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Greens/EFA Round-up 8-11 February 2010

Debriefing of the plenary session in Strasbourg

Election of the new EU Commission

Procedure under Article 17 of the Treaty on European Union

Debate and vote Tuesday 9 January 2010 The new College of European Commissioners has been approved by a majority built around Parliament's three biggest political groups. The Greens/EFA Group, who voted against, judged that - as a whole - the proposed Commission lacks the vision and determination that is needed to face up to the current economic, social and environmental crises.

In their motion for resolution, Greens/EFA reiterate that the procedure for nomination and election of the Commissioners remains unsatisfactory and plead for a new procedure. They believe that the incoming Commission must be measured against the challenges of overcoming the triple crisis, as well as defining the role of the EU on global level. They also regret that President Barroso's work programme and the composition of the proposed College of Commissioners does not give convincing guarantees. See:

- Plenary speech by Dany Cohn-Bendit (video - FR)
 - Greens/EFA motion for resolution
 - Reactions to the hearings by Greens/EFA MEPs (press releases and video statements)
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SWIFT : EU-US Agreement on the Transfer of Financial Messaging Data for purposes of the Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme (TFTP)

Council statement

Debate Wednesday 20 January 2010 - vote 11 February 2010 Council approved the interim agreement on 30 November, one day before the Lisbon Treaty came into force and granted the EU Parliament co-legislative powers on the issue. The interim agreement came into force on 1 February 2010, before any vote by the EU Parliament plenary.

The Parliament voted first on a request put forward by the Christian Democrats (EPP Group) to postpone the vote. The request was rejected (In favour: 290 - against: 305 - abstentions: 14)

The Parliament voted then on the legislative resolution to withhold the consent (in favour: 378 - against: 196 - abstentions: 31). The agreement was clearly rejected with a very large majority. It means that the interim agreement currently applied will have to be terminated and that the Council will have to give to the Commission a negotiation mandate which will take into consideration the prerequisites and criteria put forward by the Parliament in its resolution of 17 September 2009. It is a great victory for the Greens/EFA group and the Parliament as a whole which has shown the courage to reject an international agreement that has deep serious shortcomings in terms of fundamental rights, civil liberties and data protection. See:

- Text adopted by EP
- Video statement Jan Philipp Albrecht (video -DE)
- Plenary speech by Greens/EFA Co-President Rebecca Harms (video - DE)
- Greens/EFA press release

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Progress reports on Croatia, FYR Macedonia and on Turkey

Council and Commission statements

Debate and vote on Wednesday 10 February 2010

- As regards the progress report on Croatia two Green amendments were adopted notably the one urging the Croatian authorities to tackle corruption also in the urban planning and the construction sector and the one expressing concern at the resentment against LGBT minority in Croatia evidenced by homophobic attacks on participants in the Gay pride parade in Zagreb. The one urging to reconsider and redefine the Croatian recently adopted energy policy based on fossil fuels and nuclear energy was unfortunately defeated as well as the one inviting the Croatian authorities and the environment ministry to reconsider their decision regarding the legal case against Friends of the Earth Croatia.
- As to the report on FYROM/Macedonia Greens/EFA amendment against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation was adopted but the amendment stating that bilateral issues should not take precedent over the process of European integration was defeated. This resolution was then adopted with 548 votes in favour and 45 against.
- The resolution on Turkey was adopted by a large majority. The amendments of the Greens/EFA on domestic violence, honour killings, the right to conscientious objection and calling "all parties concerned" in Cyprus to support the ongoing negotiations were also adopted. On the contrary, the amendments on the "objective of Turkey's EU Membership" were defeated.

See:

- Text adopted by EP on Croatia
- Text adopted by EP on FYR Macedonia
- Text adopted by EP on Turkey
- Plenary speech by Franziska Brantner on Croatia (video - DE)
- Plenary speech by Hélène Flautre on Turkey (video - FR)

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Bluefin tuna and CITES Convention

Questions for Oral Answer pursuant to Rule 115(5) of the Rules of Procedure

Relevant committee: Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

Vote Wednesday 10 February 2010 The EU Parliament plenary adopted a resolution that calls on the EU Commission and Member States to support a ban on the international trade of the endangered bluefin tuna. This would be achieved if the species is listed in Appendix 1 of CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) at a meeting in Doha, Qatar next month. The critical amendment on CITES Appendix 1 listing was passed with 447 votes in favour, 205 against. See:

- Text adopted by the EP
- Plenary speech by Isabella Lövin (video - SV)
- Greens/EFA press release

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Haiti

Statement by the / Vice-President of the Commission

Debate Tuesday 19 January 2010 - vote 10 February 2010 The resolution on Haiti was voted by a large majority in the Parliament. The resolution calls for a comprehensive assessment of the country's short and long term need and it also insists that the people of Haiti and their government must play a leading role in the construction process. Illicit child trafficking is a serious risk due to the current chaotic situation. To control this phenomenon, the resolution calls for a temporary moratorium on new adoption. The request for Haiti's debt cancellation is also underlined. To stimulate the economy, the resolution asks to purchase locally produced food as much as possible for the relief effort. It emphasised also to build European rapid response mechanism. See:

- Text adopted by EP
- Greens/EFA motion for resolution
- Speech by Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the Commission
- Plenary speech by Eva Joly, Greens/EFA MEP, Chairwoman of the Committee on Development (video)

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Outcome of the Copenhagen summit on climate change

Council and Commission statements

Debate Wednesday 20 January - vote Wednesday 10 February 2010 The Greens welcomed renewed pressure from the Parliament to up the ambition level of EU climate policy despite the disappointing delay in international negotiations. The Parliament regrets the failure to come to a meaningful agreement in Copenhagen and calls for the EU to speak with one voice in climate negotiations. Recognising historical responsibility of industrialised countries for climate change, the EP confirmed again its view that EU should make significant commitments to financing climate efforts in developing countries (amounting to € 30 bn / annum by 2020) and that these commitments be new and additional to existing development aid pledges. While forums such as G20 and Major Economies Forum can help forge consensus, the Parliament confirmed that the UN framework is the only legitimate one for an international agreement on such a crucial issue for the whole global community. See also:

- Text adopted by EP

- Greens/EFA press release
- Climate circus website
- Stop climate change website Contact :

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Iran

Statement by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the Commission

Debate Tuesday 19 January 2010 - vote 10 February 2010 The European Parliament adopted the compromise resolution signed by all political groups. The resolution focuses on three aspects : the nuclear issue, democracy and human rights issues, the EU-Iran relations. It is the first time that the EP with overwhelming majority and across the political spectrum adopted a resolution calling for visa restrictions and travel bans against certain persons involved in human rights violations and/or the nuclear dossier.

The subject had been moved on to the agenda on the request of the Green Group. Ms. Lochbihler, Member of the Greens/EFA Group, holds the presidency of the Iran delegation this legislature. Besides stating unequivocally that President Ahmedinejad has lost his credibility after having attained re/election solely on the basis of fraud, it strongly criticises the massive human rights violations and expresses its solidarity with the Green movement for democracy. It deplores the collaboration of Siemens/Nokia and other companies in the delivery of technology being instrumental for Iranian authorities repression of press freedom and even possibly leading to the persecution of dissidents. The EP also criticises the jamming of TV and radio stations such as BBC. See:

- Text adopted by the EP
- Greens/EFA motion for resolution
- Speech by Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the Commission
- Plenary speech by Barbara Lochbihler, Greens/EFA MEP, Chairwoman of the delegation for relations with Iran (video -DE)

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