

Thursday 20 January 2000

4. Believes that the negotiations initiated in Shepherdstown between Prime Minister Barak and Foreign Affairs Minister Faruk al-Sharā hosted by President Clinton could be a fundamental step towards achieving definitive peace in the Middle East and also hopes to see progress on the humanitarian issues that stand between the two countries;
5. Welcomes the fact that Israel and Syria are endeavouring to agree a peace treaty in the near future and to resolve their disputes in order to establish normal peaceful relations between the two countries, and hopes that the Lebanese government will shortly join the negotiating table; believes that all non-Lebanese forces must withdraw from Lebanon as stressed by UN resolutions 425 and 520, so as to ensure the region's stability;
6. Calls on all countries of the region to support the peace process and to fight against any violence, most specially terrorism, which might undermine these efforts;
7. Welcomes the forthcoming Conference of the Multilateral Peace Progress Steering Committee, which is expected to take place in Moscow on 1 February 2000, and hopes that it will serve as a powerful tool to achieve sustainable peace in the Middle East;
8. Notes that the commitments of the European Union in the region in financial terms must be balanced with a clear presence in the political field, without detriment to the discreet and efficient participation of the EU representative Ambassador Moratinos; in this sense, believes that the European Union should be involved in all the negotiations of the peace process;
9. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to actively promote every project which might help to build understanding and partnership between the peoples of the region;
10. Stresses the importance of democratisation, respect for human rights and the rule of law as well as the importance of regional cooperation and integration in accordance with the spirit of the Barcelona process, in which Mediterranean and European countries cooperate in regional projects in order to promote long-term peace and stability in the Mediterranean basin;
11. Points out, finally, that any definitive peace agreement must be guaranteed not only by the parties involved, but also by the international community;
12. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Israeli Government, the Knesset, the Syrian Government, the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian Legislative Council, the Lebanese Government, the Jordanian Government and the Egyptian Government.

5. Multiannual guidance programmes for the fishing fleets (1997)

A5-0096/1999

European Parliament resolution on the annual report to the Council and to the European Parliament on the results of the multiannual guidance programmes for the fishing fleets at the end of 1997 (COM(1999) 175 – C5-0109/1999 – 1999/2112(COS))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission's annual report (COM(1999) 175 – C5-0109/1999),
 - having regard to Rule 160 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Fisheries (A5-0096/1999),
- A. pointing out that an appropriate resource conservation policy is an essential requirement in order to guarantee the future of a profitable and competitive Community fisheries sector,
- B. whereas the priority aim of the multiannual guidance programmes is to establish a balance between available resources and the fishing effort by the existing Community fleet,

Thursday 20 January 2000

- C. stressing that achievement of the objectives of the MAGPs, which provide for a reasonable reduction in the fishing capacity of the Member State fleets applying to the various fleet segments, is necessary in order to ensure the sustainable development of the sector,
- D. whereas this reduction in the capacity of the fleet entails a social and economic sacrifice and must be made in a balanced way in all the Member States if it is to be understood and accepted by the fisheries sector,
- E. noting that, if the reduction in capacity is not carried out in a balanced way, there will be a risk that countries complying with the objectives set might question the desirability of continuing to apply a policy which entails social costs and whose effectiveness may be threatened by the non-compliance of other Member States,
- F. whereas the failure to achieve the objectives laid down in the MAGPs for certain segments of the fleet in some Member States may have the effect of distorting competition, which will cause serious damage to those professionally engaged in fisheries sectors operating in states which have implemented the reduction in fishing effort envisaged in the MAGPs,
- G. noting that, in spite of the efforts undertaken during the period covered by MAGP III (1992-1996) and in 1997, the first year of application of MAGP IV, the full standardisation of measurement units for the vessels of all Member States has not yet been achieved,
- H. recognising that the change in criteria governing the segmentation of the fleet as applied in the transition from MAGP III to MAGP IV, whereby new elements such as the composition of catches have been introduced, makes it difficult to compare the data received,
- I. recognising that the coercive measures hitherto in existence to ensure compliance with the objectives of the MAGPs, such as initiating infringement proceedings or refusing to grant aid for the renewal and modernisation of the fleet, do not appear to have proved effective, in that they have not encouraged the Member State fleets to meet the objectives set,
- J. concerned at the conduct of some Member States, which have been negligent in supplying reliable data on the state of their fleets and show scant interest in taking suitable measures to reduce capacity in line with the objectives envisaged in the MAGPs,
 - 1. Calls on the Commission and Member States to adopt stable and durable criteria for vessel measurement and fleet segmentation, so as to ensure that the evolution in the respective fleets and the content of the fishing vessel register of the Community can be established clearly and precisely in the course of the successive periods covered by the multiannual guidance programmes, since their excessively variable nature, a typical feature in recent times, facilitates non-compliance with the MAGP objectives;
 - 2. Calls on the Commission to step up its efforts to ensure that the criteria employed in measuring the tonnage and power of vessels in each Member State are standardised, so as to ensure that the effort to reduce capacity is spread evenly across the various fishing fleets in the Union;
 - 3. Calls on the Member States, as a matter of urgency, to undertake a measurement of the capacity of the fleet in accordance with the criteria laid down in Council Regulation (EC) No 3259/94 and Commission Decision 95/84/EC, a procedure which should have been implemented in 1995;
 - 4. Urges the Commission to submit proposals without delay on harmonising provisions on the power of vessels, so as to ensure that the state of all the fleets can be compared on the basis of homogeneous criteria;
 - 5. Calls on the Commission, in accordance with the unanimous opinion of the Advisory Committee on Fisheries as expressed in its report on the revision of fisheries policy after 2002, to contract one or more independent certification institutes to check the data of the Member States on tonnage and power;
 - 6. Urges the Commission to pursue the measures introduced to compel Member States to comply with the provisions on the reduction of the fleet contained in the MAGPs, as regards both withholding public funds for the renewal and modernisation of the fleet and initiating legal proceedings at the Court of Justice;

Thursday 20 January 2000

7. Urges the Council and Commission to review the system of penalties in force in the event not only of failure to comply with the objectives of the MAGPs but also of repeated delays or failure to submit data on the Member States' fleets, so as to provide effective sanctions, such as a temporary reduction in the quotas for a Member State found to be in breach of those objectives or failing to meet the deadlines for submitting data; considers that retaining the relative stability principle should not serve as a pretext for the failure of Member States to honour their obligations;

8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

6. Chechnya

B5-0048, 0065, 0067, 0080 and 0082/2000

European Parliament resolution on the situation in Chechnya

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolutions on the situation in Chechnya of 18 November 1999⁽¹⁾ and 16 December 1999⁽²⁾,
 - having regard to its assent of 30 November 1995 to the conclusion of an Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Russian Federation, of the other part⁽³⁾, its assent of 11 June 1997 to the conclusion of the Protocol to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States and the Russian Federation⁽⁴⁾ and the Common Strategy of the European Union on Russia adopted by the Council on 4 June 1999⁽⁵⁾,
 - having regard to the declaration of the European Council in Helsinki of 10 December 1999,
 - having regard to its decision to postpone its opinion on the Agreement with Russia on Cooperation in the areas of Science and Technology, given the events in Chechnya,
- A. deeply concerned by the continued escalation of the armed conflict in Chechnya and in particular the increasing number of victims among the civilian population and among soldiers of the Russian Army, as well as the ever-worsening situation of the civilian population still remaining in Chechnya, especially those in Grozny, numbering several thousands,
- B. alarmed about reports on the Russian federal forces' abuses against the civilian population, such as beatings of refugees along exit routes, destruction and looting of houses, summary executions and arbitrary detention of male Chechen refugees aged between ten and sixty in so-called 'filtration camps',
- C. deeply concerned about the situation of Chechen displaced persons pressurised by camp authorities in Ingushetia into returning to their homes by depriving them of food rations,
- D. concerned that international relief agencies have still no safe access to the area even though Russia committed itself to facilitating such access during the OSCE summit,
- E. noting Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov's repeated calls on Moscow to seek a political solution of the conflict,
- F. recalling that at the OSCE summit in Istanbul in November 1999, Russia accepted that a political solution to the conflict is essential and welcomed the willingness of the OSCE to assist in the renewal of a political dialogue,

⁽¹⁾ 'Texts Adopted' of that sitting, Item 15.

⁽²⁾ 'Texts Adopted' of that sitting, Item 23.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 339, 18.12.1995, p. 45.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ C 200, 30.6.1997, p. 66.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ L 157, 24.6.1999, p. 1.