



12-15 NOVEMBER 2018

PLENARY SESSION PRIORITIES

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PRESS BRIEFING

Tuesday 13 November
@ 11.30
EP Press Room LOW
N-1/201

GUE/NGL PRESS BRIEFING

Journalists are welcome to question our MEPs on issues they are covering.

*The speakers will be GUE/NGL President Gabi Zimmer and Finnish MEP Merja Kyllönen
Interpretation: EN, FR, DE, ES, IT, PL and FI.*



Gabi Zimmer - Future of EU debate with Angela Merkel

Debate: Tuesday

Angela Merkel has been responsible for much that has gone wrong in the EU over the past 13 years. The German government has consistently let the EU be subservient to corporate interests. Along with ex-Finance Minister Schäuble, Merkel has imposed austerity against any economic rationale upon other eurozone states. The results were privatisation, mass unemployment and severe poverty for many people. She undertook major decisions such as the destructive Fiscal Compact and the dirty Turkey migration deal - agreed with allies in the Council - but excluded the democratically-elected European Parliament. In Dieselgate, she shielded the German car industry which had committed systematic fraud. She prevented the EU from adopting stronger emission limits which are supposed to better protect its citizens. Consequently, the German Chancellor has caused massive damage to the European idea.



Xabier Benito - Energy Efficiency

Debate: Monday, Vote: Tuesday

With the new IPCC report, it's clear that the EU has lost a golden opportunity to tackle climate change. The 35% target for energy efficiency by 2030 is seriously inadequate. Ambitious and binding energy efficiency targets would benefit EU citizens as this would lead to lower energy consumption for heating and cooling, and more energy security and job creation.



Paloma López - Renewables

Debate: Monday, Vote: Tuesday

Capitalism is endangering the survival of this planet. We have precious little time to make important changes - and renewable energies are one of the ways. However, we need ambitions that live up to the demands and, once again, a number of countries have put short-term corporate interests over social benefits. The EU can and must do more when facing this challenge.





Merja Kyllönen - Nuclear Forces Treaty

Debate: Wednesday

It is with great disappointment that we witnessed the US's recent withdrawal from the Nuclear Forces Treaty. In doing so, the US has nullified decades of peace building. This opens the door for the other members of the Treaty, especially Russia, to also withdraw from it - heralding a new era of fear and mistrust on an unprecedented scale. All of us at GUE/NGL will work hard to ensure that peace and stability will not be compromised, and that this will not lead to renewed militarisation by all sides.



Sabine Lösing - Arms exports report

Debate: Tuesday, Vote: Wednesday

The EU is currently the second largest arms exporter in the world after the US. Arms export licences are rarely rejected and they end up being sold to the Middle East, but especially to Saudi Arabia and its allies which have destroyed the population of Yemen. On a positive note, several important demands have been incorporated into the 2018 report and if adopted, it will be the first time that the EU has been called upon to establish a sanctions mechanism that would make arms exports almost as impossible as they were in the past.



Marie-Christine Vergiat - Humanitarian visas

Debate: Tuesday, Vote: Wednesday

Since 2015-16, the EU has failed to find an adequate solution to the refugee crisis. Instead, they've turned the Mediterranean into a mass grave. Humanitarian visas are thus a sensible solution to let in those in need to come into Europe without endangering their lives. Yet, once again, this Parliament vote will not change the situation, leaving member states to individually decide who deserves these visas. A missed opportunity.



Marina Albiol - Minimum standards for minorities' rights

Debate: Monday, Vote: Tuesday

It is vital for EU minorities to have a framework that guarantees their specific social, cultural and national rights. Despite the proposals, we still have a long way to go especially on the issues of self-government and self-determination - both of which are the basis for these rights. We regret that there is a Parliamentary majority that refuses to grant equal status to all European languages. This is discrimination against all minority language speakers - they should be promoted rather than marginalised.



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