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Terrorist attacks on USA

Position of the Greens/EFA Group

The Green/EFA Group condemned, in the strongest possible terms, the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. In the European Parliamentary debate our Co-President, Heidi Hautala, described the terrorists' actions as 'an attack on human civilization' and a 'crime against humanity'. She spoke out in solidarity with the American people who have suffered so much in this calamity.

While recognizing the United States' rights of self-defence according to Article 51 of the UN Charter, the Group calls on the Bush Administration to act with restraint and respect for basic human values. Now, after one week, the position of the Green/EFA group is based on the following observations and conclusions.

1. The Green/EFA Group reiterates its condemnation of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 which must be considered as crimes against humanity
2. The reaction of the USA and the international community must be proportional to the nature of the attacks. These crimes should be opposed with justice, rather than with revenge of retaliation. The criminals must be found, arrested and disarmed (within this framework the use of force can be necessary and legitimate, provided that it falls under the auspices of a legitimate international body), tried and punished
3. The Green/EFA Group firmly rejects all military actions that can cause the death of innocent civilians and therefore calls on the EU not to take part in actions of indiscr iminate retaliation against the population of Afghanistan
4. The Green/EFA Group urges the EU to reject a war mentality based on partnerships with undemocratic regimes as this would trigger a spiral of violence and prevent deomocratisation in certain countries
5. The international community must take collective action to establish and sustain effective multilateral instruments to combat terrorism. Current events have shown existing instruments and international co-operation to be highly unsatisfactory.
6. The Green/EFA Group is convinced that a multilateral approach is necessary in the struggle against terrorism, notably in the field of prevention. We insist that the UN provides the most appropriate framework for the requisite international co-operation
7. We consider the invoking of article 5 of the NATO Treaty last week as a sign of solidarity, we all agree that it cannot and should not be interpreted by the US government as a blank check for any military action. The USA should take its European allies seriously and avoid unilateral action under the NATO flag.
8. It cannot be stressed too much that the fight against terrorism is not a fight against Islamic countries or a fight against Islamic people living in the USA, Europe or anywhere else. On the contrary, a coalition between Islamic states and the Western world must be forged for the sake of global stability.

9. The Green/EFA Group welcomes the decision of the EP to set up an Euro-Muslim forum in the months ahead. Concrete steps must be taken to avoid the development of a "logic of a confrontation" between 'civilisations'. The Green/EfA Group will take the initiative to set up a permanent forum between all civil society actors in Europe and the Islamic World
10. We support all efforts to restart negotiations between the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority. A lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian problem would be of great help in the fight against the so-called 'Islamic fundamentalist inspired' terrorism. We therefore call for a co-ordinated initiative by the EU, the USA and the UN in the Middle East to collectively exert all the necessary diplomatic, political and economic pressure on both parties for the resumption of negotiations
11. The fight against terrorism is proclaimed as a fight for democracy and human rights. In supporting this approach, we believe it would be consistent to effect fundamental changes in the foreign policy of the USA and Europe in the Middle East. No longer can inhumane regimes be supported in the name of 'realpolitics' or for economic and/or geopolitical reasons.
12. The promotion of long term strategies of conflict prevention, sustainable economic development and the respect for human rights should be at the core of a future foreign policy in the perspective that terrorism breeds on the absence of these values. The US and EU should combine in a new commitment to tackle the sources of desperation in the South, and the huge long-term dangers to our environment and society from the persistence of deep inequalities and injustice across the world
13. To improve the effectiveness of the fight against terrorism inside the EU the co-operation between the police and intelligence services of the memberstates has to be improved. This can only be accepted under the condition of strengthened democratic control, both in the memberstates and on a European level and under the condition that basic civil liberties are not violated.
14. Financing and training of terrorist networks by the super powers has been part of an international policy generating painful backlashes. EU has to give up this attitude in favor of a policy of transparent international co-operation with democratic countries and with the support to democrats in the others. Furthermore, EU has to take concrete commitments in the fight against money laundring and encourage the US to co-operate in closing of fiscal paradises.
15. Aware that terrorist networks are closely linked to international organised crime, we underline the need for closer co-operation and co-ordination on law enforcement and justice on a transnational level. An effective fight against terrorism requires a multidisciplinary approach.
16. The current global action against terrorism should not be used as an opportunity by other countries to get rid of their own internal religious minorities (in particular: Russia with Chechnya; China with Xinyang) as there cannot be a military solution for these issues.
17. We urge the USA to revise its policy on missile defence. The terrorist attacks proved alas that high tech military defence systems are of no use in these sort of circumstances. Other ways - political, economic and diplomatic - should be found to defend our countries against the threat of terrorist organizations or countries.
18. We support all efforts to bring the perpetrators of these outrageous attacks to justice. The International Criminal Court, established in 1998 is in our opinion the legitimate instance to prosecute and judge those responsible. We therefore urge all countries, and in particular the United States, to ratify the Rome Statute and to establish the ICC without delay; the mandate of the ICC should be extended to explicitly combat terrorism.
19. The United Nations must be democratised and strengthened at all levels. It is the only global platform that we have and the only suitable to deal with such issues in a globally acceptable manner. The EU should work hard to convince the USA in this perspective, and to ensure that any action taken internationally is within the limits of the UN Charter; In this perspective the EU-Member States should increase their financial contribution to the UN.

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