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B7-0233/2014

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

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

on the EU strategy for the Arctic
(2013/2595(RSP))

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B7-0233/2014

**European Parliament resolution on the EU strategy for the Arctic
(2013/2595(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), concluded on 10 December 1982 and in force since 16 November 1994,
 - having regard to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD),
 - having regard to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of 13 September 2007,
 - having regard to the Climate Change and International Security Paper from the High Representative and the European Commission to the European Council of 14 March 2008,
 - having regard to the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, issued by the Fourth Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Reykjavik on 24 November 2004,
 - having regard to the Commission’s communications of 26 June 2012 (JOIN(2012)0019) and 20 November 2008 (COM(2008)0763) on the EU’s Arctic policy,
 - having regard to its resolution of 20 January 2011 on a sustainable EU policy for the High North¹,
 - having regard to the US Navy Arctic Roadmap of 10 November 2009,
 - having regard to Rule 115 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the effects of climate change almost solely originating from outside the Arctic will have an impact on the region; whereas, in particular, the retreat of sea ice is likely to produce unforeseeable and disastrous environmental effects and repercussions in other parts of the planet, as well as an increase in shipping, in particular between Europe, Asia and North America, in exploration and exploitation of natural resources, especially gas, oil and other minerals, but also natural resources such as fish, and in exploitation of marine genetic resources, increased mining and logging activities and increased tourism;
- B. whereas the industrial exploitation of the Arctic Ocean, which has previously been protected by ice, will have a serious impact on the highly sensitive Arctic ecosystem and on global climate;
- C. whereas the increased accessibility of the enormous hydrocarbon resources in the Arctic

¹ OJ C 136E, 11 May 2012, p. 71.

region is changing its geostrategic dynamics, with potential consequences for international stability and European security interests, and whereas the increased geostrategic interest of the EU and NATO Member States is leading to militarisation of the High North; whereas Russia announced in December 2013 its intention, as part of its priorities, to create forces in the Arctic to ensure military security and protect the country's national interests in the region;

- D. whereas in December 2013, Canada submitted a claim on Arctic territory to the UN, which would include the North Pole;
 - E. whereas the EU's only indigenous people live in Sweden and Finland; whereas the indigenous peoples of the Arctic and their civil society should be seen as key stakeholders in the processes evolving in the Arctic;
1. Takes the view that the best way of protecting natural resources would be by means of a moratorium on industrial exploitation of the Arctic Ocean region, which has hitherto been covered in ice, and that this moratorium must remain in force until a legally binding, superordinate framework has been adopted to provide full protection for the ecosystem and people of the Arctic; stresses that any agreement on a moratorium must be agreed with the countries and with the peoples, particularly the indigenous peoples, inhabiting the countries of the region; considers that a fund should be created to compensate the people of the Arctic for abstaining from the use of their natural resources;
 2. Acknowledges that the EU, like other developed areas of the world, contributes substantially to climate change and hence bears special responsibility;
 3. Regards the Arctic as a highly sensitive ecosystem where the effects of climate change are especially visible, having catastrophic and irreparable repercussions on other regions in the world;
 4. Stresses the need to protect the fragile environment of the Arctic, underlines the importance of overall stability and peace in the region; stresses that the EU should pursue policies that ensure that the highest priority of all is protecting the Arctic region, which in turn is one of the principal global climate regulators and a major source of income to the inhabitants of the region;
 5. Stresses the leading role the EU has to play in the reduction of pollution which enters the Arctic region, inter alia through long-range transport; points out that the climatic change in the Arctic will have a catastrophic and irreparable impact on coastal regions in Europe and elsewhere, and on climate-dependent industries in Europe and elsewhere, such as agriculture, renewable energy, fisheries and transport;
 6. Stresses that the effects of the melting ice have only minor, short-term positive aspects for economic development in relation to the far greater long-term environmentally destructive developments in the Arctic region;
 7. Notes with concern the increasing militarisation of the Arctic region by the Arctic states, Russia and the NATO states, the USA, Canada, Denmark and Norway, and does

not consider that the Arctic Roadmap of the US Navy, the increase in the number of Canada's Arctic Rangers, the military exercises carried out in August 2010 or the planned Russian troop deployment by 2020 contribute to fostering constructive understanding and cooperation in the region; points out that the Arctic states have on several occasions declared their commitment to resolving, and in some cases have worked towards resolving, possible conflicts of interests according to the principles of international law;

8. Recognises that whilst there are obvious differences between the Arctic and the Antarctic, there are also obvious similarities; points out that the text of the Antarctic Treaty successfully creates a framework for peaceful research and cooperation without getting caught up in territorial disputes and without prejudice to existing sovereign borders; stresses that the same aims of peaceful research and cooperation are broad enough and the situation similar enough to be considered very relevant also in the Arctic context;
9. Supports cooperation within the framework of the Arctic Council that can serve as a framework for peaceful cooperation for the protection of the people of the Arctic and the Arctic itself;
10. Respects the Government of Iceland's initiative to end the EU membership negotiations; believes it is important to maintain good relations and develop closer cooperation with Iceland in fields of common interest;
11. Expresses its concern with regard to developments between the EU and the coastal states concerning fishing quotas, and hopes for a fair solution;
12. Is conscious of the need for resources for a growing world population; recognises that sufficient resources are available for the current world population, particularly if a far-reaching switch is made to the use of renewable energy sources and energy-saving technologies, but that unjust distribution of the exploitation of resources creates extremely poor and extremely rich regions in the world, and therefore calls for political, economic and social measures and a far-reaching switch to renewable energy sources and energy-saving technologies in order to remedy this imbalance; does not regard the environmentally damaging exploitation of the oil and gas reserves believed to exist in the Arctic as a solution, but calls for unlimited protection of this highly sensitive ecosystem;
13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Arctic Council, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the governments and parliaments of the Arctic region states.