



PLENARY SESSION PRIORITIES

24-27 October 2016



**Conclusions of the European Council Meeting
Gabi Zimmer, GUE/NGL President, Germany**

The dirty EU-Turkey deal over refugees and migrants is now a template for member states to use to push for agreements with third countries. This not only absolves the EU of its own responsibilities but it undermines EU rules and values by cooperating with regimes like Egypt which do not respect human rights.

On CETA, the Commission has once again shown its true colours by threatening the Parliament of Wallonia for vetoing the trade deal. That tells us the Commission is being tone-deaf to the real concerns of EU citizens and is undermining their trust in our institutions.



EU strategy towards Iran after nuclear agreement - Sofia Sakorafa, Greece

Isolation and sanctions imposed by the west on Iran were finally lifted after the 2015 agreement with Tehran. We now fully expect Iran to take this new opportunity to foster regional and international peace and development. Similarly, the EU must pursue an ambitious, multilateral, cross-sector confidence-building dialogue that would benefit both Iranians and Europeans. This should be based on shared interests and common differences - including human rights.



Human rights and migration in third countries - Marie-Christine Vergiat, France

Migration policies must be framed from an international perspective as we now have more refugees and even more displaced people. The poorest countries are always the ones most affected and the EU needs to implement policies that not only protect the most vulnerable - but also their rights. That means no more externalisation of migration policies to third countries at the expense of genuine development and the consequences this will inevitably bring.



Fight against corruption - Dennis De Jong, The Netherlands

The fight against corruption and organised crime remains a priority since the more vulnerable are often the hardest-hit in the EU. Member states as well as EU institutions must prioritise fighting corruption - inter alia - through the development and enforcement of integrity rules and by blacklisting fraudulent companies. It is quite unacceptable that not only has the second anti-corruption report by the Commission been delayed but they've also refused to include a chapter on the anti-corruption policies of the EU institutions themselves.



**Corporate liability for serious human rights abuses in third countries
Miguel Urbán, Spain**

Protecting human rights should always be a priority for member states and the EU. We have an obligation to prevent European companies from violating human rights wherever they operate. This requires the introduction of effective control and sanction mechanisms to deal with these violations, plus to ensure that they comply with all the laws and treaties in force. We urgently need to implement measures that rectify the rights that have been violated.

GUE/NGL Press Briefing: Tuesday 25/10/2016 @ 14.30 EP Press Room LOW N-1/201

Gabi Zimmer - Council Conclusions

Marie-Christine Vergiat - Human rights and migration in third countries

Fabio De Masi - Corporate taxation package

Press Conference: Wednesday 26/10/2016 @ 15:30 EP Press Room LOW N-1/201

Curzio Maltese (GUE/NGL, IT), Eleonora Forenza (GUE/NGL, IT), Philippe Texier, Livio Pepino and Daniel Ibanez: Revealing the Judgement of the Permanent People's Tribunal on the Turin-Lyon High-speed Rail Link

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Establishment of an EU mechanism on democracy - Barbara Spinelli, Italy

The report recommends the establishment of a permanent monitoring mechanism with respect to the rule of law and fundamental rights by member states. That's good news given the problems we have in some EU states right now. But what is still lacking is proper supervision in enforcing these rights over the big EU institutions. Citizens' mistrust of Brussels is already high and this 'institutional oversight' is precisely what we are going to highlight in our amendments.



General Budget of the EU for 2017 - Younous Omarjee, France

This massive cut in the proposed budget by the Commission and Council is simply unacceptable. The 2017 budget includes a cut to the European Social Fund on youth and research. If the EU is serious about wanting to create jobs and provide growth, security and a better environment for our citizens, then it needs to invest more - not less. It must not forego solidarity by sacrificing the middle and working classes who have already suffered enough under austerity.



General Budget of the EU for 2017 - Liadh Ní Riada, Ireland

We fundamentally regret and condemn the Commission and Council's proposal to cut cohesion and integration programmes. We need to ringfence funding on youth and job creation. Likewise, the suspension of the ESI Funds to Portugal and Spain must be overturned. We also call on the Council to reverse its decision to cut funding on humanitarian aid. Similarly, we badly need a European search and rescue programme rather than more money for FRONTEX and for Fortress Europe.



Situation of journalists in Turkey - Takis Hadjigeorgiou, Cyprus

The crackdown against journalists in Turkey has intensified tremendously since the 15 July attempted coup. Discussions in the plenary plus adopted resolutions calling for freedom of expression and press freedom have all come to nought. It is high time for the EU to take concrete action towards Turkey. It is unacceptable for an aspiring EU member state to behave in such a way towards its own journalists.



Nuclear security and non-proliferation - Sabine Lösing, Germany

The NPT was created as a result of the atomic bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The nuclear disarmament process has been delayed for a long time and is even about to be reversed. Nuclear weapons must never be used as political or military means. It is vitally important that total nuclear disarmament is upheld through international policy. The 2017 international conference proposed by the UN working group must include negotiations on legally-binding measures that will outlaw all nuclear weapons.

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