



PLENARY SESSION PRIORITIES

6-9 June 2016



Lifting of parliamentary immunity in Turkey Gabi Zimmer, GUE/NGL President, Germany

By lifting the immunity of one quarter of its Members, the Turkish Parliament is turning itself into Erdoğan's sidekick and preparing the way to become the autocratic presidential system that Erdoğan desires. The AKP-dominated parliament is not only damaging democracy in Turkey, but mounting a clear attack against the pro-Kurdish HDP. Among the 59 democratically-elected representatives of the HDP, 50 could be charged based on outrageous terrorist allegations because they hamper Erdoğan's superpower fantasies. This move is an example of Erdoğan's abuse of anti-terrorist laws, which we continue to denounce. EU leaders must finally admit with whom, and at what price, they have done the dirty EU-Turkey deal.



Mid-term review of the Investment Plan Miguel Viegas, Portugal

The mid-term review of the Investment Plan confirms that it is clearly insufficient to cover the investment gap and the need to revive economic growth in Europe, especially in the countries that are most affected by the austerity policies. This plan only benefits the richest economies and large private companies with the public-private partnerships in which the private sector get the profits and the public gets to carry the risks. We will continue to fight for an ambitious public investment plan that can foster private investment and stimulate the economy.



EU engagement with the UN and the African Union Javier Couso, Spain

This report aims to increase EU contribution to peace support operations in Africa by demanding that EU member states significantly increase their military and police contributions to UN missions. We reject the report and have tabled a minority opinion that calls for the EU to end military and security funding from the European Development Fund. It also calls on the EU not to use the 'responsibility-to-protect-mechanism' as a pretext for military intervention; to end EU-NATO cooperation and interventions; to end the plundering of natural resources by multinationals and foreign powers in Africa; and to ensure independent investigations of all cases of rape and sexual abuse by EU and peace support operation brigades.

Situation in Venezuela Javier Couso, Spain

The European Parliament, driven by right-wing Spanish political parties, is taking actions against Venezuela that will contribute to the destabilisation of the country. This aggressive and interventionist approach serves only the vested interests of large Spanish companies that are linked to Venezuela. Recently, UNASUR established a dialogue between the Venezuelan Government and opposition, which led to a consensus statement from 34 countries of the Organisation of American States this week. The European Parliament should support these efforts towards peace in Venezuela rather than its current approach of ignoring the negotiations and promoting unacceptable resolutions.



European space policy Sabine Lösing, Germany

Again, another report which calls for the strengthening the EU's security and defence policy instead of prioritising civilian capacities for conflict resolution. The report regards space capabilities as an appropriate instrument for border management, internal and energy security, and to further improve the development of a European military-industrial complex. It advocates the militarisation of space and sees space capabilities as important and vital for a multitude of situations, ranging from day-to-day peacetime use to crisis management including full-scale warfare. We will vote against this report and have tabled a minority opinion that calls for a new space treaty that forbids all military use of space.

GUE/NGL Press Briefing: Tuesday 07/06/2016 @ 11:30, EP Press Room

Gabi Zimmer, Barbara Spinelli and Miguel Viegas.

Lifting of Turkish MPs' immunity; Migration; Investment Plan

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Rules against certain tax avoidance practices Fabio De Masi, Germany

The Council failed to agree to any new rules against tax avoidance in May. The Parliament should now send a strong signal for tax justice and against tax dumping in the EU. However, the large political groups are not ready to walk the talk and instead they propose a lukewarm compromise. Their proposed rules against profit shifting via fictive interest costs are, in part, weaker than the Commission's proposal or the US' rules. And, as the Netherlands and others refuse common defence safeguards, we are still failing to deal with the very harmful patent boxes and money flowing from the EU into tax havens.



Endocrine disruptors Anja Hazekamp, Netherlands

On a daily basis, we are exposed to endocrine disruptors, which may cause breast cancer, testicular cancer, fertility problems and other diseases. The European Commission has a moral and a legal obligation to ban endocrine disruptors, but it refuses to act. Public health is willingly being put at risk to protect short-term economic interests. The Commission's negligence in this case is a scandal. For now, the Commission has narrowly escaped a motion of censure, but no further delays and failures to act will be accepted.



Towards a new migration package Marie-Christine Vergiat, France

The plan presented to us by the Commission is inspired by the deal between the EU and Turkey – whose compliance with European and international standards is contested by many international organisations – and aims to extend it to third countries with whom the EU cooperates on migration. This means the countries that are signatories to the Rabat Process and worse, those of the Khartoum Process. Our member states and the Commission intend to make deals with the worst dictatorships in the Horn of Africa including Sudan, whose main leader is the subject of an arrest warrant from the International Criminal Court, and where Eritrean refugees are rounded up, imprisoned and sent directly back to Eritrea; the so-called North Korea of Africa. Through such deals, the European Union and its member states will not only deny their international obligations, but will also worsen the situation of those who seek to escape countries where their lives are at risk every day. How many deaths will it take for EU leaders to change policies and reconnect with the human values they claim to defend? For us, it's already too many.



New skills agenda for Europe João Pimenta Lopes, Portugal

The need for systematic improvement of workers' skills to adjust to the constant renewal of technologies, communication methods and labour management, is unquestionable. However, while addressing the development of new skills, the EU institutions are de facto promoting: labour insecurity (so-called flexicurity); an education system dependent upon and defined by labour market needs; and the deception of magical solutions like entrepreneurship, microcredit and workers' mobility. These policies are in line with the neoliberal agenda of the EU, which serves to deregulate work and funnel knowledge. By contrast, the best way to ensure people's capability to adapt to all circumstances is to educate men and women in a holistic way. This includes promoting cultural and universal values, promoting lifelong learning and informal and non-formal education as well as professional training programmes, while at the same time safeguarding workers' rights, namely through regulation of employment and collective bargaining.

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