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WRITTEN DECLARATION

pursuant to Rule 123 of the Rules of Procedure

on the implementation of principle of reciprocity on visa exemptions in relation to Canada and the United States of America

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Written declaration on the implementation of principle of reciprocity on visa exemptions in relation to Canada and the United States of America

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Articles 3 and 8 of the Treaty on European Union, Article 77 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Article 21 of the Charter of fundamental rights of the European Union,
- having regard to Rule 123 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas visa policy is an exclusive competence of the EU but the Commission and the Council are not acting with sufficient consistency on this matter,
- B. whereas, although Canadian and US citizens can travel freely through the EU, the citizens of Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Poland and Romania have to comply with visa requirements when travelling to Canada and the US,
- C. whereas such restrictions could threaten the ratification of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between the EU and Canada,
- 1. Calls on the Commission and the Council to increase political pressure on Canada and the US in order to set the earliest possible date for the removal of these visa requirements;
- 2. Suggests that, otherwise, the EU should establish equivalent measures, including the introduction of a travel fee similar to the US Electronic System for Travel Authorization;
- 3. Calls on the Commission to establish an effective mechanism for enforcing full visa reciprocity for all Member States, including a solidarity clause, ensuring that if a non-EU country breaches the principle of visa reciprocity in respect of one or more Member States, the EU will immediately restore the visa requirement for nationals of that country;
- 4. Instructs its President to forward this declaration, together with the names of the signatories, to the Commission, the Council and the Parliaments of the Member States.