



EUROPEAN UNITED LEFT • NORDIC GREEN LEFT

STRASBOURG FOCUS

PLENARY SESSION PRIORITIES

3-6 October 2016



Preparation of the European Council - Gabi Zimmer, GUE/NGL President, Germany

With the EU still gripped by the migration crisis, just 5651 people out of the agreed 160 000 have been relocated. Only a few member states are shouldering the entire burden and certain national governments' hard-line rhetoric is sowing more division than unity. Solidarity can only work if all member states fulfil their legal and moral obligations responsibly. We cannot have this 'flexible' solidarity. The right to asylum and a common migration policy with legal and safe access for people fleeing danger are absolutely critical. On the other hand, citizens are losing faith in the Commission in its drive to push through CETA and TTIP. People's concerns have to be taken on board seriously. We need to increase and expand current social and environmental standards for all rather than undermine existing ones. We demand transparent and fair trade deals with third countries - not biased in favour of banks and multinationals but citizens themselves.



Transparency Register - Helmut Scholz, Germany

It is unfortunate that the Commission has failed to comply with the requirements stated by the Parliament back in April 2014 to have a legislative proposal for a mandatory transparency register in place by the end of this year. They may have clubbed together the three key EU institutions in this proposal but it fails to tackle the heart of the issue. Lobbyists will still have access channels to officials so it's 'business as usual' and nothing much will change.



Transparency Register - Dennis De Jong, The Netherlands

As ITCO (Intergroup on Integrity, Transparency, Corruption and Organised Crime) co-president, I welcome this mandatory Transparency Register proposal. It is of crucial importance that we receive reliable information on lobbyists and that we can properly supervise the quality of this information. Lobbyists who give incomplete or false information must be removed from the register and in cases of fraud and criminal activities, sanctions must be imposed. In addition, the negotiations about the new proposal should be done in a transparent way and must include all the EU institutions at play.

Bahamas Leaks - Dennis De Jong, The Netherlands

Thanks to BahamasLeaks, we now know that during her term as Commissioner responsible for Competition, Neelie Kroes was involved in some shady company set up in the Bahamas to acquire parts of Enron. Kroes never said anything, of course, as was required by the Code of Conduct for Commissioners. I fully expect President Juncker to strip Kroes of her privileges and pension as soon as possible.



Colombia peace agreement - Tania González Peñas, Spain

With this agreement and referendum, a new dawn begins in Colombia. The next challenge is to ensure that paramilitary violence also becomes a thing of the past. A lasting peace process goes hand in hand with human rights and the necessary reforms. We must ensure that economic developments in the conflict zones are also undertaken in an ethical way.

GUE/NGL Press Briefing: Tuesday 4/10/2016 @ 11.30 EP Press Room LOW N-1/201

Gabi Zimmer - Preparation of the European Council

Dennis De Jong - Transparency register; conflicts of interest of past and present Commissioners

Press conference: Tuesday 4/10/2016 @ 14:30 EP Press Room LOW N-1/201

Dennis de JONG (GUE/NGL, NL) and Věra JOUROVÁ, European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality: "The Right to Legal Aid"

Wednesday 5/10/2016 @ 11:00 EP Press Room LOW N-1/201

Malin Björk (GUE/NGL) and MEPs from other political groups:

"All of Us: Women's Rights in Poland"

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Macroeconomic situation in Greece - Dimitrios Papadimoulis, Greece

Greece needs growth and a stable macroeconomic environment. It is therefore time to abandon neoliberal austerity measures and to elaborate proposals in favour of fair and sustainable development, growth and job creation policies. The dogmatic strategy by Germany's Wolfgang Schäuble to persist with more unilateral austerity and the postponement of debt relief is unacceptable. Talks on Greece's debt relief must also be completed by the end of this year.



Macroeconomic situation in Greece - Fabio De Masi, Germany

Austerity has failed Greece and the eurozone. Growth is not possible if pensions and wages are cut and public assets stripped. Greece has to take out new loans to service old debts. This is not financial assistance but mafia-style blackmail. After years of austerity and depression, and with Deutsche Bank under fire, the euro will not survive another crisis.



COP 22 - Estefanía Torres Martínez, Spain

This resolution on the implementation of the Paris Agreement and COP22 has some positive aspects including provisions for Least Developed Countries, climate justice and the sustainable improvement of technology in developing countries. Moreover, it takes a clear stand against land grabbing and highlights the urgency of climate refugees. However, there's still a lot left to do such as reducing GHG emissions below 1.5°, phasing out fossil fuel subsidies and helping developing countries' indigenous rights.



The situation in Syria - Javier Couso, Spain

Sadly, America's killing of 62 Syrian soldiers has played a key role in scuppering the latest ceasefire. This after Russia and the US agreed to cooperate in order to avoid such a situation. This terrible episode no doubt helped the advance of Daesh. During these bloody times, it is vital that all the key actors - except Daesh - come together for dialogue. That includes opposition members not involved in terrorism. A ceasefire must be reached and, consequently, respected. This applies to everyone.



Women's rights in Poland - Malin Björk, Sweden

The right to free, safe and legal abortion is a key factor to gender equality and must be guaranteed everywhere. It is therefore deeply concerning that the Polish government is now debating a complete ban on abortion. Such a ban would be a vicious attack on the right of women to decide over their own bodies.

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