PRESS BRIEFING

Journalists are welcome to question the Co-presidents of The Left in the European Parliament on issues they are covering. Physical & remote participation possible. See @Left_EU on Twitter for more details.

with Manon Aubry (France Insoumise, France) & Martin Schirdewan (Die Linke, Germany)

Martin Schirdewan: Austerity 2:0

European Council Summit - Wednesday

Everyone except the German Chancellor, Olaf Scholz, and his Finance Minister, Christian Lindner, knows that there is too little investment in the EU. Nevertheless, they want to handcuff themselves to austerity when they should be tackling social inequality, economic decline or climate change. The EU needs investment. Anyone who wants to fight this with austerity is either stupid or doesn’t want to tackle the problems at all.

Manon Aubry: Permanent ceasefire in Gaza, now!

Debate: Tuesday

The resumption of bombardments in Gaza means the resumption of a horrifying disaster. The one-week truce has revealed an apocalyptic humanitarian situation: a “hell on earth” according to UN officials. With more than 15,000 people already dead, 2/3 of them women and children, the south is now being targeted and the Palestinians have nowhere to go. It is high time for the EU to come out of its deadly silence and react, in particular by clearly calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, suspending the association agreement with Israel and imposing financial sanctions. The EU has not hesitated to react with sanctions following Putin’s war crimes in Ukraine: this double standard is unacceptable!

Miguel Urban Crespo: Award of the Sakharov Prize

Debate: Tuesday

The far right and the misogynist ultra-conservative elites continue to punish those who fight to make the right to abortion a universal reality. The Left’s position is clear: access to free, safe and legal abortion is a human right. The struggle of people like Colleen, Justyna and Morena is crucial: the patriarchy should never again decide over women’s bodies, lives and rights.
Cornelia Ernst: Investigation into abuses at Frontex

Debate: Wednesday, vote: Thursday

Frontex’s complicity in violations of fundamental rights has not ended. Despite continuous evidence of this complicity, the serious structural problems of Frontex remain and have not been addressed. Pouring more and more money into the militarisation of Frontex must stop. The Frontex system as it exists now should be abolished.

Leila Chaibi: Qatargate - one year on

Qatargate shone a light on the murky waters of corruption, conflicts of interest and lobbying, but 12 months later, “reforms” are little more than window dressing. To curb corruption and enhance transparency, we need to radically change the way the European Parliament works and tackle the structural issues that allowed a scandal like Qatargate to happen in the first place.

João Pimenta Lopes: Fisheries in Kiribati

Vote: Tuesday

We consider, as in other Fisheries Partnership Agreements, that this agreement should contribute to the strengthening of the fishing sector in Kiribati and the full exercise of the country’s sovereignty over its resources. It should contribute to the creation of jobs with rights and help to develop the capacity to study and acquire data on conserving fishery resources and on the impact of this fisheries agreement on their ecosystem.

José Gusmão: Austerity 2.0

Committee vote: Monday

The agreement between the socialists, the liberals, the right and the conservatives marks the return of full blown austerity policies with complete disregard for democracy in member states. The new rules provide the Commission with unprecedented power and complete discretion to punish countries and their people. If these rules are allowed to stand, all the speeches on social europe and the green and digital transition will be nothing more than the usual lip service.

Cornelia Ernst: Critical Raw Materials

Debate & vote: Tuesday

The Critical Raw Materials Act aims to ensure the security of supply of strategic raw materials in the EU, as these are needed for the green and digital transformation. During negotiations, I focused on anchoring clear social and environmental criteria for strategic projects in the act: without The Left, many progressive elements of the act would not exist, for example on the rights of indigenous communities or labour rights. No one should be left behind by the green transition. At the same time, a fundamental criticism remains: raw materials policy is left to the market and companies remain at the driving seat of the transformation. Equally problematic is the fact that strategic partnerships with third countries continue to be shaped exclusively by the EU Commission, as the European Board for Critical Raw Materials will only evaluate and advise. Instead of following a neocolonial pattern of resource extraction, we must ensure partnerships that are mutually beneficial.