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3 December 2003

B5-0514/2003 }
B5-0523/2003 }
B5-0525/2003 } RC1

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 37(4) of the Rules of Procedure, by

- Hans-Gert Poettering, Ilkka Suominen, Jorge Salvador Hernández Mollar, Othmar Karas, Philippe Morillon, Arie M. Oostlander and Hubert Pirker on behalf of the PPE-DE Group
- Enrique Barón Crespo, Margrietus J. van den Berg, Robert Goebbels, Stephen Hughes, Jan Marinus Wiersma, Anna Terrón i Cusí, Hannes Swoboda, Jannis Sakellariou and Martin Schulz on behalf of the PSE Group
- Jules Maaten, Baroness Ludford, Bob van den Bos and Ole Andreasen on behalf of the ELDR Group
- Gerard Collins

replacing the motions by the following groups:

- ELDR (B5-0514/2003),
- PSE (B5-0523/2003),
- PPE-DE (B5-0525/2003),

on the Council and Commission statements on the preparation of the European Council in Brussels on 12-13 December 2003

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PE 338.640}
PE 339.815}
PE 339.817} RC1

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European Parliament resolution on the Council and Commission statements on the preparation of the European Council in Brussels on 12-13 December 2003

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Council and Commission statements on the preparation of the European Council in Brussels on 12-13 December 2003,
- having regard to Rule 37(4) of the Rules of Procedure,

Economic growth

1. Supports the view that the European Union is at a critical point in its development after prolonged economic stagnation and a high level of unemployment; regrets that in such a situation the European Union is not able to speak and to act on the basis of a common strategy;
2. Expresses its concern about the decisions taken by the ECOFIN Council on 25 November 2003 concerning the implementation of the Stability and Growth Pact; is of the opinion that stability is a public good which has to be defended and that economic growth leads to more stability;
3. Considers that economic policies should continue to be aimed at producing job-creating and sustainable growth; welcomes the European Growth Initiative; regrets that ten years after Delors' White Paper and three years after the launch of the Lisbon strategy, the decisions needed to promote economic growth have been delayed; calls on the European Council to give new impetus to this process;
4. Urges the European Council to respect the European Parliament's rights in the codecision process on the revision of the TENs when adopting the so-called 'quick-start programme' and defining projects for investment in trans-European networks (TENs), energy, telecoms, IT and R&D infrastructure projects of the European Union; regrets that the 'quick-start programme' consists only of already agreed but not yet implemented projects which focus exclusively on infrastructure investments;
5. Calls again for full integration of the environmental and sustainability aspects of the 'quick-start programme'; calls also for an ambitious plan for development of clean, environmentally friendly technologies; reiterates that the environmental impact of all EU policies should be properly assessed before any action is taken in line with the Lisbon and Göteborg process;
6. Stresses that boosting investments in key projects cannot solve either the immediate or the long-term problems facing the European economy; considers that the European Council in December should focus on achieving the existing objectives of the Lisbon agenda in order to make the Union the most competitive knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010;
7. Considers that a real boost to the European Union's productivity and economic potential requires a reorientation of budgetary allocations in order to support more effective Europe-wide investment;

8. Considers it essential for the success of the European Growth Initiative to focus on projects that are sustainable, economically and financially viable, entail a high level of cofinancing and have a clear European value; insists that, alongside the TENs and R&D projects, the European Council and Member States should also agree to raise investment in human capital across the European economy and – together with the EIB – reallocate resources to skills and lifelong learning measures; considers that investment in human capital must be given the highest priority in order to attain the Lisbon goals;
9. Underlines, in this context, the fundamental importance of completing effective EU legislation to open the market in postal and passenger services, taking into account the necessity of guaranteeing at the same time universal access to public services; calls for European airspace to be redesigned via the creation of a Single European Sky; calls on the Council to take more concerted action to improve competition in the allocation of slots at Community airports;
10. Points out that the European Growth Initiative is also dependent on removal of regulatory and administrative barriers to many aspects of cross-border cooperation, thus highlighting that much remains to be done to complete an enlarged Internal Market, conducive to Europe-wide research, innovation and entrepreneurship; calls for impact assessments to be carried out on all new European legislation in order to avoid additional burdens on SMEs, and in this context welcomes the Commission's call for competitiveness impact assessment throughout the decision-making process;
11. Recalls that Europe's underperformance in R&D and investment reflects specifically the poor performance of the private sector; calls therefore on European businesses to respond to this initiative by demonstrating their willingness to enter into the public-private partnerships needed to achieve more growth and employment in Europe;
12. Welcomes the commitment to full employment, quality and productivity at work and inclusive labour markets for both the old and new Member States; takes note of the demand for labour markets to be made more flexible while providing appropriate levels of security for workers;
13. Points out that labour market reforms must result in better jobs, in order to create a knowledge-based economy; insists that, as economic and social progress have to be mutually supportive, these reforms must be achieved in close cooperation with the social partners; calls on the social partners at European level to strengthen their joint multiannual work programme in particular for industrial change and adaptability of workers and enterprises;
14. Reiterates its support for the European Employment Guidelines and the current Employment Strategy, as an efficient instrument to foster employment in the European Union, while respecting and strengthening the European social model; notes that the European Employment Taskforce has identified the requirement of increasing the adaptability of enterprises and workers as one of four essential areas for reform; will take up all the Task Force's findings and the outcome of the Tripartite Social Summit in the context of the 2004 employment guidelines package; is of the opinion that the social partners can be an important medium for achieving the Lisbon objectives;

Freedom, security and justice

15. Takes note of the recent Commission proposal to set up a European Border Management Agency to improve operational cooperation between Member States, but stresses the need for any structure to include the full involvement of the Commission and Parliament;
16. Notes that only three Member States (Denmark, Spain and Portugal) have transposed the European Arrest Warrant, urges the European Council to insist that the remaining Member States respect the deadline of 31 December 2003 and also calls on the Council to adopt a framework decision on common standards for procedural law;
17. Deplores the failure of EU leaders and the Council Presidency to discuss the rights of the Guantánamo detainees to a fair trial, and insists that the European Council and the Presidency undertake to raise this matter at the highest level with the US administration;
18. Regrets that the last JHA Council did not reach an agreement on a common European asylum policy despite the deadline set by the European Council, and insists on action (early in the Irish Presidency) based on high protection requirements;
19. Stresses the need to make major progress in defining and implementing a comprehensive European immigration policy, on the lines agreed at Tampere and developed since by the Commission;
20. Takes note of the Council's desire to develop relations with countries of origin or transit for migration flows, but observes again that progress has been very limited as regards the negotiation of readmission agreements at European level;
21. Recalls its concern about the need for real and comprehensive action from third countries of origin and transit in the management of their migration flows, in order to stop the daily tragedies off the Mediterranean coast;
22. Urges the integration of migration issues into the Union's relations with third countries and believes that stabilisation programmes, in the form of positive economic and trade-related measures, can be an incentive for countries of origin and transit countries to guarantee compliance with voluntary return agreements;
23. Agrees with the importance given by the Council to the fight against drug trafficking, which should undermine the financing of the illegal activities of traffickers and criminal or terrorist organisations;

Enlargement

24. Notes that great progress has been achieved by the 10 acceding countries in adopting, implementing and enforcing the 'acquis' but that certain important tasks must still be undertaken between now and accession; looks forward to welcoming the new Member States to the Union on 1 May 2004; notes that the deficiencies in the degree of adaptation to EU legislation and policy threaten the possibility of the accession countries benefiting from EU subsidies and exporting food products, and is confident that enlargement will take place under good conditions;

25. Urges the European Council to ensure that the framework for the conclusion of accession negotiations with Bulgaria and Romania will enable them to join the Union in 2007 if the accession criteria have been met; is of the opinion that the financial framework for the accession of Bulgaria and Romania should be based on the same principles as apply to the ten countries acceding in 2004, and the principle that accession may not lead to a deterioration in the net budgetary position in comparison with the year preceding accession;
26. Underlines that meeting the target date will depend on the real progress made not only in the negotiations but also on the ground, which requires a considerable stepping-up of their efforts and preparations;
27. Calls on the European Council to play its role in ensuring that all parties concerned contribute fully to the search for a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem; takes note of the elections which will be held on 14 December in the northern part of Cyprus and hopes that they can help to move forward the peace process within the framework of the UN and based on the UN Secretary-General's Plan;
28. Is convinced that, in this framework, the solution of the Cyprus problem and the reunification of the island will benefit all its inhabitants and will be seriously taken into account when deciding on the possible opening of accession negotiations with Turkey;

Foreign Affairs

Turkey

29. Calls on the Council to devote particular attention to the further developments and the progress of reform in Turkey; in the aftermath of the terrible bomb attacks of recent days, expresses its condolences to all the families of the dead and injured, and expects the Council to maintain and foster its engagement in Turkey in order to express the full solidarity of the European Union;

Iraq

30. Expresses its deep concern at the situation in Iraq and regards the proposals made by the US Administration and the Provisional Council for a clear timetable for transferring sovereignty to Iraqi representatives as a first positive step; renews its request to the Council to stress the EU initiatives in the post-war situation by adopting a common position;
31. Reaffirms its commitment to the most recent United Nations Security Council resolution on Iraq, which was adopted unanimously, and welcomes the European Union's commitment to play an important role in the political and economic reconstruction of that country;
32. Notes the outcome of the Madrid Donors' Conference on Iraq and calls on the Council and Commission to provide full and public access to information on all activities funded with European Union taxpayers' money through the International Reconstruction Fund Facility and/or the European Union budget;

Middle East

33. Calls on the Council and Commission to urgently further the Quartet's initiative in order to

implement the Roadmap that was also endorsed by the UN Security Council in its Resolution 1515 and to fully support the Geneva Initiative, which constitutes a concrete and sustainable proposal for achieving peace;

Georgia

34. Calls on the Council and Commission to closely follow the evolution of the situation in Georgia, providing all the necessary financial and technical assistance to the authorities so as to support, stabilise and rebuild the institutions, define a strategy for reforms and prepare for presidential and general elections;
35. Regards the appointment by the Council of a Special Representative for South Caucasus as a good initiative for a more active role of the EU in the region; calls on the Council to make all the necessary efforts to restart the three peace processes which have been deadlocked for a long time in order to achieve stability in the region;

The OSCE Summit in Maastricht

36. Deplores the fact that the OSCE Summit could not reach conclusions due to differences of opinion on the situation in Moldova; calls on the European Council to address this and other divisive issues in the framework of the EU-Russia relationship;

EU security strategy

37. Stresses the importance of the adoption of the paper to be submitted by the High Representative for CFSP, Javier Solana, through which the EU must find its way to a clear prioritisation of its foreign and security interests and objectives; underlines that an EU security strategy can be developed only on the basis of multilateralism and within the UN system; is convinced of the great contribution that such a strategy, based on a global context going beyond the strictly military dimension and ensuring the deployment of a whole package of political, economic, social and military measures, can prevent and resolve conflicts;

ESDP

38. Pays tribute to the first three crisis operations successfully carried out within the framework of the ESDP, welcomes the establishment of an EU Agency for Defence and calls upon the Council to further advance the setting-up of a comprehensive and credible European defence identity, including a European collective capacity for planning and command of EU operations, able to act autonomously of NATO, yet not undermining the alliance or unnecessarily duplicating structures; welcomes the proposals of the Ministerial Meeting which was held in Naples; insists that it be consulted in advance of decisions on ESDP operations and points out that only a well-informed Parliament is in a position to take relevant decisions swiftly and efficiently;

WMD

39. Calls for full implementation of the EU Action Plan against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and calls upon the Council and Commission to further advance the work on

the EU's emerging strategy on WMD proliferation as encompassed in the Presidency conclusions of the Thessaloniki Summit and the Basic Principles agreed on 16 June by focusing in particular on:

- further universalising the key disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and, where necessary, strengthening them, as well as the means of ensuring compliance with their provisions;
- enhancing the EU's political, financial and technical support for agencies in charge of verification and
- strengthening arms export control policies and practices within the European Union and beyond;

Anti-personnel mines

40. Calls on the Council to ask the present and future Member States to accede to the Convention on the prohibition of the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines and on their destruction as soon as possible, in order to allow the European Union to play a full and active part in the First Review Conference on the Convention in 2004 in support of its universalisation, consolidation and full implementation;

Guantánamo Bay

41. Reiterates its call for the Council Presidency to raise the issue of the right of prisoners detained at Guantánamo Bay to a fair trial with the US authorities and to enter this issue on the agenda for the next summit between the European Union and the United States;

Transatlantic Dimension

42. Calls upon the European Council to request the Commission, once the IGC is completed, to engage the Governments of the United States and Canada in a joint review of transatlantic relations, with a view to replacing the NTA with a Transatlantic Partnership Agreement, responsive to the real common interests and capabilities of the partners, by 2007;
43. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the European Council, the Council, the Commission and the parliaments of the Member States.