



PLENARY SESSION PRIORITIES

11-14 April 2016



**Conclusions of the European Council of 17 & 18 March, 2016**  
**Gabi Zimmer, GUE/NGL President, Germany**

The EU-Turkey deal outsources Europe's human rights responsibilities. It is outrageous that EU leaders could not come up with a real European solution based on solidarity and the safeguarding of human rights. Instead of preparing a humane response on time, the European Union buried its head in the sand until millions of people had arrived from across the Mediterranean. With this policy of ignorance, the EU has made itself totally dependent on a Turkish Government that is waging a war against its own Kurdish population and putting opposition figures and critical journalists in prison. Leaving the solution to the refugee crisis in Erdoğan's hands declares the EU morally bankrupt, legitimises Erdoğan's actions and strengthens authoritarianism in Turkey. By contrast, we need a fair distribution of refugees among EU member states and we must support Greece in addressing the challenges it faces.



**The Panama Papers Fabio De Masi, Germany**

The Panama Papers make it obvious: We need much stronger tools against tax havens, starting with source taxation on financial flows into these jurisdictions and including meaningful sanctions such as the revocation of business licences against those banks and lawyers assisting tax evaders and money launderers. The European Parliament should set up a permanent sub-committee for tax matters to maintain a high level of pressure on member states and the European Commission.

**Decision adopted on public tax transparency Fabio De Masi, Germany**

The Commission talks about transparency, yet omits most major tax havens from what they call country-by-country reporting by turning it into EU-reporting only. This is absolutely unacceptable in light of all the recent scandals. Anything less than showing where multinationals pay tax - and where they don't - is empty talk. It didn't harm the banks and so it should be extended to all corporations operating across borders, including the 85 per cent of corporations with annual turnover below the excessively generous threshold of 750 million euros.



**Holistic EU approach to migration Barbara Spinelli, Italy**

This report goes beyond existing reports on search and rescue, safe and legal access, temporary protection, and mutual recognition of asylum decisions. There are, however, negative points in favour of readmission agreements, returns, and safe countries of origin. In this report, the proposed solution to the refugee crisis is too focused on reinforced control of EU external borders and too elusive on the root causes: the regime-change military strategies which have caused the massive flight of people from their home countries.



**PNR Cornelia Ernst, Germany**

This directive makes the collection and retention of air travel passenger data mandatory throughout the EU. Just like the retention of telecommunications data, this is a strong violation of the fundamental right to privacy and has no proven use in the fight against terrorism or crime. We reject such an invasive yet useless measure and will vote against it.

**GUE/NGL Press Briefing: Tuesday 12/04/2016 @ 11:30, EP Press Room**

**Gabi Zimmer - Conclusions of the European Council of 17 & 18 March**

**Fabio De Masi - The Panama Papers**

**Barbara Spinelli – The situation in the Mediterranean and the need for a holistic approach to migration**

For more information please contact: Gay Kavanagh +32473842320, Nikki Sullings +32483035575

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**EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy Sabine Lösing, Germany**

This report compiles the EU policy wish list from recent years - moving away from a civilian and peaceful Union towards a militarised one. It calls for the establishment of a European Defence Union, for increased military and defence research expenditure and the massive support of the military-industrial complex. It advocates for strategic autonomy for the EU, stronger EU-NATO cooperation and the minimum defence expenditure target of two per cent of GDP. Additionally, the report stresses the merging of internal and external security and the subordination of trade, development and energy policy under the EU's common foreign, security and defence policies (CFSP/CSDP). We are against this militarisation and demand a strictly civil and peaceful EU. We will vote against the report and have tabled a minority opinion.

( See report: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&mode=XML&reference=A8-2016-0069&language=EN> )



**2015 Report on Turkey Takis Hadjigeorgiou, Cyprus**

At the next plenary session, we will discuss the 2015 Progress Report on Turkey, however, the widespread belief is that the country is backsliding on almost all of the political issues covered by the report. While the report discusses Turkey's democratic deficit, the Turkish Government has not showed any urgency in dealing with this as it has done with previous resolutions in the past. It refuses to enter into a dialogue to resolve the Kurdish issue, oppresses freedom of speech and prosecutes journalists. Concerning the Cyprus problem, the report is clear in its support for the reunification talks that are currently taking place as well as for the evolution of the Republic of Cyprus into a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation with single sovereignty, single international personality and single citizenship.



**Private sector and development Lola Sánchez Caldentey, Spain**

The shift towards the private sector in development is based on the dogma that a greater private sector role is necessarily positive. But, are all private sector activities actually positive for sustainable development? Reality proves that, all too often, the private sector's role in development is ineffective with regards to reducing poverty and achieving sustainable development goals. We will vote against the proposed report since it neglects all of the legitimate concerns of those who acknowledge this fact.



**Crisis in the agricultural sector Lidia Senra Rodríguez, Galicia (Spanish state)**

The current agrarian crisis in Europe has its origins in the neoliberal orientation that has been applied to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) since the early 1990s. These changes in policy direction have set in motion a unidirectional process of deregulation of the sector which favours a small group of large, export-oriented agribusinesses. These changes have created a CAP that prioritises exports over the internal role of agriculture in the EU. One of the reasons why the European agricultural sector is in crisis is the fact that the CAP does not consider food as a basic necessity for life, but instead as 'products' for the market.

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