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*Plenary sitting*

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**B8-1343/2016**

9.12.2016

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on support for Thalidomide victims  
(2016/3029(RSP))

**Matteo Salvini, Mara Bizzotto, Mario Borghezio, Angelo Ciocca, Lorenzo Fontana**

on behalf of the ENF Group

**European Parliament resolution on support for Thalidomide victims  
(2016/3029(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
  - having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, in particular Articles 3, 26 and 35 thereof,
  - having regard to Written Questions to the Commission E-009231/2014, E-000540/2015, E-006141/2015, E-010259/2015 and E-005523/2016 on the situation of Thalidomide victims,
  - having regard to motions for resolutions B8-0006/2014, B8-0257/2014 and B8-0090/2015 on the situation of Thalidomide victims,
  - having regard to Spanish Royal Decree No 1006 of 5 August 2010, which established the principles relating to compensation and support on the basis of solidarity for Thalidomide victims in Spain in the period 1960-1965,
  - having regard to the Commission’s statement of 14 December 2016 on support for Thalidomide victims,
  - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas, due to the placing on the European market in 1957 of Thalidomide, an antiemetic pharmaceutical product for pregnant women, by the German pharmaceutical company Chemie Grünenthal, at least 20 000 babies were born with serious physical deformities;
- B. whereas the Thalidomide disaster is the most serious public disaster ever caused by a pharmaceutical product;
- C. whereas there are more than 4 000 surviving Thalidomide victims in Europe, including: 2 800 in Germany, 450 in Italy, 400 in the United Kingdom, 400 in Spain, 103 in Sweden and around 90 in Austria;
- D. whereas the conclusions of the study by the University of Heidelberg, ‘*THALIDOMIDE: Enquiries with regard to problems, specific needs and support deficits of thalidomide victims. Summarising report of the first survey results and derivation of first action recommendations*’, of 2012<sup>1</sup> and of the study by the consultancy Firefly Research, ‘*Health, Quality of Life and Employment amongst Thalidomide-affected People – Evidence from the UK*’, of 2015<sup>2</sup>, clearly reveal all the growing physical and

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.fiftyyearfight.org/images/Heidelberg\\_study\\_ENGLISH.pdf](http://www.fiftyyearfight.org/images/Heidelberg_study_ENGLISH.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.thalidomidetrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Firefly-report-March-2015.pdf>

psychological problems which Thalidomide victims are experiencing with the passing of the years, and their consequent specific medical, financial and social needs;

- E. whereas the independent inquiry conducted in 2014 by the international lawyers Ince & Co. clearly demonstrated the irregularities committed in 1970 during the criminal proceedings against the Grünenthal pharmaceutical company, which impaired the correct conduct of the proceedings, preventing the victims from obtaining equitable compensation in the civil courts;
- F. whereas the independent inquiries conducted by the international lawyers Ince & Co. also demonstrated Chemie Grünenthal's culpable concealment from the public of the side-effects of the pharmaceutical on pregnant women and the shortcomings in drug safety monitoring on the part of the States which allowed it to be placed on their markets;
- G. whereas, on 27 May 2015, a number of Members of the European Parliament belonging to all political groups held a press conference at the European Parliament during which there were cross-party expressions of political will and commitment to guarantee Thalidomide victims access to adequate funds and resources to meet their growing health needs<sup>1</sup>;
- H. whereas, during the debate at Parliament's plenary sitting of 9 March 2016, Commissioner Andriukaitis firmly stressed the importance of providing surviving Thalidomide victims with financial support to enable them to meet their ever more enormous medical expenses, recognising the need to find an adequate solution for all the survivors, so as to guarantee their quality of life;
- I. whereas, nearly 60 years on, the survivors are still seeking justice and compensation which will enable them to pay for the costly care that they need on account of their physical condition;
- J. having regard to the fundamental role played in Europe by associations of Thalidomide victims in denouncing this culpable tragedy and defending the rights of its victims;
  - 1. Considers it essential to fully recognise the requirements of the surviving Thalidomide victims in Europe, so as to guarantee their autonomy, access to medical care and an adequate quality of life;
  - 2. Calls on the Commission to act on the commitments given by Commissioner Andriukaitis at Parliament's plenary sitting of 9 March 2016 by drawing up an assistance programme to complement action by Member States to provide financial support for Thalidomide victims and their families;
  - 3. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fiftyyearfight.org/latest/europe-speaks-loudly-with-one-voice:-press-conference>