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Greens/EFA Round up

Debriefing of the Strasbourg plenary week 16-19 January 2017

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EP Presidency

Tuesday 17 January: plenary

Jean Lambert was our Groups' candidate the European Parliament presidency. For Jean, the European Parliament must be a standard-bearer for human rights and democracy, solidarity and environmental progress. The President is our face to the world and must be a strong proponent of these values.

The Italian EPP MEP Antonio Tajani has been elected President of the European Parliament. The Greens/EFA call on him to fulfil the commitments he made to our group and in plenary. We don't agree with Mr. Tajani on many topics, including women's rights or how to work with lobbyists. As the new President, he has to leave his political past behind him and stand above his personal convictions.

- Read Jean Lambert's statement
- Social media
- Press release (DE/EN)

EP Vice-Presidency

Wednesday 18 January: plenary

The European Parliament has re-elected Wednesday Ulrike Lunacek as Vice-President of the European Parliament. This will be her second term as Vice-President, having previously been elected in July 2014. Our Group is delighted that Ulrike will continue to strongly advocate European values and fundamental rights of individuals and minorities, and ensure the parliament demonstrates these values to the wider world.

- Press release (DE/EN/FR)
- Social media

New MEPs joins Greens/EFA Group

Monday 16 January

Five Star MEP Marco Affronte joined Greens/EFA Group as independent member. With him, we add Italian as a nationality within our group. His move shows that our group and individual Five Star members in the European Parliament are close on many issues and we wholeheartedly look forward to working with him. Marco Affronte sits on the ENVI and FISH Committees and is a member of the EU-Turkey and EU-Albania Delegations. We also welcomed Jordi Solé i Ferrando, who replaces Ernest Maragall with the European Free Alliance. He sits in the ITRE Committee and is substitute in CULT, BUDG and TAXE. He is a member of the EU-Turkey and substitute in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean.

- Latest press release (DE/EN/IT)

Brexit

Tuesday 17 January

British Prime Minister Theresa May delivered Tuesday a highly anticipated speech, outlining her position for the Brexit negotiations. The speech confirms that the British Government has chosen the hardest form of separation between the UK and the European Union, exiting the single market and the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice. For the Greens, the speech sets a self-defeating agenda. The British PM has deliberately chosen to interpret the referendum along the lines of the Tory hard-liners. This is a slap in the face for those who want to establish the new UK-EU relationship. The only point on which we can agree is the wish to come to an early deal to guarantee the rights of EU nationals living in Britain, and of those British citizens who have chosen to make their home elsewhere in the EU.

- Press release (EN/ES/FR)

European Pillar of Social Rights

Thursday 19 January: plenary

MEPs adopted Thursday a report on the European Pillar of Social Rights. Our Group welcomes the report since we consider the European Parliament has a key role to play in the development of a European pillar of social rights (EPSR), on equal footing with the Council. However, it is important that the EPSR is not limited to a declaration of principles or good intentions but that it consists of concrete and specific tools to make social Europe a reality for everyone. The report contains good indications on where the EPSR should go, but a lot of work is still needed from the institutions, in cooperation with all stakeholders concerned, to make the enjoyment of social rights a reality for all people in the EU.

- Text adopted

Further information
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International Science and Technology Centre

Thursday 19 January: plenary

The European Parliament adopted Thursday a resolution on the conclusion of the agreement continuing the International Science and Technology Centre. The centres' main purpose is to promote a culture of security. It promotes the improvement of international mechanisms for the prevention of the proliferation of WMDs and their delivery systems. It will also give scientists and engineers relevant knowledge and opportunities for training and alternative employment in a peaceful manner. It is very important to note that this centre and its activities are to be seen as attempt to limit the proliferation of knowledge about chemical, biological and nuclear weapons especially in the post Soviet Union space. This is a contribution to disarmament and conversion and will contribute to Europe's safety and security.

- Text adopted

Further information
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Tackling the challenges of the Union Customs Code implementation

Thursday 19 January: plenary

MEPs voted Thursday in favour of a report tackling the challenges of the Union Customs Code implementation. It is an important legislation for the functioning of the Customs Union and our group supports the calls for a swift and complete implementation. The resolution calls for an ambitious implementation strategy in line with the EU trade policy agenda and underlines the importance of uniform electronic procedures in customs. It also emphasises the aims of easing flow of goods, reduce trade costs and enhance cooperation among Member States.

- Text adopted

Further information
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Money-laundering blacklist

Thursday 19 January

The European Parliament rejected Thursday a delegated act on third countries at high-risk of money laundering, and has urged the Commission to make a new assessment on which countries should be included on the blacklist. The fourth Anti-Money Laundering Directive (AMLD), adopted in 2015, empowers the Commission to identify high-risk third countries. The blacklist rejected today is a revision of the previous list published in July 2016, which included only 11 countries of which not one is a major tax haven. In light of recent leaks revealing money laundering and tax crimes, it is ridiculous that Panama and other famous havens for dirty money are still not on the Commission's blacklist. If the Commission is serious about tackling Money Laundering and the crimes it hides, then it must try harder and conduct its own assessment, rather than relying solely on external information. The Greens have helped defeat the right wing coalition of EPP and ECR, making clear that we expect a much more ambitious approach from the Commission.

- Press release (DE/EN/FR)

Further information
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Greens/EFA motions for resolutions

- Situation in Burundi
- Central African Republic
- Indonesia, notably the cases of Hosea Yeimo, Ismael Alua and the Governor of Jakarta

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Next issue of Greens/EFA Plenary Round-up: 17 February 2017

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Jan van der Wolf

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