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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 on 19 and 20 December
2013
(2013/2626(RSP))

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B7-0565

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

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Euro Area Summit Statement of 29 June 2012,
 - having regard to the European Council conclusions of 24 and 25 October 2013,
 - having regard to the Commission communications of 20 March 2013 entitled ‘Towards a deep and genuine economic and monetary union: Ex ante coordination of plans for major economic policy reforms’ (COM (2013)0166) and ‘Towards a deep and genuine economic and monetary union: The introduction of a Convergence and Competitiveness Instrument’ (COM (2013)0165),
 - having regard to the European Council conclusions of 7 February 2013 on a Youth Employment Initiative,
 - having regard to the political agreement reached by the Council on 28 February 2013 on a Council recommendation on establishing a youth guarantee,
 - having regard to Articles 77, 78, 79 and 80 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
 - having regard to its resolution of 11 September 2012 on enhanced intra-EU solidarity in the field of asylum¹,
 - having regard to its resolution of 23 October 2013 on migratory flows in the Mediterranean, with particular attention to the tragic events off Lampedusa²,
 - having regard to the Commission proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing rules for the surveillance of the external sea borders in the context of operational cooperation coordinated by the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (COM(2013)0197),
 - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the European Union has, given its historical background, the imperative obligation to be a reliable, non-violent actor and mediator at global level, seeking only civil and peaceful solutions to conflicts, and in its international relations, to be a player promoting the eradication of poverty through sustainable development, arms-control and disarmament, favouring balanced economic relations, fair trade, and the fair distribution

¹ OJ C 353 E, 3.12.2013, p.16.

² P7_TA(2013)0448.

of the world's resources and wealth in order to ensure stability and prosperity in the EU and the world;

- B. whereas military power as developed by the EU – particularly since the Saint Malo Declaration of 1998, the formulation of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) in 2003 and following the beginning of the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty – is not just seen as a last resort asset which comes to the fore in exceptional circumstances, but rather is regarded as useful for a wide array of ‘silent security’ functions going beyond defence and which include intelligence, reconnaissance, mass surveillance, deterrence and the use of space for military purposes;
- C. whereas international think tanks (including those driving the European Global Strategy¹) and the Vice-President / High Representative herself advocate a geographical scope for CSDP action tantamount to a neo-colonial European empire, given that they advocate that ‘Europe must assume greater responsibility for its own security and that of its neighbourhood [...] [t]he Union must be able to act decisively through CSDP as a security provider, in partnership when possible but autonomously when necessary, in its neighbourhood, including through direct intervention. Strategic autonomy must materialise first in the EU’s neighbourhood [...] [i]ncreasingly also the “neighbours of the neighbours” are being affected, e.g. in the Sahel or in the Horn of Africa, two regions where the Union is conducting five crisis management missions’²;
- D. whereas according to the European Security Strategy, security challenges faced by the EU which can trigger military reactions are not restricted to strictly military threats but go as far as to include energy security, migratory flows, and climate change;
- E. whereas the current economic and social crisis has been seriously aggravated by the economic policies and structure of the European Monetary Union and by the European Union’s neo-liberal policies of promoting the deregulation of financial markets, the liberalisation of markets in products and services, increasing financialisation of the economy, and measures to reduce public investment and increase labour market deregulation;
- F. whereas these policies have contributed greatly to the rise in unemployment in general and youth unemployment in particular, generating further social exclusion and poverty, and thereby leading to severe social regression;
- G. whereas monetary transmission mechanisms remain highly distorted and the ultra-low interest policy of the European Central Bank (ECB) has only fuelled speculation on the financial markets; whereas lending to the real economy remains subdued and deflationary pressures are looming;

¹ European Global Strategy is a think tank-driven process designed to stimulate debate on the future direction of the European Union’s external relations: ‘The EU’s global influence will increasingly be determined by its actions in its strategic neighbourhood [...] the EU should also be prepared to undertake autonomously the full spectrum of civilian and military missions in the strategic neighbourhood in keeping with international law, when and where this is necessary to protect vital European interests. This implies the ability to project both civilian and military capabilities’. 2013, page 11f.

² Speech by Catherine Ashton, VP/HR and Head of the EEAS, at the European Defence Agency (EDA) annual conference in Brussels on 21 March 2013, pages 2 and 5.

- H. whereas ‘zombie’ banks still operate throughout the EU and stand in the way of any economic recovery;
- I. whereas the Banking Union project will not change the way financial markets and their players operate; whereas significant changes to banking structures are urgently needed for sustainable and socially balanced economic recovery;
- J. whereas the link between financial and sovereign debt crises remains and banks are still making huge profits at the expense of ordinary working people;
- K. whereas some Member States continually ignore the obvious macro-economic imbalances in the EU, which are now recognised even by the Commission itself, and continue with their deflationary wage and labour market policies, which harm those who are most vulnerable in Europe; whereas, especially in Germany, the proposed minimum wage is a mere window-dressing exercise rather than a real solution to the problem;
- L. whereas the answers provided by the EU, the ECB and the IMF (the ‘Troika’) to the economic crisis have been both politically and economically wrong; whereas in contrast to forecasts the economic situation is still deteriorating, leading to a widespread vicious circle of recession, poverty, social exclusion and unemployment;
- M. whereas democratic structures, including the functioning of national parliaments, have been severely disrupted due to the ‘market discipline’ and austerity policies imposed by the EU, the ‘Troika’ and the governments of the Member States; whereas the crisis management institutions (the ‘Troika’) and the European funding mechanisms (including the European Stability Mechanism and the European Financial Stability Facility) lack democratic accountability;
- N. whereas the new Commission proposals on ex-ante coordination of economic policy reforms and the introduction of a convergence and competitiveness instrument deepen neo-liberal economic policies and are aimed at further removing policy choices from Member States, as they significantly reduce the scope for action and alternative policies;
- O. whereas the recent Annual Growth Survey and the related Alert Mechanism report continue to prescribe the wrong medicine under questionable assumptions;
- P. whereas the recent tragedies off Lampedusa left at least 400 migrants dead, with many more missing;
- Q. whereas, according to the International Organisation for Migration, at least 20 000 persons have died at sea since 1993, pointing once more to the need to do everything possible to save the lives of people in danger and to the need for Member States to abide by their international sea-rescue obligations;

On the Common Security and Defence Policy

- 1. Demands clear commitment to and implementation of a strict civilian external policy, which should include as priority objectives the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, arms

control, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Regime, full nuclear and conventional disarmament, peaceful resolution of conflicts, favouring balanced economic relations, fair trade and fair distribution of the world's resources and wealth to ensure stability and prosperity in the EU and the world;

2. Denounces the further militarisation of the EU, its complete binding to NATO, the formation of a military union and the ambition of military autonomy via increased investment in armament and capabilities, in order to secure the economic and geostrategic interests and expansionist projects of the EU and those of large European capitals and major Member States;
3. Deplores the lack of political will to promote civil conflict resolution, focusing instead on EU defence, intervention, militarisation and surveillance; denounces, in this regard, the focus on the following key points, which have been repeatedly addressed in the annual CSDP report and other relevant reports of the European Parliament:
 - the blackmail that consists in maintaining that defence cuts pose a risk to European security, claiming that it would be constrained and controlled by third powers;
 - the demand to establish a single defence market, armament cooperation, pooling and sharing, the overall demand to amplify military and security research, in particular for CSDP missions and the increased investment in civilian research for military use, in particular through Horizon 2020;
 - the strengthening of the EU defence and military sector, the promotion of civil-military cooperation and, through the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB), the further development and strengthening of a military industrial complex (MIC);
 - the increased use of development aid (European Development Fund) to finance security/CSDP operations and missions, and the subordination of policy areas such as trade and development policy to the CSDP;
 - binding permanent structured cooperation as a basis for an 'EU-wide security-of-supply regime and guarantee';
 - the call for EU funding of military operations (start-up funds) and the need to increase the ATHENA mechanism;
 - the support for a strong European Defence Agency (EDA) and EU-headquarters equipped with intelligence support beyond democratic parliamentary or public control, to develop in a centralised manner EU military policy capabilities and equipment;
 - the call to use the battle groups and the demand for standing battle forces at high readiness with land, air, naval and special forces components and a high level of ambition, essentially an EU army;
4. Calls for a redirection of funds from both the Union and national military defence budgets in order to meet the social and economic needs of the people, especially in times of crisis,

stop austerity, invest in civil industry and development, and create jobs;

5. Emphasises that investment in the military is a heavy drain on the economy and a very ineffective way of creating jobs; calls, therefore, for a redirection in funding from both the Union and national military defence budgets to meet the social and economic needs of the people especially in times of crisis, stop austerity, invest in civil industry and development, and create jobs;

On the Banking Union

6. Reiterates its call for a strong public banking sector and for strong public control over the financial sector as well as its downsizing, so that it can no longer pose a threat to society and eventually serve the needs of the real economy;
7. Condemns strongly the fraudulent practices applied by some financial institutions and demands that the Member States' governments oblige banks to work in the interest of the general public rather than maximise profits for a few shareholders;
8. Deems the proposals on the Banking Union to be completely flawed in terms of addressing the deep-rooted problems in the financial sector; calls on the European Council to fundamentally revise its policy stance towards the financial sector;
9. Is highly concerned at the policy of the ECB, which so far has only served the interests of the financial industry and capital market players rather than ordinary people; calls on the European Council to engage in serious debates about reforming the ECB so that it can finally serve the people of Europe instead of the financial markets;

On deepening the EMU

10. Is convinced that the European Parliament and national parliaments, as well as social partners and civil society, should play a key role in all matters of economic policy-making;
11. Recalls that debt levels have increased in the EU from 18 % in 2008 to 25 % in 2012, while at the same time the rich have even become wealthier; condemns the EU policy of austerity and demands that the European Council reverse it; considers existing tools for economic policy coordination to be completely inadequate for solving the crisis and for transforming the Member States into democratic and inclusive societies to the benefit of all citizens;
12. Condemns the implicit 'carrot-and-stick' logic, disguised as a solidarity mechanism, of the so-called 'convergence and competitiveness instrument', which only aims to bribe people into agreeing to wrong policy measures, aimed at undermining workers' and social rights and which will further widen the gap between rich and poor; rejects any form of contractual agreements which will further remove alternative and progressive economic policy choices from Member States;
13. Demands the annulment of the so-called 'memoranda of understanding' between Member States and the 'Troika', as well as of measures emanating from these memoranda;

demands, furthermore, the dissolution of the ‘Troika’; strongly believes that Member States need to revise and renegotiate their public debt;

14. Demands that the debts of the banks should not be placed yet again on the shoulders of the people, and insists that no further bank bailouts with public funds take place and that any future ESM interventions be conducted under full democratic control; stresses that ‘zombie’ banks need to be wound down and that a public bank with full access to ECB refinancing should ensure real economy financing;

On employment and social aspects of the EMU

15. Calls for a break with the promotion of neo-liberal structural labour market reforms and for the elaboration of a European Employment Strategy based on the concept of ‘good work’ and the International Labour Organisation’s Decent Work Agenda, with a strong focus on the creation of quality and sustainable jobs, phasing out precarious forms of employment, abolishing workfare programmes, promoting quality in work, improving social security, enhancing workers’ rights, promoting shorter collective working time without any loss of wage and the reconciliation between professional and private life;
16. Believes that structural labour market reforms should create an inclusive labour market, promoting the quality of work, improving levels of education and expanding training programmes, improving gender equality and the integration of women, migrants, young workers and older workers, and other disadvantaged groups in the labour market;
17. Calls for the EU and the Member States to promote a reduction in working time across the board without loss of pay for workers, and the creation of additional jobs in order to avoid an increase in workload, which could possibly be assisted through a reduction in aid to businesses over a transition period during times of economic stagnation;
18. States that a European Union for all citizens could not be achieved solely via the European Economic and Monetary Union, but also requires a social union;

On the Task Force for the Mediterranean

19. Takes note of the Commission communication of 4 December 2013 on the work of the Task Force Mediterranean (COM(2013)0869) and deplores the renewal of the policy approach of reinforced border control, which has led to Fortress Europe and causes tragedies at sea; is deeply concerned that the priorities established by the task force to prevent death at sea consist mainly in further developing actions in third countries that do not comply with international human rights standards; calls on the Commission and the Member States to assume the EU’s responsibilities in dealing with tragedies at sea;
20. Calls on the European Council, the Member States and the Commission to refrain from any cooperation on border control, the exchange of data and management of migration flows with third countries which do not fully meet their international human rights and refugee rights obligations;
21. Welcomes the exploration of further possibilities for protected entry into the EU as a future priority in the Home Affairs area, in particular with regard to a humanitarian visa

strategy and a pilot project on the joint processing of protection claims; warns, however, of the risks that any processing of claims made outside of EU territory may entail, in particular with regard to safeguards; stresses that EU solidarity needs to be backed by concrete responsibility-sharing mechanisms for refugees and asylum applicants;

22. Is of the opinion that the EU should open further legal work and study migration channels, and allow migrants looking for a better life to work in legal and safe conditions; believes that this approach will ensure that migrants can contribute positively to our societies and considerably reduce the number of victims of smuggling and trafficking;
23. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the parliaments of the Member States.