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Greens/EFA Round up

Debriefing of the Strasbourg plenary week 3-6 April 2017

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Palm oil and deforestation of rainforests

Monday 3 April: debate / Tuesday 4 April: vote

The European Parliament adopted Tuesday 4 April, by a large majority, a report on palm oil and deforestation of rainforests. For the first time, MEPs have called for stricter rules on the import of palm oil. Our group welcomes this report and voted in favour. It gives an insight into the problems related to unsustainable palm oil production and calls for action. These include minimum sustainability criteria for palm oil products entering the EU, and an EU action plan on deforestation and forest degradation. The widespread use of palm oil is a causes of widespread devastation, not least to rain forests. This has a significant knock-on effect for global climate change and also impacts local people, whose livelihoods are closely linked to the ecosystems being destroyed.

- Text adopted

- Press release (DE/EN/ES/FR)
- Plenary speech - Benedek Jávor

Further information
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One-year anniversary of the Panama Papers

Tuesday 4 April

One year ago, the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) published the Panama Papers. The biggest leak in history made clear just how easy it has been to evade taxes or launder dirty money. The European Commission has already introduced tougher rules against money laundering and is preparing proposals to monitor tax advisers more closely. They are also considering much needed protections for whistleblowers. It is time for EU Member States to stop blocking progress on tackling tax evasion and money laundering. European governments are insisting on a more business as usual approach, refusing public transparency on who owns companies and trusts, delaying public tax transparency for companies and weakening the process to establish an EU blacklist of tax havens. The PANA inquiry committee mandate was recently extended by six month. It is expected to adopt its final report in November, after 18 months of investigations.

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

Further information
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Dieselgate: Inquiry recommendations and type approval legislation

Tuesday 4 April: debates and votes

The European Parliament voted Tuesday on the findings and recommendations of its Dieselgate inquiry committee, with the aim to transform them into legislation. While MEPs voted in favour of introducing EU-level market surveillance for vehicles, they failed to secure an independent EU agency in charge of oversight, which our Group had been calling for. Such an agency is needed to create much greater transparency, bringing any wrongdoing on the part of car manufacturers out into the open. With the inquiry finding that both the European Commission and Member States should have acted on emission fraud sooner, there is a clear case for independent scrutiny. Unfortunately, the EP plenary, voting for the legislation on approval and market surveillance of motor vehicles (or “type approval”), disagreed. Despite

the loss on the issue of EU Agency, the EP vote outcomes are strong on the need for more EU oversight and better enforcement and implementation of Union law.

- Text adopted - Approval and market surveillance
- Text adopted - Inquiry into emission measurements in the automotive sector
- Press release (DE/EN/ES/FR)
- Plenary speech – Bas Eickhout
- Plenary speech – Pascal Durand
- Plenary speech – Karima Delli
- Blog by MEP Bas Eickhout

Further information
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Supporting the future of Syria and the region: Foreign Affairs Council and International Summit

Council: Monday 3 April / Summit: Tuesday 4 - Wednesday 5 April

EU Foreign Ministers met Monday to discuss the EU-Syria strategy. These talks come ahead of a two-day conference in Brussels, "Supporting the future of Syria and the region", and amidst one of the worst chemical attacks on Syrian civilians. The conference, which runs 4-5 April, will bring together representatives from more than 70 countries, international organisations and civil society. Help for Syria must be at the top of the European agenda. We are witnessing one of the worst humanitarian disasters since the Second World War. The European Union and its Member States must provide sufficient resources to support the victims in Syria and its neighbours. In addition, refugees from Syria must be accepted in Europe by means of generous resettlement programmes and legal access routes.

- Social media

Brexit: Article 50 resolution

Wednesday 5 April: debate and vote

The European Parliament adopted by a large majority Wednesday a resolution setting out its terms for negotiating United Kingdom's exit from the European Union. The Greens/EFA signed the resolution alongside the EPP, S&D, ALDE, and GUE-NGL groups. We want the negotiations to be conducted in good faith, with no posturing and thinly veiled threats. Our absolute priority in the negotiations is the rights of citizens. The great number of citizens in Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Gibraltar must not be forgotten, nor should the many young people who wish to stay in the EU. UK citizens living in the EU, and

people from across Europe living in the UK, are also an urgent priority and should not treated as pawns to be traded.

- Text adopted
- Press release (DE/EN/FR/ES)
- Plenary speech – Philippe Lamberts
- Plenary speech – Alyn Smith
- Social media

Further information

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Money Market Funds

Tuesday 4 April: debate / Wednesday 5 April: vote

MEPs adopted Wednesday the draft European regulation on money market funds, as agreed in the inter-institutional negotiations. The Greens/EFA group voted against the proposal, citing inadequate supervision of these funds, which operate as shadow banks. This vote is a blow for efforts to improve the stability of the financial system and a gift to the financial lobby. Furthermore, it is at odds with international efforts to regulate the shadow banking sector. These funds function like savings banks they should clearly face the same level of rigorous regulation banks are subject to. The adoption of weak rules is part of a pattern of regulatory rollback that Greens have been drawing attention to for some time. The EU is once again failing to properly regulate the financial sector, leaving citizens at risk from a future financial crisis.

- Text adopted
- Press release (DE/EN/FR)

Further information
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MFF revision is a missed opportunity

Tuesday 4 April: debate / Wednesday 5 April: vote

MEPs approved Wednesday the Midterm revision of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 (MFF). Our group believes the revision is a poor deal for the parliament, which includes no additional funds despite previous commitments and on-going multiple crises. Nothing has changed in the EU budget to reflect the EU's Paris climate agreement commitments. In 2013, the MFF was cut for the first time. The midterm revision should have been an opportunity to at least partially reverse this mistake. Further, MEPs are being asked to give up some of the European Parliament's budgetary powers to the Council. Our group lost the vote. The GUE and others joined us but S&D abstained. In doing so, the S&D gave a majority to the EPP-ALDE, de facto to giving up some of the European Parliaments' prerogatives. Overall, this a bad deal for the people of Europe, and a self-defeating one for this parliament.

- Text adopted - Consent procedure
- Text adopted - Resolution
- Press release (DE/EN/FR)

Further information
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Agriculture: GMO objection

Wednesday 5 April: debate and vote

The European Parliament has voted Wednesday against the import of a range of up to 20 genetically modified maize varieties for use in feed and food. The Standing Committee on "Plants, Animals, Food and Feed" was unable to reach a decision in January, as did the appeal committee on 27 March. With a clear lack of support (15 Member States and the European Parliament opposed), our group calls on the European Commission to withdraw its proposal.

- Text adopted
- Press release (EN/FR)
- Social media

Further information
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Roaming charges will become a thing of the past

Wednesday 5 April: debate / Thursday 6 April: vote

MEPs have approved Thursday the results of the trilogues on roaming. In negotiations, the parliament was able to secure low prices for consumers. Tariffs have been reduced so that small providers will now be able to compete with major telecoms groups. The ball is now in the court of telecom companies who must implement the roaming regulation in a user-friendly manner.

- Text adopted
- Press release (DE/EN)

Further information
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Greens/EFA motions for resolutions

- Bangladesh, including child marriages
- Belarus
- Russia, the arrest of Alexei Navalny and other protestors

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