

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

1999



2004

*Session document*

6 September 2000

B5-0703/2000}  
B5-0724/2000}  
B5-0733/2000}  
B5-0737/2000}  
B5-0746/2000}  
B5-

0747/2000}RC1

## JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 50(5) of the Rules of Procedure

by the following Members:

- Konstantinos Hatzidakis, Antonios Trakatellis, Cristina García-Orcoyen Tormo, Francesco Fiori, Françoise D. Grossetête, Arlindo Cunha, Marielle de Sarnez, Encarnación Redondo Jiménez and Joseph Daul, on behalf of the PPE-DE Group
- Minerva Melpomeni Malliori, Giorgos Katiforis, Pasqualina Napoletano, Anna Terrón i Cusí, María Sornosa Martínez, Alexandros Baltas, Anna Karamanou, Ioannis Koukiadis, Emmanouil Mastorakis, Ioannis Souladakis, Dimitrios Tsatsos, Myrsini Zorba, Paulo Casaca and António José Seguro, on behalf of the PSE Group
- Carlos Bautista Ojeda, Marie Anne Isler Béguin and Monica Frassoni, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group
- Sylviane Ainardi, Salvador Jové Peres, Efstratios Korakas, Ilda Figueiredo, Mihail Papayannakis and Armando Cossutta, on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group
- Cristiana Muscardini, Nello Musumeci and Luís Queiró, on behalf of the UEN Group

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replacing the motions by the following groups:

- PSE (B5-0703/2000),
- PPE-DE (B5-0724/2000)
- Verts/ALE (B5-0733/2000),
- UEN (B5-0737/2000),
- GUE/NGL (B5-0746/2000),
- GUE/NGL (B5-0747/2000),

on forest fires in Europe

## **European Parliament resolution on forest fires in Europe**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the forest fires which occurred in Europe in the summer of 2000, especially in Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Portugal and the Balkans,
  - having regard to Decision 1999/847/EC establishing a Community action programme in the field of civil protection,
  - having regard to Regulation 2158/92/EC on protection of the Community's forests against fire and the proposal for amendment currently under negotiation (COM 99/379 and EP report A5-152/2000),
  - having regard to the resolutions adopted by the European Parliament in January and April 2000 on the consequences of the storms in the winter of 1999 for the forestry industry and the environment,
- A. having regard to the large number of fires which have devastated large areas in Southern Europe, killing several people and burning more than 100 000 hectares of forests and cultivated land, a large number of stock farms and other holdings, and causing wholesale destructions, including serious damages to dwellings and infrastructures,
- B. having regard to the disastrous consequences for the economies of the regions where the fires occurred;
- C. having regard to the importance of Mediterranean forests to the regional economy, regional planning, the living environment and the maintenance of biological diversity and the fact that the surface area destroyed by fire greatly exceeds the area reforested each year, having an extremely serious economic, social and ecological impact,

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- D. having regard to the absence of any Community forestry policy and the amendments to Regulation 2158/92/EC, which provide for no more than mere monitoring of the state of forests,
- E. whereas the Member States, especially the poorer ones, are not able to confront natural disasters of this magnitude and need solidarity and assistance,
1. Expresses its sympathy and solidarity to the families of the deceased and to the inhabitants of the stricken areas and pays tribute to the promptness and dedication of the firefighters and voluntary workers, who tirelessly fought the fires, often at the risk of their lives,
  2. Strongly condemns the criminal behaviour of pyromaniacs and of people using fire to benefit from insurance and compensation schemes thus destroying land and putting citizens and firefighters' lives in danger;
  3. Calls on the Commission and national/regional authorities to adapt the relevant legislation in order to ensure that agricultural subsidised schemes do not lead to perverse effects giving incentives to land destruction;
  4. Asks the Commission and the Member States concerned by forest fires to adapt the 2000-2006 regional development programmes financed by the Structural Funds in order to tackle the issues related to forest fires with preventive, restoration and reforestation measures, in particular in the Mediterranean and other South European areas;
  5. Asks the Commission and the Member States to use the 2000-2006 Community Initiative INTERREG to develop actions in the field of spacial planning and sustainable land use management in the areas affected by forest fires;
  6. Calls for the policy of reafforestation of damaged areas to be conducted showing due respect for local plant species and the diversity of ecosystems, and emphasises once again that special attention should be given to the restoration of rural landscapes; stresses that efforts aimed at introducing ecological management of resources should ensure that the potential of any given area, including its agro-sylvo-pastoral potential, is matched with appropriate activities, which can revitalise the area by providing alternative forms of sustainable development; points out that the existence of such activities in forestry areas can help with surveillance and act as a deterrent against the starting of fires, whether deliberate or accidental;
  7. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to take all the necessary initiatives and measures to introduce forest registers in countries where they do not exist, thereby contributing to the protection, development, ecological recovery and productive exploitation of forests in these countries and calls on the Member States to combat property speculation with a view to protecting and reafforesting devastated areas;
  8. Calls for the establishment of inventories of economic activities using up space and for measures to identify techniques for making the best possible use thereof and for preventing

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fire risks, as well as the compilation of geographical databases enabling a more effective approach to be taken to spatial planning in rural areas and optimum use of natural resources;

9. Asks the Commission to propose a legislative initiative in order to increase the exchange of technical and investigative information and develop at European level the coordination of police forces specialised in the field of agro-environment and forestry;
10. Calls upon local, regional, national and, when necessary, European institutions to launch joint information campaigns and environmental education programmes in order to raise people's awareness of the risks related to forest fires;
11. Calls on local authorities to improve forest management and to adopt the necessary land-planning and budgetary measures enabling firefighters to detect and act quickly when a fire starts;
12. Calls upon the Commission to set up a European Fire Prevention Centre for the systematic study and introduction of new technical methods for the prevention and fighting of forest fires in the Mediterranean and other southern European countries;
13. Welcomes the initiatives taken recently by the Commission and the Joint Research Center to develop risk indicators in the Mediterranean Member States, thus enabling firefighters to evaluate possible needs for emergency action, and calls for further initiatives to be taken in this field;
14. Calls on the Commission to increase resources invested in civil protection at EU level;
15. Calls on the Commission to promote the creation of European Union specialised mechanisms, which will co-ordinate and actively participate in prevention and intervention during natural and industrial disasters;
16. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the governments of the Member States and the local authorities in the affected areas.