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# Export of toxic waste to Africa

## Greens/EFA motion for a resolution

*Tabled by Frithjof Schmidt, Margrete Auken, Marie Anne Isler Béguin, Carl Schlyter and Sepp Kusstatscher on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*

*The European Parliament*,

 having regard to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal,

 having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas around 500 tonnes of chemical waste have been dumped in several areas in the neighbourhood of Abidjan, where 5 million people live,

B. whereas eight people have died so far and 85 000 have been taken to hospital for treatment for nosebleeds, diarrhoea, nausea, eye irritation and breathing difficulties; whereas the consequences of this dumping of toxic waste may be far-reaching, including soil contamination and surface and groundwater pollution,

C. whereas the toxic waste was dumped by a Greek-owned, Panamanian-flagged tanker leased by Trafigura, a Netherlands-based company; whereas such sharing of responsibilities creates a systematic and unacceptable problem with regard to the enforcement of EC legislation,

D. whereas environmental regulations in the countries of the North have made it expensive to dispose of hazardous waste,

E. whereas the Amsterdam port authorities found out about the hazardous nature of the waste upon unloading, but then pumped the waste back on board; whereas the Netherlands authorities allowed the ship to leave their territory despite knowing about the nature of the waste and about the captain's unwillingness to pay for environmentally sound disposal in the Netherlands,

F. whereas the company had the opportunity to dispose of the waste in a legal and safe manner in Europe, but chose a cheaper alternative in Côte d'Ivoire,

G. whereas Africa is a dumping ground for all kinds of hazardous waste; whereas Greenpeace has identified 80 sites where hazardous waste from developed countries has been dumped: old computers in Nigeria, radioactive tanks in Somalia, dumping of chlorine in Cameroon, etc.,

H. whereas most African countries do not have strong regulations to protect the environment and the livelihood of their populations against hazardous waste,

I. whereas all exports from the EU of waste for disposal have been prohibited since May 1994, pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 259/1993; whereas the export of hazardous waste from the EU to non-OECD countries has been prohibited since January 1997, pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 259/1993,

J. whereas the dumping of hazardous waste in Côte d'Ivoire is just the tip of the iceberg of ongoing shipments of hazardous waste from the EU to non-OECD countries; whereas major amounts of electrical and electronic waste are being dumped in non-OECD countries under the pretext of 'reuse'; whereas a significant number of old EU vessels laden with toxic substances and materials are being scrapped in Asia under conditions that are extremely harmful to workers and the environment,

1. Calls on the Commission, the Netherlands and Côte d'Ivoire to fully investigate this case, to establish responsibilities at all levels, to bring to justice those responsible for this environmental crime and to ensure that the environmental contamination is comprehensively dealt with and the victims are compensated;

2. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to take all necessary measures to ensure full enforcement of the existing waste shipment regulation;

3. Calls on the Commission to make legislative proposals to close the loopholes in the current regime and so end the shipments to non-OECD countries of waste electrical and electronic equipment and obsolete vessels;

4. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission, the Member States, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire.

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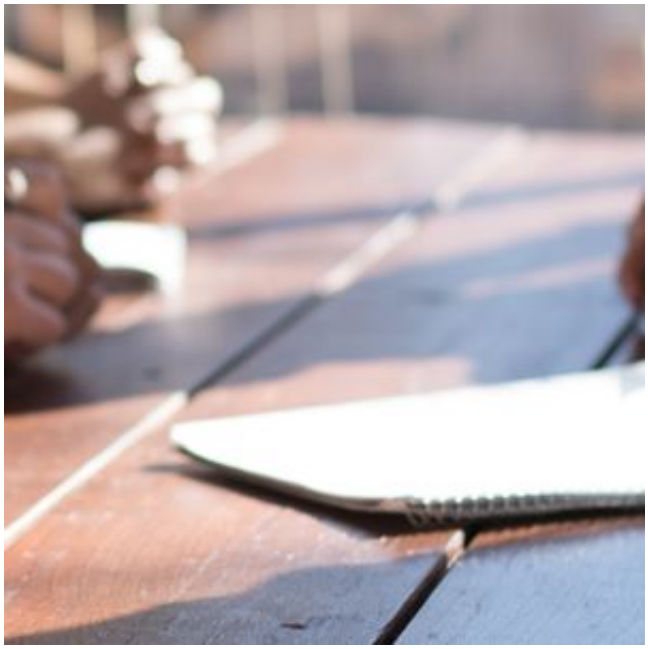
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