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Brussels Agenda

Weekly preview of the Greens/EFA group - 6-10 Dec. 2010

EP priorities:

- EU budget 2011 - saga continues (budget committee vote, Weds.)
- EU-Libya framework agreement (foreign affairs committee vote, Thurs.)

EU and other priorities:

- Fair prices for dairy farmers (Commission, Weds.)
- UN climate summit (UNFCCC COP16 in Cancun, until 10 Dec.)

Greens/EFA events:

- The impact of the Nobel Prize on EU-China relations (press conference, Tues.)
- Kosovo elections and EU electoral observation (press conference, Tues.)
- Human rights in Colombia (hearing, Tues.)
- The future of EU cohesion policy (workshop, Tues.)
- ITER: a European money pit and scientific mirage (conference, Weds.)
- Access to healthcare for undocumented women and children (hearing, Weds.)
- The challenge of labour migration in Europe (conference, Thurs.)
- EU structural funds and energy efficient housing (hearing, Thurs.)

EU budget 2011 - saga continues

Weds. 8 Dec. - Budget committee vote

Hot on the heels of the breakdown in negotiations between the EP and Council on the EU budget 2011, the EU Commission came out with a 'new' proposal, which will be voted on by the EP budget committee. For the Greens, the new proposal does not offer substantial improvements from the position at the end of the trialogue negotiations. While the new proposal does introduce some changes on budget 'flexibility', these fall short of the current situation. On the crucial issue of formalising the role of the Parliament in future negotiations on the EU financial framework, there is hardly any improvement.

EU-Libya framework agreement

Weds. 8 Dec. - Foreign affairs committee vote

The EP foreign affairs committee will vote on a report on the EU-Libya framework agreement. With

negotiations on the agreement still ongoing, the EU Commission signed a 'cooperation agenda' with Libya on migration in October, including allocating 250 million for projects purportedly aimed at improving treatment of refugees and the upgrade of border surveillance systems. Green MEPs are concerned about the lack of transparency on this agreement, notably as regards the negotiating mandate. This lack of transparency is particularly worrying in light of the human rights record of Libya, the treatment of migrants under the Rome-Tripoli accords, and Libya's closure of the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in June.

Fair prices for dairy farmers

Weds. 8 Dec. - Commission proposal

The EU Commission is set to come forward with proposals on the future of the dairy sector, in particular dealing with price concerns for dairy farmers. The current system in which a handful of dominant processors and wholesalers can set artificially low prices threatens the continued survival of small farmers. The Greens believe the Commission should support farmers to cooperate and strengthen their hand in demanding fair prices through a binding milk contract framework and support for milk farmer producer organisations and want binding competition legislation to prohibit discounters from selling milk below production cost.

EU climate summit in Cancun

UNFCCC COP16 all week until 10 Dec.

After being sidelined at last year's UN climate talks in Copenhagen, the EU must try and regain its credibility at this year's summit in Cancun. Climate aid for developing countries will be a crucial issue in Cancun and the Greens want the EU to live up to its promises to provide new, additional fast-start climate aid amidst concerns the EU is falling short. Unequivocally signaling its openness to continuing with the Kyoto Protocol would also be a crucial step for the EU to take to rebuild relations with developing countries. The Greens also believe the EU should agree to the long overdue strengthening of its 2020 emissions reduction target (from 20% to 30%). (all the news and opinions at: www.stopclimatechange.net)

The impact of the Nobel Prize on EU-China relations

Tues. 7 Dec. - Press conference, European Parliament, Press Room PHS 0A50 (11.00)

3 days ahead of the Nobel Prize awards, with this year's peace price going to Chinese rights defender Liu Xiaobo, Greens/EFA co-president **Dany Cohn-Bendit** will host this press conference on the impact on EU-China relations. It will include Olivier Basile of Reporters without Borders, Grégoire Théry of the FIDH and Vincent Metten, European Director of the 'International Campaign for Tibet'.

Kosovo elections and EU electoral observation

Tues. 7 Dec. - Press conference, European Parliament, Press Room PHS 0A50 (10.30)

Green MEP Ulrike Lunacek, who is also the EP rapporteur on Kosovo, will be part of the EU electoral observation team for the crucial parliamentary elections in Kosovo on 12 December. She will be joined by Doris Pack MEP for this press conference, which aims to call on the authorities in Kosovo to ensure free and fair elections.

Human rights in Colombia

Tues. 7 Dec. - Hearing, European Parliament, Room ASP 1G2 (10-12.00)

The civil war in Colombia continues with human rights abuses occurring on an almost daily basis. With the EU looking to conclude a free trade agreement with Colombia, this hearing will bring together experts

from Colombia and policy-makers to give a true assessment of the situation there.

The future of EU cohesion policy

Tues. 7 Dec. - Greens/EFA workshop, European Parliament, Room ASP 1G3 (9.30-12.00)

This workshop aims to get input from stakeholders on the future of EU cohesion policy. The EU Commission recently outlined its plans on future priorities for and reform of EU cohesion policy in the 5th Cohesion Report. The Greens want to introduce the concept of GDP plus as an indicator for future regional development and want greener structural funds.

ITER: a European money pit and scientific mirage

Weds. 8 Dec. - Greens/EFA conference, European Parliament, Room ASP 1G3 (18.30-20.30)

Billions of Euro of public funds is being poured into the ITER nuclear fusion project, despite the high possibility that it may never yield any commercially-viable results. The public bill is ballooning, as cost estimates are overrun. This conference will seek to address the concerns with pouring public money into the money pit of this scientific mirage. (info from michele.rivasi@europarl.europa.eu)

Access to healthcare for undocumented women and children

Weds. 8 Dec. - Hearing, European Parliament, Room ASP 3G2 (16-18.00)

This hearing aims to feed into the debate about health inequalities faced by particularly vulnerable groups; and to explore the potential of EU policies in the fields of public health, social inclusion and children's rights to tackle the situation faced by undocumented migrants. It will bring together experts from EU institutions and civil society to this end.

The challenge of labour migration in Europe

Thurs. 9 Dec. - Greens/EFA conference, European Parliament, Room ASP 1G3 (9.00-17.30)

This conference will gather politicians and stakeholders from across Europe to discuss the challenge of labour migration. It will address the legal aspects and migrants' rights, as well as social cohesion. (info from barbara.lochbihler@europarl.europa.eu)

EU structural funds and energy efficient housing

Thurs. 9 Nov. - Greens/EFA hearing, European Parliament, Room ASP 5E1 (14-18.00)

This hearing will make an assessment of how EU structural funds have been used to improve the energy efficiency of the existing building stock in Europe. The assessment is a sort of 'mid-term review' of the funds. (info from aura.vanhue@europarl.europa.eu)

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