employed population in the European Union, and millions of those jobs are today at risk,
- G. whereas the European automotive industry is key to the EU economy because of its multiplier effect for other sectors and industries, and in particular the existence of hundreds of thousands of small and medium-sized businesses,
- H. whereas some Member States have started to adopt national measures to support the automotive industry,
- I. whereas the Commission is currently negotiating further trade liberalisation in the framework of the Doha Round and a Free Trade Agreement with South Korea,
1. Recognises that the automotive industry has been put under intense pressure by the current economic and financial crisis, reflected in particular in a severe fall in demand for cars but also in its production overcapacity, difficulties in accessing credit financing and structural problems predating the crisis;
 2. Notes with deep concern that so far measures adopted at the European level do not adequately match the challenges brought about by the current crisis and calls for a real European framework for action incorporating specific indications as to how both the EU and Member States can take the decisive measures needed;
 3. Notes with increasing concern that some short-term measures adopted at national level by Member States could distort competition within the single market, damaging long-term competitiveness, and calls therefore on Member States to ensure that further measures are coherent, efficient and coordinated;
 4. Urges therefore the Council and Commission to coordinate actions at European level to avoid protectionist moves and to adopt EU-wide measures rather than national ones;
 5. Calls on the Commission to mobilise all its resources to combat the crisis and to introduce new instruments where necessary, and welcomes in this context the temporary framework for State aid assessment established as part of the European Economic Recovery Plan;
 6. Calls on the Council and Commission to accelerate, simplify and increase financial support for the automotive industry, notably through the European Investment Bank and the European Central Bank and by allowing State guarantees for low-interest loans; considers that the financial support, notably via loans, should help to stimulate demand for

new vehicles, to the benefit of economic growth, the environment and road safety;

7. Reaffirms that policies, both at EU and national levels, should contribute to tackling the restructuring phase that the automotive industry and its supply-chain industries are facing, due to a very competitive business environment, and encourages the sector therefore to implement such adjustments in a socially responsible way, in close cooperation with social partners;
8. Urges in this context the Commission to facilitate, improve and speed up access to existing instruments such as the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund and the Structural Funds;
9. Reaffirms that the automotive industry needs continuous investments in R&D programmes which deliver the best solutions as regards quality, safety and environmental performance to achieve a sustainable competitive framework and calls therefore on the Commission to facilitate, improve and speed up in that context access to EU support instruments for R&D and innovation, such as the 7th Framework Programme;
10. Calls on the Commission to draw up guidelines and recommendations for measures to encourage in a coordinated manner fleet renewal, such as scrapping schemes and other market incentives, which have positive and short-term effects on consumer demand for new cars and calls on the Commission to monitor national measures already implemented in this context to avoid distortions on the internal market;
11. Calls on the Council and Commission to seize the opportunity to review existing car taxation to coordinate fiscal regimes across the European Union;
12. Confirms the need to deepen the dialogue and on-going discussions with third countries and the EU's main trading partners on the future of the automotive sector and calls therefore on the Commission to monitor closely developments in non-EU countries, notably in the United States and Asia, to guarantee a level playing field at international level in which all parties refrain from protectionism and discriminatory measures on the global car market;
13. Calls on the Commission to postpone the conclusion of the Free Trade Agreement between the European Union and South Korea until a balanced and fair deal between the two partners is found;
14. Calls on the Commission to fully apply Better Regulation principles and therefore to carry out a thorough assessment of the impact of new EU legislation on cars, in particular with regard to the effect on the cost of new cars and the sufficient lead-time needed to implement the measures, and urges the Commission to adopt a more cautious approach to regulation in line with the recommendations of CARS 21, thus giving the automotive sector legal certainty and predictability, and calls on the Commission to implement its proposal to strengthen the CARS 21 process through a Round Table with Member States, the automotive industry and trade unions;
15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Governments and national Parliaments of the Member States.