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Plenary sitting

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B7-0560/2013

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statements by the Council and the Commission
pursuant to Rule 110(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on preparations for the European Council meeting (19-20 December 2013)
(2013/2626(RSP))

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on behalf of the ALDE Group

B7-0560/2013

**European Parliament resolution on preparations for the European Council meeting
(19-20 December 2013)
(2013/2626(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolutions of 12 June 2013 on strengthening European democracy in the future EMU¹, of 23 May 2013 on ‘future legislative proposals on EMU: response to the Commission communications’² and of 21 November 2013 on the Commission communication entitled ‘Strengthening the social dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU)’³,
- having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas determined efforts have been made by the EU institutions and the Member States to restore financial credibility and stability, in particular through the adoption and implementation of structural reforms and the adoption of the new economic governance framework; whereas these efforts have to be completed by a true Banking Union;
- B. whereas better economic policy coordination is needed in order to enhance competitiveness, sustainability and job creation in the EU;
- C. whereas the ‘Community method’ is the appropriate approach in dealing with the challenges facing the EU and its currency;
- D. whereas all decisions should be underpinned by parliamentary scrutiny and accountability at the level at which they are taken;
- E. whereas full respect for, and thorough application of, EU law is the basic element of this policy;
- F. whereas in a rapidly changing and volatile geostrategic environment, marked by emerging security challenges, the US rebalancing towards the Asia-Pacific region, and the impact of the financial crisis, the EU needs to assume its responsibility as a credible security provider with real strategic autonomy, particularly in its neighbourhood, which will have the effect of enhancing its own security;
- G. whereas the only way for the heads of state and government to address these geopolitical trends and the uncoordinated decline in defence spending is to accelerate the coordination of defence cooperation;

On the Banking Union

¹ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0269.

² Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0222.

³ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0515.

1. Reminds the European Council of the political commitment to the effect that the Single Resolution Mechanism should be agreed before the end of the current legislative term; calls on the European Council to reiterate its demand to the Council of Ministers that the negotiations on the Deposit Guarantee Directive and the recovery and resolution framework be concluded successfully before the end of 2013;

On deepening EMU

2. Calls on the European Council to make a political commitment with regard to the legislative preparation, on the basis of the Treaties, of better economic policy coordination; expects Parliament and the other EU institutions to agree on the key features of this better economic policy coordination before the end of the current legislative term;
3. Requests that, on the basis of the aforementioned better economic policy coordination, a legal act on ‘convergence guidelines’ be adopted under the ordinary legislative procedure, laying down, for a set period, a very limited number of targets for the most urgent reform measures;
4. Reiterates its request that the Member States ensure that the national reform programmes, which should be established on the basis of the aforementioned convergence guidelines and verified by the Commission, are discussed and adopted by their national parliaments; considers this essential in order to strengthen ownership, and the democratic accountability, of the whole process;
5. Considers it appropriate for the Member States to commit themselves to fully implementing their national reform programmes, as verified; suggests that, on this basis, the Member States could enter into a ‘convergence partnership’ with the EU institutions, with the possibility of conditional funding for reform activities;
6. Reiterates that stronger economic cooperation should go hand in hand with an incentive-based mechanism; considers that any additional funding or instruments, such as a solidarity mechanism, must be an integral part of the EU budget, but outside the agreed multiannual financial framework (MFF) ceilings;
7. Recalls that the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance (TSCG) has to be integrated into EU law by 1 January 2018 at the latest, on the basis of an assessment of the experience with its implementation, as stipulated in Article 16 of the TSCG;
8. Recalls its fundamental position that the strengthened EMU should not divide the EU but, on the contrary, establish deeper integration and stronger governance, which should be open to all non-euro Member States on a voluntary basis;
9. Calls on the European Council to comply fully with Article 15(1) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU);

On defence policy

10. Takes the view that, in a rapidly changing and volatile geostrategic environment marked by emerging security challenges, the US rebalancing towards the Asia-Pacific region, and

the impact of the financial crisis, the EU needs, without duplicating existing activities within the NATO framework, to assume its responsibility as a global political player and a credible security provider, particularly in its neighbourhood and with real strategic autonomy, in order to promote international peace and security, to protect its interests in the world and to ensure the security of its citizens; underlines, in this connection, the need for the EU to be consistent in its policies and faster and more efficient in taking up the aforementioned responsibilities;

11. Notes that the EU is currently facing significant financial constraints and that the Member States, for financial, budgetary and political reasons alike, which may or may not be related to the eurozone crisis, are undergoing a phase of uncoordinated reductions in their levels of defence spending; highlights the potential negative impact of these measures on their military capabilities and, therefore, on the EU's ability to assume its responsibilities effectively in the areas of peacekeeping, conflict prevention and the strengthening of international security;
12. Takes the view that, in order to address the above-mentioned challenges, the EU heads of state and government must seize the opportunity afforded by the December 2013 Council by taking a clear stance in favour of a stronger European defence system;
13. Welcomes, in this connection, the Commission communication of 24 July 2013 entitled 'Towards a more competitive and efficient defence and security sector' (COM(2013)0542) and the final report of 15 October 2013 by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Head of the European Defence Agency;
14. Calls on the European Council to implement the suggestions made in Parliament's reports on the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB);
15. Believes that the Member States must first commit to overcoming the CSDP's operational shortcomings by pledging their support for both CSDP civilian missions and military operations, notably through capability contribution;
16. Underlines the fact that the Lisbon Treaty introduced several new instruments relating to the CSDP, which have not yet been put into practice; emphasises, in this connection, the necessity of implementing those provisions in order to further strengthen the CSDP, and calls on the Council to take full advantage of the aforementioned instruments (such as permanent structured cooperation among Member States (Article 46(6) TEU) and the possibility of entrusting CSDP missions and operations in particular to that group of Member States (Articles 42(5) and 44(1) TEU));
17. Highlights the importance of launching a process of strategic reflection with a view to defining EU objectives and priorities and setting out a roadmap, with timelines, for deeper defence cooperation (a White Book that would serve as a framework to reflect on national processes);
18. Calls on the Council to engage in enhanced cooperation in the field of armament, notably by empowering the European Defence Agency to play its full role in promoting

coordination, overseeing commitments, prioritising investment in technologies (including strategic enablers such as air-to-air refuelling, satellite communication, strategic airlift, remotely piloted air systems, cyber defence and the Single European Sky), agreeing on the greater use of coalitions of the willing / core groups, and finding a workable solution for the use of Battlegroups;

19. Calls on the Member States to pledge their support for a robust EDTIB which can overcome the fragmentation, and enhance the creativity and strength, of European industries through closer coordination of the planning of national defence budgets (potentially through the setting-up of a 'European Semester' for defence issues) and closer coordination at the industry level (harmonisation of standards and certification of defence equipment); calls for the provision of further incentives and support for the defence industry, with a commitment to the development of key defence technologies and systems (tax incentives, financial support for research and development, and the institutionalisation of synergies between civilian and military capabilities);
20. Emphasises that the EU's strength, as compared with other organisations, lies in its unique potential to mobilise the full range of political, economic, development and humanitarian instruments to support its civilian and military crisis management, missions and operations under the roof of a single political authority – the VP/HR – and that this comprehensive approach, whether through its 'soft power' or through more robust actions where necessary, gives it unique and widely appreciated flexibility and efficiency;
21. Supports the creation of a Council of Defence Ministers to give defence the weight it deserves;
22. Urges the heads of state and government, in view of the strategic importance of European defence and the scale of the challenges facing the Union, to revisit in December 2015 the progress made in implementing the December 2013 Council conclusions, on the basis of an implementation report by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy;
23. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the European Council and the Commission.