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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 110(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the floods in Central European countries, in particular Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary

**Jaromír Kohlíček, Jiří Maštálka, Miloslav Ransdorf, Vladimír Remek,
Willy Meyer, Helmut Scholz, João Ferreira**
on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

B7-0400/2010

European Parliament resolution on the floods in Central European countries, in particular Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 3 of the Treaty of the EU and Articles 191 and 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU,
 - having regard to the Commission proposal for a Regulation establishing a European Union Solidarity Fund (COM(2005)0108) and to Parliament's position of 18 May 2006,
 - having regard to its resolutions of 5 September 2002 on floods in Europe, of 8 September 2005 on natural disasters (fires and floods) in Europe, of 7 September 2006 on forest fires and floods and its resolutions of 18 May 2006 on natural disasters (forest fires, droughts and floods) – agricultural aspects, regional development aspects and environmental aspects,
 - having regard to the White Paper 'Adapting to climate change: Towards a European framework for action' (COM(2009)147) and to the Communication from the Commission on a Community approach on the prevention of natural and man-made disasters (COM(2009)0082),
 - having regard to the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change of 11 December 1997 and to the Community's ratification of the Protocol on 4 March 2002,
 - having regard to the statement by the Commission on the major natural disaster in the autonomous region of Madeira of 24 February 2010,
 - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas a major natural disaster has occurred, in the form of floods taking place in various European Union Member States, particularly in Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, as well as in Germany and Austria, resulting in human casualties and necessity to evacuate thousands of people,
- B. whereas the said disaster has caused serious damage, including into infrastructure, enterprises and arable land, destroying also elements of natural and cultural heritage, and possibly creating public health risks,
- C. whereas it is necessary to undertake reconstruction of the areas destroyed or damaged by the disaster in order to make up for their economic and social losses,
1. Expresses its strong solidarity with the inhabitants of the regions affected by the disaster; takes into consideration their possible serious economic effects and pays its respects and condolences to the families of the victims;

2. Acknowledges the relentless efforts of search and rescue units, both professionals and volunteers, saving lives and reducing the damage in the affected areas as well as the many individual citizens who fought to save their livelihoods and their surrounding environment;
3. Believes that these disasters will have consequences not only at national level, calling for a real commitment to the countryside at European level;
4. Is concerned at the increasing number of natural disasters which, in the opinion of the experts, can be attributed essentially to climate change and the intensification of extreme weather conditions, and to farming and forestry practices that are inefficient, environmentally unsound, economically unsustainable and socially outdated and discriminatory, since they entail the depopulation of large natural areas whose conservation requires a human presence;
5. Urges the Commission to mobilise the current EU Solidarity Fund in the most flexible manner possible and without delay and make available the resources needed for the purpose of relieving the suffering and supporting rehabilitation plans for the affected areas, the restoration of their productive potential;
6. Calls on the European Commission and the Member States to support the affected by the economic and social effects of the disaster in the swiftest possible manner;
7. Calls on the Commission to be flexible as regards negotiating with the relevant authorities if a revision of the relevant operational programmes under planning or implementation becomes necessary in the regions affected by the disaster;
8. Calls upon the Commission to take into consideration the differences between the regions affected, which include i.a. mountain and other riverside areas, so as to assist its victims in the best possible manner;
9. Urges the Commission to promote measures so that public works financed by EU funds include an amount of public investment for the improvement, care, maintenance and increase of public environmental infrastructures;
10. Asks the Commission and the Member States to ensure that flood risk management measures focus on the prevention of damage through changes in land use and through giving rivers more space where possible; considers that such measures, which work with nature and not against it, would protect people, property and the environment and help achieve environmentally sustainable water management and land use planning, as well as the EU objective for biodiversity and the EU climate change adaptation strategy;
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the Member States and the regional and local authorities responsible for the affected areas.