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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Council and Commission statements

pursuant to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure

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on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

on preparations for the VIth Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers, to be held in Naples on 2 and 3 December 2003

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European Parliament resolution on preparations for the VIth Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers, to be held in Naples on 2 and 3 December 2003

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Barcelona Declaration and to the work programme dated 28 November 1995 adopted by the Barcelona Conference,
 - having regard to its previous resolutions on the Mediterranean policy, in particular its resolution of 11 April 2002 on the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers held in Valencia on 22 and 23 April 2002,
 - having regard to the Communications from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on preparations for the VIth Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers, to be held in Naples on 2 and 3 December 2003,
 - having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament dated 11 March 2003 concerning the new strategy to be pursued with regard to the new frontiers of the enlarged EU,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs entitled 'Wider Europe - Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours' (A5-0378/2003),
 - having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament dated 21 May 2003 entitled 'Reinvigorating EU actions on Human Rights and democratisation with Mediterranean partners',
 - having regard to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the new neighbourhood policy will contribute in particular to a strengthening of EU relations with the Mediterranean countries at a time when the Union is preparing itself for enlargement to include 10 new Member States,
- B. whereas the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues to cast a dark shadow over the Barcelona Process and constitutes an insurmountable obstacle to the full development of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership,
- C. whereas the Euro-Mediterranean parliamentary dialogue has, in an initial stage, taken the form of a Parliamentary Forum attended by the representatives of the peoples of both shores of the Mediterranean Sea, and whereas the conversion of that Forum into a parliamentary assembly (EMPA) forms part of the action programme of the VIth Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers, scheduled to be held in Naples on 2 and 3 December 2003,

- D. whereas the mechanisms provided by the Barcelona Process have clearly demonstrated their limitations as regards respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms,
1. Reaffirms the need to guarantee - through dialogue, mutual knowledge and comprehension - the stability of the Euro-Mediterranean area with a view to improving the living standards of the peoples of the region and to maintaining peace;
 2. Sincerely hopes that parliamentary cooperation will be deepened and calls on all the Member States to contribute to the development of the Euro-Mediterranean parliamentary dialogue; advocates the establishment of the EMPA as the most appropriate instrument for that purpose and calls on the Naples Ministerial Conference to approve the conversion of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Forum into a parliamentary assembly endowed with consultative powers;
 3. Believes that the role of the future EMPA will be to ensure that the Euro-Mediterranean partnership functions smoothly and that the association agreements concluded between the European Union and the Mediterranean partner countries are properly applied; with that in mind, supports in particular the setting-up of a committee to be responsible for the political aspect as well as for human rights;
 4. Points out, in this connection, that the progress made in the implementation of various sectoral programmes has not been matched by progress in the field of democracy and human rights; draws attention once again to the present ineffectiveness of the so-called human rights and democracy clause, included as Article 2 in all association agreements, for lack of a clear implementation mechanism;
 5. Hopes that the 'New Neighbourhood Policy' and the Communication entitled 'EU-Mediterranean Region: human rights and democracy' will result in a clarification of that aspect and calls on the Council to lay down clear benchmarks in the national Action Plans so as to establish a specific and constructive dialogue with the partner countries in this field;
 6. Reiterates that each party in the Barcelona Process must, above all, endeavour to promote democracy and the rule of law, together with respect for individual freedoms, especially women's freedoms; emphasises, in particular, the need for respect for the provisions set out in the democracy clauses included in the Euro-Mediterranean association agreements;
 7. Urges, in this connection, all parties to define clear and transparent mechanisms in the chapter concerning the implementation of the democracy and human rights clause, starting with the establishment of a regular dialogue with representatives of civil society; calls on the Commission, the Council and the partner countries to keep these issues high on the agenda during Association Council meetings with a view to achieving genuine progress on the basis of the annual country reports to be submitted by the Commission;
 8. Expresses its solidarity with Mrs Radhia Nasraoui, a Tunisian barrister, who has been on hunger strike since 15 October 2003 and calls on the Tunisian authorities to take immediate action on all her claims, in particular on the complaints made with regard to vandalism and physical attacks on her person; notes the manifest deterioration of the situation relating to fundamental freedoms in Tunisia and calls on the Tunisian authorities,

as a matter of great urgency, to guarantee the independence of the judiciary;

9. Takes the view that Ali Lmrabet, Editor-in-Chief of the magazines 'Demain' and 'Doumane', has been detained in prison since July 2003 for an offence involving the expression of his opinion and notes that the conditions in which he is being held are putting his physical integrity at risk; calls for his immediate release and for the withdrawal of all the legal proceedings brought against him and calls on the Moroccan authorities to take the necessary measures to guarantee freedom of the press and freedom of opinion;
10. Emphasises the urgent need for the cycle of violence afflicting the Middle East to be terminated by the effective implementation of the Road Map and the attainment of the '*Two Peoples - Two States*' objective; reiterates its support for the forces in Israel and in Palestine which are working to achieve a just solution to the conflict and for the Coalition for Peace, the body behind the Geneva Accords; takes the view that the establishment of a climate of confidence among the Israelis, the Palestinians and the other Arab countries is a matter of the utmost importance for Euro-Mediterranean relations;
11. Urges, in this connection, the rapid establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean Foundation with the aim of stepping up the dialogue between cultures and bridging the current credibility gap;
12. Is shocked by the recent tragic events which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of immigrants in the Mediterranean; calls for a common EU immigration policy, which should be based on a balance between the fight against illegal immigration, the legal means for immigration - which includes a more flexible visa policy - and an integration policy;
13. Reaffirms that the EU external borders control policy must not undermine the non-refoulement principle;
14. Welcomes the decisive improvement in the use and management of MEDA funds and in the relevant absorption capacity of the partner countries; hopes, in particular, that the new MEDA Regulation will incorporate the decentralisation system to a greater extent and take more serious account of the regional and the South-South dimension of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership; supports the idea of integrating more fully into the MEDA programmes the promotion of good governance, human rights and democracy and calls, to that end, for the setting-up of pilot studies into the impact of European Union measures relating to human rights;
15. Reaffirms the need to encourage the general application of the South-South cooperation process, along the lines of the Agadir Accord, as the only way of achieving a genuine free-trade area; recalls, in this connection, the importance of transfrontier projects with a view to improving and strengthening regional cooperation;
16. Welcomes the conclusion of the agreement on the revision of the bilateral agricultural protocols between the EU and Morocco which paves the way for a new phase of the Association Agreement with a view to liberalising mutual farm trade over the next four years;

17. Believes that such revision may contribute to the achievement of a trade balance between the two sides; calls on the Commission to develop assistance programmes in this field which promote environmentally-friendly farming and encourage quality instead of quantity;
18. Calls on the Council to open a substantive forward-looking debate on how Euro-Mediterranean agriculture might become multidimensional and promote complementarity of farm produce, sustainable development and the environment;
19. Emphasises its opposition to the death penalty and calls on the associated countries in the Mediterranean to introduce a moratorium on capital punishment; calls, similarly, on the Commission to take measures to support campaigns seeking to impose a moratorium on capital punishment;
20. Calls for the European Investment Bank section responsible for the Mediterranean and the Middle East to be expanded so that it may constitute a genuine branch capable of attaining the objectives defined by the new strategy, with financial support from the other Mediterranean countries;
21. Hopes that the process for the ratification of the association agreements signed between a Mediterranean state and the EU will be speeded up; encourages the conclusion of the agreement with Syria, Article 2 of which clearly poses the question of respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights; reiterates the willingness of the national parliaments and of the European Parliament to participate fully in the drawing up of the objectives and in the evaluation of those agreements;
22. Urges Libya and Mauritania to participate fully in the Barcelona Process and to accept the principles thereof and calls on the associated Mediterranean countries which have, to date, remained aloof from the interparliamentary dialogue to reconsider their position; calls on the European Commission to envisage the implementation of cooperation projects in Libya;
23. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission and to the governments and parliaments of the Member States and of the Mediterranean partner countries signatory to the Barcelona Declaration.