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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Question for Oral Answer B7-0000/2011

pursuant to Rule 115(5) of the Rules of Procedure

in view of developing a common EU position ahead of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)

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European Parliament resolution of ... in view of developing a common EU position ahead of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), to be held in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012, which will focus on two themes: "a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication" and "the institutional framework for sustainable development",
- having regard to the questions to the Commission and to the Council on the EU's objectives for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) to be held in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012 (O- B7 000/2011, O- B7 000/2011),
- having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled "Rio+20: towards the green economy and better governance" (COM(2011)363),
- having regard to the outcomes of the Conference on Biological Diversity in Nagoya, Japan 2010
- having regard to Rules 115(5) and 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas although progress towards sustainable development has been made since the Rio Summit in 1992 and the Johannesburg Summit in 2002, considerable implementation gaps and challenges still remain,

B. whereas synergies between the three Rio Conventions on Biodiversity (CBD), Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Desertification (UNCCD) should be enhanced;

C. whereas as many as 1.4 billion people still live in extreme poverty, half of whom live in sub-Saharan Africa, and whereas one sixth of the world's population is undernourished,

D. whereas the world population is expected to rise to at least 9 billion in 2050, putting even greater demands on the supply of natural resources,

E. whereas the ever-growing need for water, land and forest, has led to the increasing depletion and degradation of these resources, and whereas biodiversity loss and deforestation continue at an alarming rate,

F. whereas the levels of global greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise,

G. whereas the challenges lying ahead are not stand-alone issues but are mutually related and interdependent, and whereas Rio+20 is the only multilateral forum addressing all three pillars of sustainable development and therefore assuring an holistic approach

- H. whereas good environmental governance goes beyond institutional arrangements comprising transparency, accountability, civil society involvement; whereas the Rio Declaration Principle 10 confirms environmental issues are best handled with participation of all concerned citizens and highlights the necessity to provide access to information concerning the environment, the right to participate in decision-making processes and effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings;
- I. whereas contributions should be submitted to the UN before 1 November 2011, as input to negotiations starting early in 2012,
 - 1. Welcomes the decision of the UN General Assembly in Resolution 64/236 to convene a United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development at the highest possible level in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012, which represents a unique opportunity for world leaders to set the sustainability agenda for the next 10 years,
 - 2. Welcomes the Communication from the Commission entitled "Rio+20: towards the green economy and better governance", considers however that an emphasis on green economy and private sector should not divert attention from the need to empower citizens and promote good environmental governance beyond institutional arrangements; highlights that the EU can share important experiences in this regard in implementing Principle 10 of Rio;
 - 3. Calls on the Commission and the Council to ensure that a strong and unified EU position is submitted to the UN before 1 November 2011, as input to negotiations starting early in 2012;
 - 4. Underlines that the Rio+20 Summit represents a crucial opportunity to reinforce the political commitment for sustainable development at global level and the partnerships between industrialised and developing countries,
 - 5. Emphasises that there is a crucial need to inject greater urgency and dynamism into the implementation and the international governance of sustainable development policies which are making slow progress,
 - 6. Calls on the Commission and the Council to ensure that the Rio+20 Summit does not only result in statements of good will, but in tangible actions and accountable targets which are needed to enable the transition to green economy and better governance,
 - 7. Stresses that the Rio+20 Summit should focus on strengthening the links between the environment, economic and social agendas, shifting the view from seeing them as three independent pillars to a more coherent and interdependent approach,
 - 8. Underlines that the Rio+20 summit should set specific and concrete goals and ways of measuring them,
 - 9. Shares the view that in order to achieve the transition towards a green economy in the context of poverty eradication, the following three interlinked policy dimensions need to be addressed:

- Investing in the sustainable management of key resources and natural capital
- Establishing the right market and regulatory conditions
- Improving governance and involvement of civil society and the private sector

10. Emphasises the need to include the principle of common but differentiated approach and the polluter pays principle to promote a fair share of responsibilities towards global sustainable development,
11. Calls on the Commission and the Council to ensure that the Rio+20 Summit tries to find a solution to the persistent and widening equity gaps at global and national level due to the present economic model,
12. Emphasises that the Rio+20 Summit should discuss an integrated approach to address the multiple challenges such as poverty eradication, health, food and energy supply,

Actions in Resources and Natural Capital

13. Stresses that the transition towards a green economy requires urgent action as regards resources and natural capital management,
14. Emphasises that the fair and equitable access to resources is a crucial precondition for development and poverty eradication; highlights that the poorest countries will be most affected by the impacts of climate change and thus need support for the adaptation,
15. Underlines the importance of valuing resources, natural capital and ecosystem services at their real value, including the different cultural livelihood values assigned to them, while not commodifying natural systems, and calls for the establishment of natural capital accounting processes and their integration into the economic accounting structures and political decision making processes,
16. Stresses the urgent need to address scarce resources, such as raw materials, their sustainable use and recycling opportunities,

Water

17. Emphasises that the Rio+20 Summit needs to renew its commitment towards promoting a sustainable management of water, considers that establishing international partnerships in this regard could help to achieve this goal,
18. Underlines the importance of integrated river basin management, and calls for a strengthening of policies to improve water access, quality and efficiency,

Marine environment and oceans

19. Emphasises the need to improve the governance and strengthen the protection of the marine environment and oceans, and considers that seas and oceans should become one of the key pillars of the Rio Framework, aside climate and biodiversity protection;
20. Considers that a strong commitment should be made to the sustainable management of fisheries, notably by strengthening Regional Fisheries Management Organisations and

introducing good practices in terms of institutions, surveillance and enforcement mechanisms,

Energy

21. Points to the increasing scarcity of fossil energy sources, such as oil or carbon and reiterates their contribution to the greenhouse gas effect,
22. Underlines that the transition towards a green economy requires a radical transformation of the energy sector, in order to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency, especially in least developed countries, and emphasises the necessity of renewable energy technology and know-how transfer,
23. Calls for global targets and measures to increase the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency worldwide,
24. Believes that renewable energy and energy efficiency has the potential to mitigate climate change, contribute to social and economic development, improve security of supply and provide environmental and health benefits,
25. Considers that the external costs of energy supply should be reflected in the price of energy,

Agriculture and food-safety

26. Emphasises that there is an urgent need to promote sustainable agriculture in the context of poverty eradication, recognizing that appropriate low impact, multifunctional farming systems already exist and should be promoted,
27. Shares the Commission's view that existing initiatives promoting sustainable agriculture that build on multilateral actions (such as the FAO), regional activities (such as organic farming) as well as business activities should be strengthened, and that in addition, new initiatives and partnerships should be launched under the governance arrangements of the Committee for Food Security to make the consumption and production of food more sustainable, to promote community resilience and decrease hunger,
28. Asks for global measures to create greater transparency in the commodity market and to stop financial speculations that contribute to high food price volatility,
29. Considers that land degradation and land use change require a global response and calls for efficient measures and monitoring,
30. Underlines the vital importance of small producers, which are responsible for the majority of world's food supply,

Forests

31. Highlights the need to promote sustainable forest management and combat deforestation, underlines the need to establishing partnerships with governments, civil society and the private sector in order to achieve this goal,

32. Believes that the design of REDD+ instrument under UNFCCC should ensure respect of and contribution to overall forest protection objectives and targets,

Chemicals and hazardous substances

33. Supports the Commission's view that the time is ripe to establish a more robust and coherent international regime for governing the use of chemicals and hazardous substances, and that the Rio+20 Summit should set about achieving this aim,

Waste Management

34. Highlights the fact that good waste management does not only minimise environmental impacts but also provides a source of new materials and jobs,

Developing conditions to stimulate markets and investing in human capital

Environmentally harmful subsidies

35. Stresses the urgent need to tackle environmentally harmful subsidies,

36. Calls on the Rio+20 Summit to launch a series of coordinated actions by countries aimed at identifying and phasing out all environmentally harmful subsidies by 2020, in line with Nagoya commitments;

Regulatory and market-based instruments

37. Stresses that the use of regulatory instruments, on both a national and international level, along with market-based instruments, will play a crucial role in greening the economy,

38. Underlines that fiscal reforms designed to shift the tax burden from labour to resource use and pollution can help create a win-win outcome for both employment and for the environment,

39. Calls on the EU Commission to promote the inclusion of environmental aspects into international trade negotiations,

Financing

40. Emphasises that the transition towards a global green economy will require large-scale financial investment, underlines that public money alone will not be enough, and that public funding will rather have to catalyse and leverage much greater private investment,

41. Invites the Rio+20 Summit to recommend to reform existing financing strategies and to establish new public-private financing schemes and partnerships as needed,

42. Believes that developing countries need a stable long-term framework of financial support, capacity building and technology transfer to promote sustainable development and allow them to skip the energy and carbon intensive development path that the industrialized countries experienced

43. Underlines that Official Development Aid (ODA) should be better leveraged for green economy objectives,

44. Considers it crucial that the poorest countries have access to innovative forms of financing to close the equity gap which these countries experience,

Empowering citizen

45. Considers it of outmost importance to continue to empower citizens in environmental governance and calls for progress in Rio +20 on ensuring effective global implementation of Rio Principle 10; considers that the EU has important experiences to offer for international discussions with over 10 years of implementation of the Arhus Convention;

Training

46. Stresses the need to support education and training programmes, in particular for young people, in all countries ,

Technologies

47. Highlights the importance of R&D in order to stimulate innovation, and the need for scientific and technological cooperation,

48. Acknowledges that technological innovation, assessment and transfer is essential to meet environmental, economic and social challenges; however, also underlines that technological development cannot be the only solution to environmental problems or for poverty eradication,

49. Stresses that the introduction of new and emerging technologies must not compromise the goals of just and sustainable development and poverty eradication; technologies can have different environmental, social and economic impacts; without proper oversight some technologies can lead to unsustainable exploitation of natural resources (such as water, land, biomass), increases in poverty and other detrimental social effects,

50. Therefore supports the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building on environment-related technology as well as the goals for evaluation and transfer of environmentally sound technologies and asks for the creation of a capacity within the UN system to monitor, evaluate and provide information about new technologies relevant to sustainable development and poverty eradication,

Measuring progress

51. Underlines that the Rio+20 Summit should deliver a new alternative model to measure growth and welfare 'beyond GDP', underlines that it is necessary in order to measure progress in a broad sense, which encompasses economic environmental and social dimensions; therefore calls for the development of clear and measurable indicators that take account of climate change, biodiversity, resource efficiency and social inclusion,

Improve Governance and private sector involvement

52. Stresses the urgent need to improve sustainable development governance,
53. Takes the view that UNEP needs to be strengthened, by creating a global multilateral environmental organisation, for example by transforming UNEP into a UN Specialized Agency (such as the ILO), as this would be the most promising way forward to improve international environmental governance and make progress towards global sustainable development.
54. Reiterates its proposal for an international environmental court, so that global environmental legislation becomes more binding and enforceable,
55. Calls on the Rio+20 Summit to launch a strategy for strengthening coherence between the different multilateral environmental agreements,
56. Emphasises the need to involve global, national and local actors in the implementation processes,
57. Stresses the need to step up the involvement of finance ministers, development ministers, environment ministers and others in sustainable development policies,
58. Calls on the Rio+20 Summit to strengthen the engagement of the key stakeholders, including the private sector, underlines that business and civil society, in particular NGOs, social movements, and indigenous communities need to play a prominent role,
59. Underlines the importance of business and civil society working together within developing countries in order to deliver tangible results,
60. Stresses the importance of the involvement of citizens, calls for raising awareness and providing more information on sustainable consumption in order to change values and behaviour and facilitate responsible decisions,
61. Underlines that all major stakeholders should have full, open and fair access to all negotiations, intersessional and preparatory meetings towards Rio+20,
62. Believes that parliamentary representatives ought to play an active role in connection with the conference; ideally, the European Parliament ought to be formally associated with the conference with equivalent status to the Commission delegation and at least the same status as it has enjoyed at other conferences,
63. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of Member States and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.