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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF 31 MAY 2023

(C/2024/1295)

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2023-2024 SESSION

Sittings of 31 May and 1 June 2023

BRUSSELS

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF 31 MAY 2023

PRESIDENZA: ROBERTA METSOLA

President

1. Resumption of the session

President. – I declare resumed the session of the European Parliament adjourned on Thursday 11 May 2023.

2. Opening of the sitting

(The sitting opened at 15.03)

3. Formal sitting – Address by Salome Zourabichvili, President of Georgia

President. – Dear colleagues, we have with us today the President of Georgia, Salome Zourabichvili. President, dear Salome, welcome to the European Parliament.

Let me start, dear President, by thanking you for your personal commitment in supporting the European calling of Georgian society. We want the right conditions to exist to enable an EU future for Georgian citizens. I want to reiterate that we stand by your side, ready to support you in your journey to become an integral part of the European Union. We need to work more and closer together towards granting EU candidate status to Georgia, ensuring that the Georgian people do not miss a historic opportunity.

For this we need to see tangible movement on a number of milestones: in securing democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights; in ensuring media freedom and protecting journalists; in safeguarding fundamental rights and personal dignity for detainees. And here let me reiterate that this house has repeatedly expressed its concern over the situation of Mikheil Saakashvili.

The European Union stands ready to assist Georgia on its European path, providing all the necessary assistance along this transformative journey. But it is for Georgia to walk that path and to choose its own future.

Madam President, I commend the strength with which you lead your country. We further count on you to help ease the political and societal polarisation in Georgia. Let us keep working together to safeguard the rights of our European peoples and the future of our societies.

Salome Zourabichvili, President of Georgia. – Madam President, dear Roberta, distinguished Members of the European Parliament, I would like to thank the Presidency and each and every political group for the opportunity given to me to address this assembly. Doing so at such an important juncture for the future of my country is both an honour and a great responsibility.

Madame la Présidente, cela fait treize ans qu'un président géorgien n'était venu à cette tribune et il est symbolique que je porte aujourd'hui la même aspiration, celle qu'au-delà des passions politiques et des divergences, tous les Géorgiens partagent: celle d'une Géorgie retrouvant sa famille européenne.

Il y a des moments dans l'histoire d'un pays où se cristallisent les choix, où se détermine l'avenir, où le passé trouve son aboutissement. Nous vivons un tel moment dans l'histoire de la Géorgie, quand ceux qui la gouvernent, son peuple et les 27 États que vous représentez, devront ensemble décider pour la Géorgie ce qu'elle sera demain.

Pour sa part, la nation géorgienne a déjà tranché et je viens devant vous porter ce message: notre choix européen est non seulement légitime, mais aussi sans alternative, car fondé sur nos valeurs, notre histoire, nos combats, notre détermination et notre vision pour l'avenir.

Madam President, I am addressing this distinguished assembly in the name of the Georgian people, representing the centuries-long will of a nation to rejoin its European family.

I am also here as the head of state of a country whose Constitution mandates every state institution to take all possible steps to further the objective of Euro-Atlantic integration.

I will do so relentlessly. I will do it, not only to implement the Constitution, but out of a moral conviction.

Born in France to émigré parents, who had to leave Georgia following the 1921 Russian invasion and occupation, I returned to serve my country and achieve the ideal of so many generations of Georgians: seeing a free Georgia in a free Europe – the only guarantee of independent Georgia and the only path to a better future for every citizen.

In my first official capacity as Foreign Minister, of Mr Saakashvili, I am proud to have negotiated both Georgia's entry into Europe's neighbourhood and Russia's withdrawal of its military bases. I remember seeing Russian ships depart from the port City of Batumi – but three years later Russian tanks rolled again in our territory.

As a Member of Parliament, I fought to pass a law allowing double citizenship for all. Those that are today nationals of a European country and Georgian citizens are a very first concrete link between Georgia and Europe.

As President, at this decisive time of our journey towards Europe, I want to see Georgia get past domestic and international challenges, and firmly embark on the path to full-fledged European integration. And for that, there is only one road: to secure Georgia be granted by year end the status of candidate to the European Union. And I am confident.

Madam President, Georgia shared its tragic history for 2.5 centuries through Tsarist imperialism and russification, Soviet totalitarianism and repressions, and again Russian aggressions and occupations with one country, Ukraine. I therefore cannot stand before you without first reiterating the complete, unequivocal and principled solidarity of the people of Georgia with the people of Ukraine.

We know too well that Ukraine is not only defending its territory, but is shedding blood for us all: for Europe, its security and freedom; for Georgia, its security and European future. I would like to reiterate my personal respect, admiration and support to President Zelenskyy and his people. I am convinced that in the near future both our countries will see their representatives sitting side by side in this very chamber.

Madam President, my plea for Georgia's European future starts with Georgia's European past, based on shared history, cultural roots and, most importantly, shared values.

Since Georgia began to exist, it has shared the three pillars considered to be at the foundation of Europe's civilisation: Greek and Roman heritage and Christianity. Antique Greco-Roman civilisation has left its influence and visible marks in our mythology, archaeology and culture. Christianity has, for its part, been central to our identity as a nation. As the first kingdom to be converted to Christianity in the 4th century AD, Georgia has been fighting for centuries to preserve its faith and identity, against numerous empires and invaders; all along, on the Eastern shores of the Black Sea, it has served as a small Christian outpost facing the empires of Asia.

This common heritage has influenced our core values. These are the same ones that gave birth to the European idea and inspired Europe's founding fathers. Maybe it is not a coincidence that the first federalist constitution of Europe was written by a Georgian, Professor Michel Muskhely from the University of Strasbourg.

Tolerance, protection of minorities and human rights have been ours for long. It is a miracle that Georgian tolerance has survived in the Caucasus – this 'mountain of languages', as the Arabs used to call it – and build a state where religions have found protection throughout the ages.

Tbilisi's architecture is a testimony to this history: mosques, synagogues, churches of various denominations, even Zoroastrian sites coexist side by side. This long-standing tradition of peaceful coexistence between religions and cultures is best symbolised by the more than 26 centuries of Georgians and Jews living together and side by side, free of any form of repression or discrimination.

Today, 20% of our population is of Armenian, Azeri descent, Kurdish or Yezidi heritage, maintaining the old tradition of hospitality that has reached well beyond our borders.

While political polarisation has affected the image of Georgian tolerance, recent events have underscored that it remains very much alive. Georgia has received and is hosting for a year and a half more than 80 000 Russians. Let's reflect for a moment what it means to welcome citizens from the country which is occupying 20% of your territory and wages the most brutal aggression against your friend, Ukraine. That this has happened without any serious incident speaks millions of Georgia's tolerance. We can and should be proud. But it should be accompanied by clear and strict state regulations, so that tolerance does not give way to frustrations and escalation.

Gender equality: this very modern notion stands at the core of the national epos by Shota Rustaveli in the 12th century already said, 'Lions cubs are equal, be they female or male'. This again appears in the role that women have played throughout our history: in the 4th Century AD, St Nino converting the Georgian state; Queen or, as she was called, King Tamar reigning over Georgia's golden Age; or in 1918, the First Democratic Republic of Georgia giving women both the right to vote and be elected.

The predictability of laws, the rule of law, which stands at the core of any liberal judicial system has been espoused for ages. King Vakhtang the VI finally gathered in one compendium the principles, obligations and laws guiding Georgian monarchy: from the old testament to Greek and Roman laws, traditional Georgian Justice, medieval Georgian laws, church laws and its own justice code.

Unity, which is the contrary of polarisation, our coat of arms carries the words 'force lies in unity'. Echoed by the Georgian poet Vaja Pshavela: 'it is when we fight each other that the enemy wins'. National unity has allowed the country to survive and is today challenged by the cancer of polarisation. Georgia is no exception in this regard, but polarisation in a small country is far more destructive. And more destabilising for a country confronted to occupation, outside threats and disruptive campaigns of propaganda, fake news and hate speech. Polarisation serves only the enemy and is something that we should comprehend better.

The list of Georgian core values, echoes in fact directly the 12 recommendations put forward to achieve candidate status. My point here is certainly not to say that historical records are sufficient to address current concerns, and there are many, but to underline that what the EU is asking is nothing but an integral part of our culture, our values, our heritage. Your recommendations are not some foreign ideas imposed to us, as was Soviet ideology. These are in essence Georgian. Therefore, what you are asking from us is that Georgia stays true to its identity. What you are 'recommending' is that Georgia eliminates the remnants of the totalitarian past and reunites with itself and its European roots.

Since its independence, Georgia has never wavered on its path to European integration. Georgia paid a heavy price to defend its freedom and its independent democratic and European future in 1921, 1989, 1992 and 2008. Without comparing to the incalculable plight that Ukraine is going through today, it should not be forgotten that Georgia has paid its own blood price resisting Soviet rule, defending its independence and its right to rejoin the democratic and free world.

Georgian governments since the independence have set forth pro-European platforms and all delivered constant progress on this path. President Gamsakhurdia put Georgia back on Europe's map of free nations. President Shevardnadze first initiated the idea of Euro-Atlantic integration. President Saakashvili made Georgia's integration with the EU and NATO the priority for his reform agenda. Under his leadership, Georgia joined the neighbourhood policy and the Eastern partnership. In 2012, the Georgian Dream government was elected on a pro-European agenda and reached milestones in this regard: the association, the free trade agreement and visa liberalisation were all signed at that time. The Constitution was amended in 2016 to include the objective of Euro-Atlantic integration, and that is something that none of us should forget.

Despite challenges and foreign aggressions, Georgia's population has not hesitated, wavered or faltered. It has stood its ground. The people have been the backbone of the pro-European course, supporting – even sometimes preceding or forcing – their governments when embracing the path towards European integration.

Opinion polls have shown constant support for European integration. And I think it is fair to say that there are many countries within Europe that would envy such levels of Euro enthusiasm.

Beyond electing pro-European governments, it is impossible to point to any party that has scored any decent result while not claiming to be fully supportive of European integration. That is a lesson for Georgian politics today: anti-European campaigns only lead to political marginalisation.

Despite Russian wars, occupation or active measures, Georgians never faltered. Fear has not altered the European course. For European integration is not a mere foreign policy orientation, but an existential one, a part of our DNA.

Georgians choose Europe with their feet: hundreds of thousands have emigrated to Europe; Georgia's youth has turned to learning English, German or French, to studying in Paris or Berlin. My country's youth's visceral pro-European stand is testimony to the strength of European soft power. In one generation, Russia for them has become definitely the anachronistic past and Europe without question the only future.

Most importantly, Georgians have been vigilant not to let any government deviate from this path. Every massive demonstration has been in support of freedom, democracy and the European path. Over the last few years, Georgians have taken to the streets to defend this ideal when it seemed to falter. In June 2019, after a member of the Russian Duma was allowed to sit in the Georgian Parliament, violating our law on occupation and raising questions as to the pro-European orientation of those who invited him. In February 2022, to demonstrate its massive solidarity with Ukraine and our common European aspiration. In June 2022, before the European Council was to decide on candidate status. In March 2023, when Georgians literally forced the Government to back down on the so-called 'Russian law', viewed as a threat to the civil society, the non-governmental sector, and hence to our democratic and European path.

As the President of Georgia, on my side and within my constitutional powers, I have been taking all steps and initiatives to further this objective.

Through attempts to achieve depolarisation, by launching an initiative for national reconciliation together with the civil society. By supporting united political platforms. By bolstering women's roles as facilitators of renewed political dialogue. It is undoubtedly a difficult process, and I cannot be proud of any success yet, but one I will continue pushing through, moved by the conviction that we have no alternative but working all together.

Through brokering political agreements. And I am proud that alongside President Charles Michel what became the April 19 Agreement was signed in the presidential palace in presence of all political parties. But it is fair to say that if this agreement had been implemented Georgia would have already been given candidate status.

Through granting pardons – three times – to opposition figures in order to deconflict political tensions and allow agreements to emerge. These decisions have come at a high political cost in a polarised political atmosphere. But I stand by every one of these decisions as timely expressions of Voltaire's words:

'Je ne suis pas d'accord avec ce que vous dites, mais je me battraï jusqu'à la mort pour que vous ayez le droit de le dire.'

But in view of some interventions I have received, I want also to be clear that while representing a small country, I think that the discretionary power of the President in that matter should be equally respected for small or big countries. For pardoning is a right to be exerted by a President 'En son âme et conscience', free from any pressure, be it from outside or be it from within, and I want also to address some of the governmental circles that there is no need to try to threaten me because I will do what I will think necessary to do.

Also by using my constitutional veto against legislations contradictory with European principles. And I know that even if my vetoes have been and may be in the future be rejected by the current majority, they will be supported and strengthened by hundreds of thousands of Georgians, because they deal with the main principles to which we all adhere.

Through, finally, high-level diplomacy, I have, time and again, advocated for Georgia's European integration in almost all European capitals and as I'm doing today with you. I most vividly remember hosting the 2021 Petra Summit on the shores of the Black Sea with President Zelenskyy and President Sandu alongside President Michel, as a major step to accelerate our associated trio's path towards European integration. We have lost time since then, we, Georgia.

This is by no means the end of the road. Every decision will have a time and a place. I will leave no rock unturned when it comes to ensuring that Georgia stands where it belongs.

Georgia's European path is of course largely the result of European efforts and support. While Georgia has expressed its determination, it has been matched by what has been an extraordinary support by Europe over the years. And while we await a historic decision, I am also here to express the thanks of the Georgian people to Europe.

Because the European Union has helped to support increased prosperity. It is by far the largest international donor in Georgia; in all sectors of the Georgian economy, it is European aid and European markets that have provided Georgians with increased standards of living. In that sense, when I hear that we should thank Russia for now helping some development of our economy, I think it is not only immoral but also and simply flat wrong.

The European Union has been a provider of stability. One should never forget that when Russian tanks rolled into Georgia our partners prevented a tragic outcome from being even worse. In the name of France's Presidency of the EU, Nicolas Sarkozy's mediated – with US backing – an agreement that stopped Russians from going further into Georgian territory. Europe's reaction may have been insufficient by not imposing greater costs on Russia, and we realise that today, but without Europe, Tbilisi itself could have been occupied. Since 2008, the European Union monitoring mission has also been an invaluable presence on the occupation line, acting as a check on Russia's destabilising activities.

The European Union has provided us with constant high-level diplomatic backing, especially in times of crisis both foreign and domestic. Let me here pay tribute to our many Eastern European and Baltic friends for their constant and unwavering commitment. Let me underline that visits by European Union Council, Commission and Parliament High Representatives, parliamentary delegations, representatives of the Members States are for our people a demonstration of proximity and support that they need, and for the government a reminder to deliver timely on the requirements that will get us to the next historic step.

The European Union has helped us move up the ladder of ever-closer integration. One should never forget the journey that Georgia has travelled in the past 20 years. Moving from neighbourhood to association is something that most thought was impossible and with the last step of utmost importance, granting us the European perspective, the EU has once and for all settled the question of geography versus identity.

We might have to fully grasp its full significance, because the focus has been on what we did not get and was within our grasp. But we should understand that the European perspective closed an existential debate over geography, which for years has been the essential argument against our membership. The EU decision has closed this debate once and for all and sent to the Georgians two main messages: you are Europe and your path to Europe is in your hands.

Why should Georgia be granted candidate status?

My speech today was intended to be more than a plea for the status of candidate. It was meant to explain our European identity, recall the toll the Georgian people paid in the face of Russian aggression and the importance of what the European Union and Georgia's people and governments have delivered in the past two decades. To explain that we are asking for candidate status as a family member is asking for recognition, protection and support.

Candidate status would indeed mean recognition. Recognition of the relentless fight of the Georgian people for their European identity. While we are the first to understand our current shortcomings, and maybe the word is 'weak', we do not want those to overshadow our achievements, that for the past 30 years – that is one generation! – we have made extraordinary progress through substantial reforms.

We are not perfect – far from it! For the two last years, my unrelenting message to the government has been to listen to its people and stay true to its electoral commitments for more, not less Europe. Some of the 12 recommendations have been implemented; but here again, more should have been, more could, and should still be done. That will be our common task in the months to come to make sure we do not let go a second chance. One that the people of Georgia will not forgive.

Recognition should be given to the Georgian people's democratic credentials because a democracy rests first and foremost on its people, it rests on the strengths of the civil society. If there is anything that the last two years have shown, it is that Georgians will not give up: not give up on Ukraine and solidarity; not give up on Europe and their future; not giving up on their rights. That is why I am so forceful and optimistic. With this democratic force, it is only a matter of time before changes come for the better. And that is the message that the retreat of the Russian law taught everyone: do not dare to dent the democratic will of this country.

Candidate status would provide protection and security for Georgia. Protection from Russia. Russia which to this day continues to occupy and wage a hybrid war on the Georgian people. Russia which listens to each and every signal. That is why nobody can afford sending the wrong signal and leaving Georgia in a grey zone. The lessons from 2008, 2014, 2022 is that hesitation comes with a heavy price. As Russia is facing defeat in Ukraine, we cannot ill-afford to provide Russia with a temptation to look for weaker spots anywhere else.

Russia needs to understand that Georgia is Europe and that Europe is determined for Georgia to be Europe. What we have seen in the past months in Georgia is Russia is trying to score points, to subtly reestablish its influence while weakening that of Europe's. Renewed flights, lifting visas, unrestricted population inflows, increased trade and ambivalent statements – all designed to create domestic tension, confusion, escalation. This cannot be allowed to happen. Neither for Georgia, nor for Europe. As Europe helps Ukraine push back against brute force, its needs to help the Georgian people resist to this more subtle push. That is what candidate status stands for: a clear statement of determination not of confrontation.

Candidate status would cement Georgia's role as a pro-European force in the region. Europe understands the importance of this region for the new world emerging. It knows that Georgia is not only a democratic and European stronghold, but a central element of a secure Black Sea and a stable Caucasus region. It is a key to new connectivity projects over the Black Sea, and through the Caucasus, with the Caspian Sea and Central Asia.

Candidate status would safeguard democracy. The spirit of the European Council decision in 2022 was to create conditionalities in order to improve democracy in Georgia and correct its trajectory.

This commendable objective should not be weaponised by populist forces that try to create an anti-European trend. A narrative is being spread that Georgia has been denied candidacy because Europe does not share its traditional values, because it does not consider our tragic past, because it treats us differently from Ukraine or Moldova. We all know this is a flat lie. And the Georgian people have shown where they stand. But one should not ignore the capacity of darker forces, helped and fuelled from outside, to try to undermine this solidity.

In fact, granting us candidate status would serve the democratic future and help lay the ground for all these recommendations to be fully and thoroughly implemented. Europe has stood by Georgia despite its democratic shortcomings in the past. It is because Europe remained committed to Georgia that Georgians were successful in getting their democracy back on track.

Keeping Georgia on its European path is vital for us, of course, but no less important for Europe. Promoting Georgia's European membership in the European Union is part of a greater strategic vision regarding a new European order that will emerge from what I am confident will be a Ukrainian victory.

What Ukraine has achieved in 2022, was what we failed to achieve in 1992 or 2008, and what Ukraine failed to achieve in 2014 or 2015. That is to open the eyes of the world to the true nature of Russia; that the myths about Russian humiliation or Russian insecurity are just that – myths to justify aggression and wars. The largest country in the world has still to understand and accept that it also has borders.

Now we need to fully apprehend that it is accommodation and not determination that feeds Russian aggression. Appeasement has never worked anywhere. It is not EU or NATO enlargement that ever threatened or incited Russia to attack; it is Russia's very own irresistible imperialist nature. And if anything, it is the 'stop and go's', the hesitations before decisions, that incite and dynamise Russia, trying through intimidation to affect the outcome. Signals of insufficient resolve – subdued reactions to 2008, 2014 or to little green men entering the Louhansk and Donestk regions – is what encourages Russia to do more. In reverse, former Soviet Republics and members of the Warsaw Pact are here to show that they enjoy peace and stability since they have become members of NATO and the European Union. And that is our future too.

That is why European candidate status is not only about essential democratic recommendations, but also about the future European security architecture. It is about long-term stability. I say this not as a bargaining plea that would be both immoral and wrong but as a lesson of history: leaving us behind would only encourage Russia to seek compensation for its own failure to win a war it started but cannot end.

In Ukraine, Russia has already been politically and militarily defeated in so many aspects: destroyed is the myth of military invincibility, lost the sense of strategic superiority, lost is the ability to divide Europeans and play on their divisions. Ukrainian resilience and strength, Swedish and Finnish historical choices, the European puissance that is finally emerging – all of that is the result of an immense miscalculation by the Russian leadership.

Today's world is divided between those who do not dare imagine that Russia is no longer invincible, and losing, and those that understand a new world is emerging. That is why only Ukraine can decide when to negotiate peace and together with Europe determine what peace – one that will have to oblige Russia to renounce occupying any foreign land.

That is why when I plea for the European future of Georgia, I plea also for people in the Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions, because this future is for them too, the only one that will ensure their freedom, their protection and their identity. And I stand with those who demonstrated yesterday in Sokhumi, Abkhazia, under the banner 'Abkhazia is not for sale, we will not concede to the Russians!'

4. Statements by the President

Presidente. – Cari colleghi, poche settimane fa, l'Europa è stata testimone di inondazioni che in Italia hanno messo in ginocchio l'Emilia-Romagna.

Almeno 15 persone hanno perso la vita e più di 30 000 sono state costrette a lasciare le loro case.

La stessa quantità di pioggia che di solito cade in sette mesi è caduta in due settimane, causando lo straripamento di ventitré fiumi in tutta la regione. Nella zona si sono verificate 400 frane e 43 Comuni sono stati inondati. Ci sono danni gravissimi alle abitazioni, all'agricoltura, all'industria e alle infrastrutture.

Ma il momento peggiore ha fatto emergere il meglio delle persone. Abbiamo visto i primi soccorritori rischiare tutto per qualcuno che non hanno mai conosciuto, vicini di casa aiutarsi tra loro.

L'Unione europea ha attivato il suo meccanismo di protezione civile. L'Italia chiederà l'attivazione del Fondo di solidarietà dell'Unione europea.

La nostra risposta continuerà e sarà sempre più forte. E alla popolazione dell'Emilia-Romagna voglio dire ancora una volta: siamo con voi, saremo con voi e vi aiuteremo a ricostruire. Perché voi siete l'Europa.

Cari colleghi, vi invito ad unirvi a me nell'osservare un minuto di silenzio per ricordare le vittime di questa tragedia.

(Il Parlamento, in piedi, osserva un minuto di silenzio)

Colleagues, I was asked by several Members to raise again the issue of the new so-called anti-homosexuality bill in Uganda. The bill includes the death penalty for 'aggravated homosexuality'. It criminalises sex education for the gay community and makes it illegal not to expose what it calls 'perpetrators of aggravated homosexuality' to the police.

This is deeply worrying and undermines the rights of people in Uganda. This Parliament has reaffirmed time and again that people should be allowed to live as they wish to live, be who they wish to be, and love as they wish to love.

I want to show my solidarity and that of this Parliament with people in Uganda and reiterate what we know to be true: that in the end, love wins.

5. Approval of the minutes of the previous sitting

President. – The minutes and the texts adopted of the sitting of 11 May are available. Are there any comments?

I see that is not the case so the minutes are approved.

6. Composition of Parliament

President. – Following the resignation of Ismail Ertug, and on the proposal of the Committee on Legal Affairs, Parliament takes note of the vacancy of his seat from 3 July 2023, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, and will inform the national authority concerned thereof.

7. Verification of credentials

President. – On the proposal of the Committee on Legal Affairs, Parliament verifies the credentials of Mercedes Bresso, Francesca Peppucci and Maria Veronica Rossi with effect from 6 April 2023, and of Pirkko Ruohonen-Lerner with effect from 12 April 2023.

8. Composition of committees and delegations

President. – The EPP, S&D and The Left groups have notified me of decisions relating to changes to appointments within committees and delegations. These decisions will be set out in the minutes of today's sitting and take effect on the date of this announcement.

9. Negotiations ahead of Parliament's first reading (Rule 71)

President. – The LIBE Committee has decided to enter into interinstitutional negotiations, pursuant to Rule 71(1) of the Rules of Procedure. The reports, which constitute the mandates for the negotiations, are available on the plenary webpage and their titles will be published in the minutes of the sitting.

Pursuant to Rule 71(2), Members or political groups reaching at least the medium threshold may request in writing by tomorrow, Thursday 1 June at midnight that the decisions be put to the vote. If no request for a vote in Parliament is made within the deadline, the committee may start the negotiations.

10. Signing of acts adopted in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure (Rule 79)

President. – I would like to inform you that, together with the President of the Council, I shall today sign four acts adopted under the ordinary legislative procedure in accordance with Rule 79. The titles of the acts will be published in the minutes of this sitting.

I would also like to inform the House that I have received a request for a point of order and I will give the floor to Susanna Ceccardi.

Susanna Ceccardi (ID). – Signora Presidente, voglio fare appello all'articolo 10 del nostro regolamento perché nella seduta del 23 maggio in commissione LIBE è successo un fatto increscioso.

Parlavamo dei fatti di Cutro, del naufragio di una barca di migranti e di 94 morti; durante questa seduta, e quindi un importante dibattito, mentre i parlamentari dei gruppi di centrodestra parlavano, la deputata tedesca Birgit Sippel ha mostrato il dito medio ai parlamentari di centrodestra, in grande disprezzo delle vittime e dell'argomento importante di cui stavamo parlando.

Per questo, Presidente, Le chiedo di prendere provvedimenti per ristabilire l'onorabilità delle sedute anche delle commissioni del Parlamento europeo e sanzionare la deputata socialista Sippel.

11. Order of business

President. – The next item is the order of business. The final draft agenda as adopted by the Conference of Presidents on 11 May pursuant to Rule 157 has been distributed. With the agreement of the political groups I wish to put to the House the following proposals for changes to the final draft agenda.

For Thursday, the report by Ms Cicurel on the requests for the waiver of the immunity of Maria Spyraiki and the report by Mr Halicki on the request for the waiver of the immunity of Alexis Georgoulis are added to the votes. If there are no objections, these changes are approved.

We now move to changes requested by political groups. For today, Wednesday, the Renew and ECR groups have requested that Council and Commission statements on 'Reconstruction and integration of Ukraine into the Euro-Atlantic community' be added in the afternoon. The debate is to be wound up with a resolution to be voted in June. The ECR Group has requested that the debate be added as a third point before the debate on 'Breaches of the rule of law and fundamental rights in Hungary and frozen EU funds'. As a consequence, the sitting would be extended to 23.00.

I give the floor first to Petras Auštrevičius to move the request on behalf of the Renew Group.

Petras Auštrevičius, on behalf of the Renew Group. – Madam President, dear colleagues, on behalf of the Renew Group I would like to have the following debate added to the agenda for today, with the session therefore being extended: 'Council and Commission statement on the reconstruction and integration of Ukraine into the Euro-Atlantic community', with a resolution to be adopted in the June plenary.

Dear colleagues, awaiting the Commission's assessment regarding Ukraine's progress implementing recommendations, also in July NATO will hold its summit in Vilnius. It is important to reiterate our unwavering and standing support for Ukraine for full Euro-Atlantic integration and therefore send a very clear signal to the brave people of Ukraine.

Colleagues, I do understand, because our session is overcrowded, that this might happen in June, but I wish to have full clarity and solidarity with this decision.

President. – So just to clarify, Mr Auštrevičius, your proposal is now to move it to June?

Petras Auštrevičius, on behalf of the Renew Group. – Madam President, my proposal is for this mini-session, but there might be a compromise for June.

President. – We have received an alternative proposal from the S&D Group. I give the floor to Mr Cimoszewicz to present the alternative title, for this session.

Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, on behalf of the S&D Group. – Madam President, the Renew and ECR proposal speaks about two very important but separate issues: the reconstruction of Ukraine, which needs an urgent working-out of the programme, and the Euro-Atlantic integration of that country.

Although my political group believes that it would be beneficial to prepare this debate better, we can agree to add that point to our agenda as Commission and Council statements on the need for a fair, inclusive and sustainable reconstruction and recovery of Ukraine.

Michael Gahler, on behalf of the PPE Group. – Madam President, the EPP Group would like to support the suggestion from Renew and the ECR. However, as already slightly indicated by colleague Auštrevičius, we would prefer to have it in June — also with one argument, which is that it is a bit closer to the debate that will be held anyhow ahead of the summit in Vilnius in July. So we think it's better to have it then.

I was also informed that the Swedish Presidency will not be present at a later stage today, but will certainly be present in Strasbourg. So we would support the suggestion of the Renew Group to have it in June, and the title.

President. – OK, so back to Mr Auštrevičius' original point, would there be agreement that this be debated for the plenary in June, and it will go through the preparatory stages for that?

OK, we'll do that. So the sitting is not yet extended until 23.00. But it will happen!

The Greens and S&D groups have requested that a Commission statement on 'Social and economic costs of the climate crisis and the urgent need for European solidarity to support affected countries and regions, especially after the current floods in Emilia Romagna and Marche' be added as the fourth point in the afternoon. Therefore the sitting would be extended to 22.00. I give the floor to Terry Reintke to move the request.

Terry Reintke, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group. – Madam President, colleagues, first things first. As you said, President, I think it is important that we make clear that this Parliament stands in full solidarity with all people who are affected by these horrible floods in different regions in Italy. We have again and again shown how important, especially in moments like this, European solidarity is.

We can see – and this is not an isolated event – that climate change is nothing happening in the distant future anymore; it is something that is happening now –with extreme weather events, with droughts, with floods, with forest fires. We in this Parliament should debate what needs to be done now, what the necessary steps are to show solidarity with people in Italy, but also what the long term implications are, so that we avoid situations like this from happening again.

So, colleagues, please support our request to debate this today in plenary.

President. – I have received an alternative proposal from the Renew and EPP groups, so I give the floor to Nicola Danti to present on behalf of both groups.

Nicola Danti, *a nome del gruppo Renew*. – Signora Presidente, intanto vorrei esprimere gratitudine per la solidarietà che Lei ha espresso nell'apertura della seduta alle popolazioni così colpite nelle regioni italiane di Emilia-Romagna, Marche e anche Toscana.

Noi avremmo una proposta alternativa a quella che hanno proposto il gruppo socialista e il gruppo dei Verdi, che ha il seguente titolo: «Dichiarazioni della Commissione sui costi economici e sociali del cambiamento climatico alla luce delle alluvioni in Italia e il bisogno urgente di solidarietà europea».

Elisabetta Gualmini, *a nome del gruppo S&D*. – Signora Presidente, intanto Le esprimo la mia gratitudine per le Sue parole. Come Lei ha detto, siamo di fronte a una terra ferita, quella dell'Emilia-Romagna, delle Marche e, in parte, della Toscana. Abbiamo visto un ciclone con la forza di un uragano, colline che si abbassano e fiumi che si alzano, un fiume di 50 centimetri è diventato alto 12 metri.

E di fronte a questa catastrofe naturale davvero io penso che sia importante avere il supporto e il sostegno di tutte le forze politiche, in modo che il Parlamento esprima non solo la solidarietà, ma anche la richiesta alla Commissione europea perché siano stanziati i fondi e gli aiuti necessari.

Propongo dunque un titolo di compromesso tra la proposta dei Verdi, che ringrazio, e di Renew; il titolo sarebbe «Commission statement on the social and economic costs of climate change in light of the floods in Emilia-Romagna, Marche and Toscana and the urgent need for European solidarity».

President. – I need to check whether the other groups agree with this alternative proposal. I see that the Green Group does, Renew does, the EPP does. OK, so I will put the compromise request to the vote.

(Parliament agreed to the request)

So we will have that proposal, and therefore the sitting will be extended to much later than originally foreseen.

The EPP, S&D, Renew and Greens groups have requested that Council and Commission statements on 'Threat to democracy and the rule of law in Poland, in particular through the creation of an investigative committee' be added as the fourth item this afternoon. As a consequence, the sitting would be extended again.

I give the floor to Jeroen Lenaers to move the request.

Jeroen Lenaers, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, on Monday the President of Poland signed a law creating a commission to investigate Russian interference in Polish politics. At least that's what he would like us to believe, but the real objective is clear for us all to see, and this is to intimidate political rivals and to interfere in the upcoming elections.

This is not a surprise. The ruling party in Poland has consistently undermined the rule of law and democracy in its efforts to cling on to power. It is always tilting the playing field in its own favour. But this is no longer about tilting the playing field. This is about removing the opposition from the playing field altogether.

These are classic autocratic tactics. If you are afraid of elections, if you're afraid of opposition, if you're afraid of checks and balances that define any normal democracy, this is what you do.

It's a disgrace for Poland. It's a disgrace for the EU, and this House must urgently address it here. This is why the EPP, S&D, Renew and Green Groups have requested adding the debate for which you read the title to the agenda today as a matter of urgency.

Stéphane Séjourné, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Madame la Présidente, cette affaire est d'une extrême gravité, c'est pour cela que je me permets de reprendre la parole. Renew Europe proposera probablement une résolution pour le mois de juin pour qu'on puisse, y compris au Parlement européen, prendre une position concrète sur cette affaire.

Je voudrais à ce propos formuler une remarque, et peut être envoyer un message à nos collègues du PiS. D'abord la remarque: finalement je suis heureux que le PPE se rende compte de la véritable nature de leurs probables futurs collègues de coalition. Aujourd'hui le groupe ECR prétexte de travailler sur les ingérences étrangères pour construire l'incapacité des oppositions à se présenter contre eux, ce qui est extrêmement grave en démocratie. Et le Parlement européen doit en tout cas prendre toutes les mesures et s'exprimer systématiquement contre ces procédures.

Au-delà de ça, je pense que l'ensemble des groupes politiques sera d'accord pour cette résolution et peut être aussi pour l'adopter ici, dans cette plénière, pour qu'on puisse avoir en perspective le début des négociations.

Ryszard Antoni Legutko, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – Madam President, let me begin by saying that investigation is a standard parliamentary practice – oh yes, it is – and the commission that has been set up meets all democratic standards. Whoever says otherwise lies; whoever says otherwise lies.

(Interjections from the floor)

Madam President, could you please discipline the colleagues?

The Soviet – sorry, the Russian interference...

(Interjections from the floor)

Russian interference has been with us for a long time. The top politicians from France, Germany, Finland, Austria have been on the payroll of Putin and his oligarchs, and...

President. – Dear colleagues, can you please let Mr Legutko speak.

Ryszard Antoni Legutko, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – This is amazing! I mean, this is political hooliganism!

(Mixed reactions)

So Poland has also been a place that Russian infiltration was present. And just let me give you a few examples. There was an attempt to tie us to the Russian gas supply for several decades to come. We had the Polish ambassadors being coached by Russia's Foreign Minister, Mr Lavrov. I know some of your colleagues have been responsible for this. I know that you suspect that all the truth may come out, but please, for the sake of decency, reject this stupid and disgraceful proposal.

President. – I put the request to the vote by roll call.

(Parliament agreed to the request)

So now the sitting will be extended until 23.00.

Also today the ECR Group has requested that a Commission statement on 'Interference in the European political agenda by non-European organisations who are behind the activities of radical environmentalist movements, in light of recent inquiries by the German authorities' be added as the last item in the afternoon.

I give the floor to Vincenzo Sofo to move the request on behalf of the ECR Group, and then to Michael Bloss to speak against.

Vincenzo Sofo, *a nome del gruppo ECR*. – Signora Presidente, a nome del gruppo ECR, chiedo dunque di inserire nella plenaria di oggi un dibattito senza risoluzione intitolato «Dichiarazione della Commissione sulle interferenze nell'agenda politica europea da parte di organizzazioni extra europee che si celano dietro l'attività dei movimenti ambientalisti radicali alla luce delle recenti indagini delle autorità tedesche».

Quest'Aula non può infatti ignorare quanto sta emergendo da inchieste giornalistiche che svelano come i movimenti tipo «Ultima Generazione», che negli ultimi mesi stanno intensificando le azioni contro le politiche energetiche e industriali dei nostri governi e della Commissione, siano sponsorizzati, finanziati e manovrati tutti da una stessa organizzazione, dietro alla quale si trovano politici, media e industriali della sinistra americana.

Parliamo nel solo 2022 di diversi milioni di dollari usati per provocare decine di migliaia di azioni, spesso illegali, e che appunto già sono oggetto di indagini giudiziarie in Germania.

È urgente, dunque, che anche quest'Aula indagli se dietro a questi movimenti ci sia un tentativo di ingerenza extra europea nelle nostre politiche nazionali e comunitarie e se in tale operazione siano coinvolti anche i partiti ambientalisti presenti in questo Parlamento.

Michael Bloss, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group. – Madam President, dear colleagues, climate activists need to be protected and we need them now more than ever – these are not my words; these are the words of the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, on the recent events in Germany. And you want to do the opposite – you want to criminalise them; you want to silence them and you want to silence the debate on the climate emergency.

But whether you approve or disapprove of their actions, they have fundamental rights. They have a right to a voice; they have a right to protest. And it's our duty as parliamentarians to uphold these rights. This is the essence of democracy. So, let us listen to the interference of the UN Secretary-General and protect their rights. Please, colleagues, vote against this request by the ECR Group.

President. – I put the request to the vote by roll call.

(Parliament rejected the request)

The Left Group has requested that Council and Commission statements on Israeli attacks in Gaza be added as the last item this afternoon.

I give the floor to Clare Daly to move the request on behalf of The Left Group.

Clare Daly, on behalf of The Left Group. – Madam President, over 5 days earlier this month, Israel attacked and bombed Gaza 323 times. Ten civilians were killed, 1 100 people displaced. More than 150 000 Palestinian civilians have been killed or injured in Gaza and the West Bank since 2008; 33 000 of those were children.

The EU stands by and watches this happen and calls Israel our friend. We construct houses and schools in the West Bank; the Israelis come and destroy them. We cannot consider ourselves a union of values and continue to call Israel our friend. We need to have this conversation, but in light of the time constraints that we are now already under and the positive remarks by some of the other groups that they will facilitate a full and necessary debate on this in June, I'll withdraw it on that basis.

President. – I have received an alternative proposal from the S&D Group. I give the floor to Evin Incir to move the request.

Evin Incir, on behalf of the S&D Group. – Madam President, we were actually asking for the floor in case the Left would put forward their proposal. But since they withdraw, we will also withdraw ours and then we will come back to it during the next session.

President. – We will deal with it in the preparation for the upcoming plenary part-session.

The Greens and The Left groups have requested that the vote on the report by Ms Kalniete on 'Foreign interference in all democratic processes in the European Union, including disinformation' be postponed to the June part-session.

I give the floor to Philippe Lamberts to move the request.

Philippe Lamberts, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, dear colleagues, I think it's a very good thing that this Parliament has tackled the issue of foreign interference and disinformation seriously. We already adopted one report on it, there is a second one coming, and as we could see a few minutes ago, these issues are sensitive issues, not easy ones to deal with because, of course, they put in tension different aspects of democracy in terms of freedom of speech, but also restrictions that can be applied to them. And so we cannot just go about voting on such an important text without giving the possibility of the real sovereign – that is the plenary of this assembly – to discuss potential amendments to make this text better.

So my plea to you is that, yes, we have the debate on the text today – well, in this session, I don't know if it's today or tomorrow – and we vote the report in the June session allowing for this assembly to table and discuss amendments to make it better.

Sandra Kalniete, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, I appreciate highly the atmosphere we had working on this ING2 Committee second report and the dialogue which we had among shadow rapporteurs and rapporteur. However, committee voted on this report with very convincing vote: 27 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention. And I oppose postponement of the vote for the plenary session in June because there is no lack of clarity. There was a clear majority. And there was also a deadline for tabling amendments. To those political groups or individual Members who missed it, I say this is not a reason to proceed in this way.

President. – I put the request from the Greens and The Left groups to the vote.

(Parliament rejected the request)

With that the agenda is adopted and the order of business is this established.

12. 10 year anniversary of the Rana Plaza collapse in Bangladesh (statement by the President)

President. – The next item is a statement on the 10-year anniversary of the Rana Plaza collapse in Bangladesh (2023/2708(RSP)).

Dear colleagues, you will recall that 10 years ago, in spring 2013, an eight-story commercial building called Rana Plaza in Bangladesh collapsed. Thousands of tons of metal and concrete came crashing down, killing 1 134 people. Hundreds of lives. Garment workers. Factory workers. Mostly women, who only hours earlier protested about the lack of safety of their working conditions before being told to get back to work.

The Rana Plaza collapse in Bangladesh was a wake-up call for the Western world. Ten years on, I would like to give the floor to a round of speakers to speak up about lessons learnt and about what the European Union has done to own up to the consequences of consumer preferences for abundance and affordability ahead of moderation and sustainability. Because we have a responsibility here.

Seán Kelly, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, Bangladesh is the second largest apparel exporter in the world. The sector accounts for about 82% of the country's total export revenue and most workers in the ready-made garment sector are young women, as you said, from rural backgrounds.

Ten years ago, the deadliest accident in the history of the modern garment industry – and one of the worst industrial accidents ever – took place in Rana Plaza in Bangladesh, leaving 1 100 people dead and at least 2 500 grievously injured. This was not the first tragedy of its kind and, sadly, not the last. Others have happened since. Rana Plaza and the other industrial accidents suffered by Bangladesh brought home the urgent need to establish a culture of workplace safety in the country's garment industry and beyond.

Much has improved in the last ten years, however more needs to be done to ensure that clear standards, guidelines and accident reporting protocols are understood and implemented at all levels. Compliance with core labour standards and national legislation must be improved, including coverage of compensation, contracts, gender inclusivity and working time. Better access to social protection for workers across Bangladesh in all economic sectors is crucial. Further strengthening of the capacity of the safety committees, labour inspectorate and trade unions will be integral to this. Labour rights must be respected in order to foster an environment where trade unions can operate freely and without harassment, where improved social dialogue between the government, employers and trade unions takes place. It is imperative that we build upon the lessons learned and progress made in the ready-made garment industry to enhance industrial safety in other priority sectors to avoid such a tragedy repeating itself in the future. Occupational safety and health must be a priority.

Agnes Jongerius, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Madam President, dear colleagues, since 24 April 2013, we have held a speech here every year to ask attention for the Rana Plaza disaster. Every year we commemorate this disaster and we remember the more than 1 100 deaths and the 2 000 people injured. And every year we say ‘no more yet’ and ‘this no more’.

The media are covering the topic. They are writing articles. They are showing that there has not been enough progress made, showing that the accord which has been put in place to protect the workers is under pressure. We always call upon the Bangladeshi Government to do better. We sometimes manage to strong-arm them by making it conditional that the accord must stay, in order to keep the Everything But Arms arrangements – and using the threat of withdrawing these trade preferences has helped, as the Bangladeshi Government did not want to lose access to our markets. Thereby, it's shown that laws, rules and conditions help.

Today I'm hopeful that not only can we grant the workers in Bangladesh help, but also help all the workers of the world. This year we can really do something besides calling for better and safer working conditions. Tomorrow, we can ensure that companies, employers are held accountable. We can do this by voting. Let us vote in favour of the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence. Let's help all the workers of the world. I think that will be the best response to the Rana Plaza disaster.

Barry Andrews, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Madam President, dear colleagues, recently we marked the 10-year anniversary of the deadliest industrial accident in the modern era. These were 1 134 avoidable deaths, and the Rana Plaza factory in Bangladesh sparked an international outrage and a litany of promises by major brands to clean up their supply chains.

This tragedy should have been a wake-up call for citizens, governments and companies that business as usual was no longer sustainable. While there have been some improvements, it is fair to say that, overall, very little has changed. The immediate reaction of global firms was to pledge to clean up their act. And over 200 of them joined the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh, a legally binding pact obliging them to source from Bangladeshi factories that met basic safety criteria. Nevertheless, this still left many holes on labour rights and environmental protection.

Many companies still turn a blind eye or simply refuse when it comes to looking after their workers and the environment. Even in Ireland, many of the largest Irish companies score poorly when it comes to what is known as corporate due diligence and human rights policies. A 2021 report from Trinity College Dublin found that 34% of publicly listed companies scored zero against human rights due diligence indicators, while 72% fail to disclose whether they assess salient risks and impacts. The pressures of the garment industry, the lack of regulation and the decision or omission of many large companies to inquire into their supply chain directly has led to these type of accidents around the world.

Irish and European companies have enormous leverage over many of their suppliers and subcontractors. The connection of the Irish and EU economy to millions of workers around the world through global value chains comes with a responsibility. It was recently reported in the media that the EMEA headquarters of Shein would be located in Ireland. This is a company with zero transparency and a terrible environmental record, and it will be setting up in Dublin just 10 years after the Rana Plaza disaster. It is for this reason that I would very much encourage colleagues to support the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive that will be before the House tomorrow.

PRESIDÊNCIA: PEDRO SILVA PEREIRA

Vice-Presidente

Saskia Bricmont, *au nom du groupe Verts/ALE*. – Monsieur le Président, nous rendons hommage aujourd'hui aux 1 138 morts et aux milliers de victimes de l'effondrement du Rana Plaza il y a dix ans. «Plus jamais ça», avait alors scandé le monde. Un accord international sur la santé et la sécurité au travail avait alors été signé par 200 grandes marques, prêtes à assumer leurs responsabilités auprès des fournisseurs. Mais certaines, bien connues n'ont toujours pas signé l'accord.

Le Bangladesh lui, s'est engagé à réformer son code du travail, mais la situation des travailleurs du secteur textile reste très préoccupante. Et «plus jamais ça» reste malheureusement un slogan dont ils ne voient pas les effets.

L'accord du Bangladesh vient d'être étendu au Pakistan, mais qu'en est-il des conditions de travail en Turquie, au Maroc, en Égypte et au Viêt Nam, avec lequel nous avons un accord? Et en Chine, où le travail forcé reste très important dans la culture du coton? Et en Inde? Allons-nous enfin saisir l'opportunité des négociations commerciales en cours pour inclure des dispositions concrètes sur la transition du secteur du textile dans les pays d'où nous importons nos vêtements?

La responsabilité des grandes entreprises et des importateurs européens nous impose de voter la législation sur le devoir de vigilance, demain. Nous ne laisserons pas une partie des libéraux et les conservateurs s'asseoir sur le bon compromis trouvé. Nos vêtements ne sont pas propres. Ils portent la marque des violations des droits des travailleurs et travailleuses qui ont déjà trop attendu.

Et le travail doit se poursuivre car nos vêtements sont aussi toxiques. Oui, mille substances chimiques sont utilisées dans le processus de fabrication textile, parmi lesquelles des phtalates, des perturbateurs endocriniens, du permanganate de potassium, du cadmium et même des insecticides. Des substances qui sont manipulées par les travailleuses, par les femmes, par les enfants dépourvus d'équipements de protection. Des substances souvent interdites en Europe car cancérigènes, mais qui se trouvent en contact permanent avec notre peau.

Il est donc urgent d'actualiser la réglementation REACH sur les produits chimiques et d'adopter des clauses miroirs pour que, quand on protège la santé des consommateurs européens, on protège aussi la santé des travailleuses et des travailleurs à l'autre bout de la chaîne. Les droits des travailleurs, notre santé, l'environnement ne peuvent pas être mis en pause.

Nicola Procaccini, a nome del gruppo ECR. – Signor Presidente, la tragedia del Rana Plaza in Bangladesh ci costringe ad aprire gli occhi su un aspetto inquietante della globalizzazione.

Mi riferisco alla logica secondo cui contano solo il profitto e il margine di guadagno e che per arrivare al prezzo più basso possibile sia necessario delocalizzare la produzione dove le regole e le tutele per i lavoratori sono minime o inesistenti. Una logica perversa, frutto di una cultura avida e internazionalista.

Non farò l'elenco dei grandi marchi di abbigliamento occidentale coinvolti in quella tragedia, divenuta simbolo dello sfruttamento più cinico, malgrado la tentazione sia obiettivamente forte. Oggi, a dieci anni di distanza, non posso negare alcuni progressi nelle condizioni di lavoro e di sicurezza delle nostre catene di approvvigionamento, ma c'è ancora moltissimo da fare.

L'Unione europea è il principale mercato integrato del mondo, acquista ed esporta tutto. Grazie alla forza della nostra economia abbiamo il diritto di chiedere reciprocità negli standard ambientali e sociali di produzione, con il duplice obiettivo di disincentivare la delocalizzazione delle imprese europee e di incentivare il miglioramento delle condizioni dei lavoratori quando queste scelgono comunque di produrre fuori dal nostro continente.

Come presidente della delegazione dell'Asia meridionale, di cui fa parte il Bangladesh, lasciatemi omaggiare la sua grande cultura, la sua grande spiritualità, citando il suo poeta più famoso, Tagore: «Il potere disse al mondo: "Tu sei mio", ed il mondo lo fece prigioniero sul suo trono. L'amore disse al mondo: "Io sono tuo", e il mondo gli si offrì come casa».

Dominique Bilde, au nom du groupe ID. – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, dix ans après la tragédie du Rana Plaza qui vit périr en 2013 plus de 1 100 personnes, essentiellement du secteur de l'habillement, rien n'a changé au Bangladesh, ou trop peu. Certes, des améliorations ont substantiellement renforcé la sécurité au sein des entreprises, mais, à en croire l'Organisation internationale du travail, le salarié typique du secteur de la confection est une femme âgée de 23 ans, issue d'une zone rurale et qui vit avec sa famille dans un logement inadéquat. Pas de quoi pavoiser. Et c'est sans compter la persistance du travail des enfants.

Tout ceci est consternant. Mais que dire d'une Union européenne qui, d'un côté, fait grand cas de sa nouvelle stratégie en matière de textiles dits «durables» et de l'autre, a jusqu'à présent maintenu des facilités exorbitantes en faveur d'un tel bénéficiaire. Je vous épargne d'ailleurs le bilan du pays en matière de condition féminine ou de propagation de l'islam radical qui est à l'avenant. En France, les manifestations relatives à l'affaire Charlie Hebdo sont à cet égard de sinistre mémoire.

Le Bangladesh bénéficie toujours en effet du régime commercial le plus favorable, même si les États-Unis lui ont retiré leurs avantages équivalents, dont les textiles sont d'ailleurs exclus. La concurrence de pays à bas coûts pourrait également tuer dans l'œuf tout espoir de renaissance des industries nationales. Je parle en connaissance de cause puisque ma région, la Lorraine, en France fut historiquement le fer de lance du textile français. Quelques courageux entrepreneurs tentent d'ailleurs d'en reprendre le flambeau en bravant les affres de la crise énergétique et de l'inflation.

Bref, le cas du Bangladesh illustre le gouffre béant entre les discours et les actes. Osons espérer, sans se bercer d'illusions, que la nouvelle mouture des préférences commerciales permettra un tant soit peu de le résorber.

Manon Aubry, au nom du groupe The Left. – Monsieur le Président, 1 135. Ils étaient 1 135 femmes et hommes, certains presque des enfants, morts broyés sous les décombres de l'usine du Rana Plaza au Bangladesh. 1 135 corps au milieu des étiquettes de Carrefour, Auchan, Primark, H&M et Benetton. 1 135 travailleurs morts parce qu'on les a forcés à trimer alors que les murs de l'usine se fissaient. Morts parce qu'on les a forcés à tenir la cadence pour assurer les profits sans limite de nos marques de vêtements. 1 135 vies écrasées par l'avidité des multinationales qui exploitent les travailleurs et la nature dans le monde entier en toute impunité.

Ces 1 135 vies étaient aussi précieuses que la mienne et que la vôtre. Derrière chacune d'entre elles, il y avait des histoires, des rêves d'avenir, des rires et des larmes. Derrière chacune d'entre elles, il y a désormais une famille endeuillée qui demande justice. Pendant dix ans, l'Union européenne a ignoré cet appel. Comme si ces vies ne valaient rien, ou pas plus que quelques centimes de marge sur le prix d'un tee-shirt.

Pendant dix ans, nous avons laissé ces multinationales continuer à passer les vies des travailleurs, les droits de l'homme et l'environnement dans leur broyeuse à profits. Nous avons laissé Total exproprier plus de 100 000 personnes en Ouganda et en Tanzanie. Nous avons laissé Nike et Zara exploiter le travail forcé des Ouïgours en Chine. Nous avons laissé 6 500 ouvriers mourir sur les chantiers de la Coupe du monde au Qatar. En mémoire des 1 135 morts du Rana Plaza, la droite et l'extrême droite de cet hémicycle, viennent jurer, la main sur le cœur, que cela n'arrivera plus.

Mais, chers collègues, une telle promesse ne se paye pas de mots. Elle se vérifiera par les actes demain, lorsque nous voterons sur le devoir de vigilance des multinationales. Alors, trêve de paroles en l'air, car oui, chers collègues du PPE, comment osez-vous verser des larmes de crocodile aujourd'hui quand votre groupe est en train de saborder en coulisse le texte visant justement à punir les multinationales qui exploitent à mort les gens et la nature? Le choix est finalement simple pour Monsieur Weber, dont je regrette l'absence aujourd'hui, et son groupe de la droite: céder aux lobbies et protéger les exploités, ou défendre les droits de millions de travailleurs.

Tiziana Beghin (NI). – Signor Presidente, con 1 134 vittime e oltre 2 500 feriti la tragedia del Rana Plaza, in Bangladesh, può essere considerata come l'incidente sul lavoro più grave della storia. Una tragedia solo apparentemente lontana, perché al Rana Plaza si fabbricavano gli abiti che si vendevano nei negozi di tutto il mondo, anche qui in Europa.

Abbiamo dunque anche noi delle responsabilità sulle condizioni di lavoro nei paesi del terzo mondo, e come Europa devo dire che abbiamo reagito. Dopo la tragedia c'è stato un maggiore coinvolgimento delle aziende nella responsabilità sociale, l'adozione di standard internazionali più elevati e un incremento delle pressioni sui governi per aumentare i diritti dei lavoratori.

È stato fatto tutto? Possiamo dire che tragedie come quella del Rana Plaza non si verificheranno mai più? No. La pandemia e l'avvento dell'*ultra-fast fashion* hanno alimentato altre forme di abusi: dagli algoritmi che decidono sulla vita dei lavoratori, alle paghe da fame.

Come Movimento 5 Stelle sosteniamo l'iniziativa dei cittadini europei, promossa tra gli altri dall'Organizzazione mondiale del commercio equo, da Abiti Puliti e da Fashion Revolution. «Good Clothes, Fair Pay», questo è il titolo della campagna che chiede all'Europa una legislazione per raggiungere salari dignitosi in tutto il settore dell'abbigliamento, del tessile e delle calzature.

Il prossimo 17 giugno come Movimento 5 Stelle saremo in piazza a Roma anche per loro. #BastaVitePrecarie non è solo un impegno che vogliamo prendere in Italia, ma un obiettivo da raggiungere in tutta Europa e in tutto il mondo.

Questo Parlamento sta lavorando, oltre che sulla responsabilità sociale d'impresa, sul regolamento per porre fine al lavoro forzato. Domani voteremo un provvedimento d'urgenza per acquistare più armi e munizioni. Secondo noi sono invece queste le urgenze su cui dovremmo lavorare.

Mai più Rana Plaza. Basta sfruttamento dei lavoratori. Basta vite precarie.

President. – That concludes the item.

13. Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence (debate)

President. – The next item is the debate on the report by Lara Wolters, on behalf of the Committee on Legal Affairs, on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence and amending Directive (EU) 2019/1937 (COM(2022)0071 – C9-0050/2022 – 2022/0051(COD)) (A9-0184/2023).

Lara Wolters, rapporteur. – Mr President, we have just commemorated the horrors of Rana Plaza, the hundreds of victims, many of whom had not wanted to go into the building but were threatened and made to pay with their lives, in a disaster that tragically could have been avoided.

Rana Plaza is not the only disaster linked to corporate greed or the only disaster linked to companies misbehaving and turning a blind eye. Saeeda Khatoon died last December and in her lifetime never had justice for her son, who died in a burning clothing factory in Bangladesh. Fire escapes were blocked, the factory in question made jeans for a known German brand. Or Rosita, Tikwari, Veronica and Manimbu, who are still fighting for justice after their homes were destroyed by a palm oil company in West Papua, financed with European money. Injustice, impunity that makes your stomach turn!

These are examples that show the need for rules on responsible business, because we are talking about daily occurrences of injuries, pollution, corruption on the other side of the world, as well as in Europe. Tragically, nobody is ever to blame. Everybody points to someone else. Companies say it wasn't them, it was their supplier. They didn't know. Low prices are very welcome, responsibility is not.

But we're not talking about all companies. Let's be very clear about that. Many companies and sectors have taken action voluntarily, especially after Rana Plaza, and yet it hasn't been enough for true change. Action has been too patchy and there's often too little justice for victims. So for victims, the case for this law is very, very clear.

For businesses, this law is of vital importance also. Why? Because they need certainty about what to do, as well as the certainty that their competitors are doing the same.

As for consumers, they in themselves cannot change the world. Even if it were possible for people to check every company and every label, that won't make enough of a difference. That's why we're making a law on what responsible business means.

What we have before us is a political agreement that I am very proud of. It was painstakingly negotiated over three years, and it tries to take into account every difficulty that was raised by everyone who will be affected by this law – workers and companies alike.

It has always been my aim to negotiate a position with cross-party support in this House which is proportionate and workable for business and effective and accessible for victims. Why? Because this legislation is too important for us not to deliver.

This is about what kind of Europe you want to live in and what we as Europeans value. It's about what kind of trade we want in the future, how we see globalisation, and about defining our relationship with China. It is about serious action on sustainability and climate. If we don't take a firm stand in Europe, then who will? Our task in a united Parliament is to set global standards as we have done in the past.

'Een betere wereld begint bij jezelf.' Ik vond die reclames heel mooi als kind, maar ze hebben hun glans verloren. Het is namelijk niet waar. Jij en ik, wij kunnen de wereld niet in ons eentje veranderen. De sterkste schouders, die moeten de zwaarste lasten dragen.

En een betere wereld begint bij bedrijven. Dat is beter voor iedereen die in de winkel staat en zich afvraagt waar een trui gemaakt is, maar ook beter voor bedrijven zelf, want bedrijven die hun plicht naar mens en milieu serieus nemen, daar zijn er een boel van. Die bedrijven geven we met een antiwegkijkwet een steuntje in de rug.

Maar grote cowboybedrijven die regels aan hun laars lappen, die moeten we de pas afsnijden, zodat we niet meer hoeven te lezen over duizenden arbeiders die in Qatar stierven tijdens de bouw van voetbalstadions, Oeigoeren die in China onder dwang onze kleding maken, zodat het klaar is met voetbalvelden aan gekapt regenwoud in Zuid-Amerika, natuurgebieden waar oliemaatschappijen pijplijnen doorheen bouwen, uitgebuide gastarbeiders die tomaten plukken in Spanje.

Voor verantwoord ondernemen is Europese wetgeving nodig. En veel bedrijven vragen zelf om duidelijke regels die in heel Europa gelden. Op rechts is dat op dit moment aan dovemansoren gericht. Rechtse partijen in dit Parlement schermen met spookverhalen over het vestigingsklimaat en over regeldruk voor bedrijven. Klagende multinationals wordt de hand boven het hoofd gehouden.

Het is klaar – wat mij betreft – met politieke spelletjes. Laten wij morgen verantwoordelijkheid nemen als Europa, als Europees Parlement, en laten we morgen een serieuze stap zetten richting een duurzamere en eerlijke wereld.

Raphaël Glucksmann, *rapporteur pour avis de la commission des affaires étrangères*. – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, c'est dans la boîte de ce test de grossesse que fut retrouvée cette lettre: l'appel à l'aide d'un prisonnier chinois forcé de fabriquer des produits qui sont ensuite vendus dans une pharmacie à Paris. Voilà où mène la pyramide d'irresponsabilités qu'est la globalisation. Voilà où mène un monde sans règles dans lequel ceux qui ont le plus de pouvoir ont aussi le moins de responsabilités. Le monde de Zara, de Shein ou de Nike.

Aujourd'hui, le moment est venu de tourner la page de l'impunité des plus puissants. Le moment est venu de rendre les multinationales comptables des destructions de l'environnement et des violations des droits de l'homme commises sur leurs chaînes de valeur. Le moment est venu de les empêcher de se cacher derrière leurs fournisseurs, leurs sous-traitants ou leurs filiales. Cette législation sur le devoir de vigilance est une révolution juridique d'ampleur. Tenter de l'affaiblir, ou la rejeter même, est contraire à nos principes, mais aussi à nos intérêts. Chacun d'entre nous, chers collègues, aura à répondre de son vote.

Barry Andrews, *rapporteur for the opinion of the Committee on International Trade*. – Mr President, dear colleagues, all companies carry out due diligence on their supply chains, but only insofar as it impacts the operations of their own company. What makes this proposal radical is that, for the first time, companies will be mandated to carry out due diligence on their supply chain as it affects the planet, as it affects human rights abuses.

This has been an extremely divisive text, but I want to set the record straight. Contrary to what you might hear in this Chamber today, SMEs are excluded from the proposal. Contrary to what you might hear today, this is not a regulatory burden. There are already supply-chain laws in EU Member States, so this is deregulatory in effect by creating a level playing field. It is also aligned with the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, and therefore companies not only know what they have to report, but they also know what they have to do. So this provides businesses with the opportunity to take advantage of the European Green Deal. It also gives citizens, for the first time, a very clear choice: it takes human rights and environmental degradation out of our shopping baskets.

René Repasi, *Verfasser der Stellungnahme des mitberatenden Ausschusses für Wirtschaft und Währung*. – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Geld bewegt die Welt – eine Welt, in der Unternehmen kaum beeindruckt sind von unterbesetzten staatlichen Aufsichtsbehörden und von Haftungsansprüchen, deren Voraussetzung von Klägerinnen und Klägern nur schwierig bewiesen werden können. Nein, in dieser Welt haben sie nur Angst, dass ihnen der Geldhahn zuge dreht wird, wenn sie sich nicht um die Menschenrechte und um die Umwelt in ihren Wertschöpfungsketten kümmern.

Diesen Zahn haben die Regierungen im Rat gezogen, indem sie die Finanzen aus dem Lieferkettengesetz herausnehmen wollen. Diesen Zahn will die rechte Seite des Hauses ziehen, die heute noch nicht einmal dabei ist. Sie ist den Sireningesängen der Finanzlobby erlegen.

Wer dicke Gewinne gemacht hat in Europa, wer diese einstreicht, hat die verdammte Pflicht, diese Profite zum Schutz der Menschenrechte und der Umwelt einzusetzen. Insoweit kann ich an die nicht anwesende rechte Seite nur appellieren: Kommen Sie rüber auf die gute Seite der Macht. Es ist noch nicht zu spät.

Samira Rafaela, *Rap avis EMPL.* – Voorzitter, ik hoop dat het Europees Parlement morgen zijn verantwoordelijkheid neemt. Het is jammer om te zien dat de afgelopen dagen een aantal collega's, met name hier rechts, bezig zijn geweest om coalities te bouwen om bijvoorbeeld amendementen te maken die geheel tegen de essentie van deze nieuwe en belangrijke wetgeving ingaan.

Ik dank de rapporteur. Heel goed werk. Het is geen geheim dat de Commissie sociale zaken en werkgelegenheid nóg verder wilde gaan. En als het aan mij zou liggen, dan zou ieder bedrijf zijn verantwoordelijkheid moeten nemen op het gebied van mensenrechten en klimaat, ongeacht hoe groot het bedrijf is. Dit is een goede deal. Het maakt namelijk helemaal niet uit hoe groot of klein de administratieve druk is. Mensenrechten mogen hier niet aan onderdoen.

Maar dit is geen tijd om dogmatisch te zijn. We moeten nu doorpakken en bedrijven eindelijk de manieren geven om internationaal verantwoord te ondernemen conform de OESO-richtlijnen. We gaan nu ook doorpakken. Hierna gaan we door met het weren van producten die gemaakt zijn uit dwangarbeid. Die moeten van onze markt weggehouden worden. De economie wordt gemaakt en gedragen door mensen, dus daar doen we het ook in eerste instantie voor: voor mensen.

Tiemo Wölken, *Verfasser der Stellungnahme des mitberatenden Ausschusses für Umweltfragen, öffentliche Gesundheit und Lebensmittelsicherheit.* – Herr Präsident, sehr geehrter Herr Kommissar, schön, dass Sie da sind; liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Mit welchem Recht konsumieren wir in der Europäischen Union Produkte, die in Teilen der Welt hergestellt worden sind, wo dadurch Menschenrechte verletzt werden, die Umwelt zerstört wird oder tatsächlich Menschen ausgebeutet werden? Welches Recht haben wir dazu?

Wir haben dazu kein Recht, und deswegen braucht es ein klares, ein starkes Lieferkettengesetz, das sicherstellt, dass Menschenrechte nicht nur in der Europäischen Union gelten und an den Außengrenzen aufhören, sondern dass sie weltweit gelten.

Mit diesem europäischen Lieferkettengesetz, über das wir morgen abstimmen, haben wir die Chance, dafür zu sorgen, dass wir nicht mit zweierlei Maß messen, sondern dass wir dafür sorgen, dass Menschenrechte und Umweltschutz überall auf der Welt gleichermaßen gelten. Das ist unsere Pflicht. Und ich hoffe sehr, dass die EVP morgen diesem Gesetz zustimmen wird und sich nicht verabschiedet aus einem Kompromiss, der dafür sorgt, dass Menschenrechte und Umweltstandards weltweit eingehalten werden.

Dieser Kompromiss ist ein guter: Er sorgt für einen fairen Ausgleich für die Unternehmen, für die Beschäftigten, für die Umwelt und für die Verbraucherinnen und Verbraucher. Und deswegen müssen wir morgen dieses klare Signal hier gemeinsam setzen.

Didier Reynders, *membre de la Commission.* – Monsieur le Président, Mesdames et Messieurs les députés, je suis particulièrement heureux d'avoir aujourd'hui ce débat avec vous au sujet du projet de rapport de votre Parlement sur le devoir de vigilance des entreprises en matière de durabilité.

La Commission se félicite du travail de la commission JURI, ainsi que de l'intérêt du Parlement européen pour la proposition législative présentée par la Commission en février 2022, qui constitue une priorité politique commune. Je souhaite en particulier remercier la rapporteure, M^{me} Lara Wolters, ainsi que les rapporteurs fictifs dans ce dossier. Nous avons eu l'occasion d'échanger à de nombreuses reprises tout au long du processus, dans une atmosphère particulièrement constructive.

Nous partageons l'ambition d'une action législative horizontale au niveau européen, afin de mettre en œuvre, concrètement, les engagements de l'Union en faveur d'une transition vers une économie plus juste et plus durable dans le domaine du droit des sociétés.

You will vote tomorrow on a proposal that represents a unique opportunity for the Union. This legislation can have an important impact on the way companies operate globally. It can lead to the development of new, more sustainable business models by large companies operating in the European Union market. Many stakeholders are asking for this: consumers, investors, employees and the wider public, as well as many companies themselves. Indeed, this is an initiative where we want companies to be on board. We are ready to continue to work together with them to make due diligence a reality on the ground.

In order to achieve our goals, we proposed harmonised and mandatory rules on corporate due diligence and directors' duties. Existing international recommendations and voluntary schemes have played an important role so far, but they have not been sufficient to lead to the necessary changes and to ensure a level playing field throughout the whole economy. With this proposal, we can indeed offer legal certainty and a level playing field for companies across the European Union, support for SMEs, better access to finance and guidance to facilitate the transition.

This proposal aims to support companies in running their business in a way that effectively addresses possible negative impacts on human rights and the environment throughout their value chains. A review of more than 2 000 studies shows that integrating human rights and environmental protection into business operations leads to competitive advantages in all sectors of the economy and to more innovation.

So, our main objective is to ensure that long-term perspectives and sustainability factors are better integrated in corporate strategies and decision making. Therefore, in our view, a clarification of the directors' duty of care is also useful. The duty of care of directors is already present in all the legal systems of all Member States. The Commission's proposal does not set a new duty of care, but only clarifies duties already present in national law to make sure that directors are empowered to act also with regard to the long term.

It is important to make sure that sustainability considerations are taken into account in the major decisions of large companies. The proposal does not change the existing enforcement regime in this regard. Only shareholders would be able to hold directors to account.

As regards climate change, in our proposal, we provided for a special regime that would require large companies to adopt a climate transition plan to ensure that their business model and strategy are compatible with the objective to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees in line with the Paris Agreement. The Commission changed to be covered by the whole due diligence regime. And of course the Commission did not propose, sorry, to change to be covered by the whole due diligence regime. So there are two systems, one with the due diligence process for harm to the environment and violation of human rights and a transition plan for climate.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Commission proposed that the new rules apply only to large companies which have the capacity to implement the measures needed and notably to scrutinise their value chains. SMEs don't fall under the scope of the proposed directive and would therefore be excluded from the administrative and civil-liability regimes contemplated in terms of enforcement. To limit the impact of this proposal on SMEs across value chains, the Commission also proposed to provide them with technical and financial support, notably, SMEs should benefit from specific guidance and tools.

In a nutshell, our approach when designing the proposal has therefore been guided by the need to ensure proportionality, being mindful of impacts on competitiveness, while at the same time ensuring that we trigger a solid change on more sustainable value chains.

I would like to conclude by praising again your work and commitment on this file. With this report, we are making further progress in this important field. It is a good indicator that we should be able to reach a final agreement soon. I am now looking forward to the upcoming trilogues. I thank you, of course, for your attention and if it's possible to go further tomorrow we will start very fast the trilogue. But before that I will now listen with interest to your interventions.

Ilan De Basso, *föredragande av yttrande från utskottet för utveckling*. – Herr talman! Vi ska rösta om en banbrytande lagstiftning som sätter press på företagen att ta hänsyn till mänskliga rättigheter och miljön. På 2000-talet borde det här inte vara så speciellt banbrytande, men det är det.

Företag som bedriver verksamhet i utvecklingsländer måste respektera mänskliga rättigheter, miljö och rättsstatsprincipen, inte minst för att vi ska kunna nå målen i FN:s Agenda 2030. Det är inte storleken på företagen utan storleken på den skada som företagen orsakar som är det väsentliga. Därför måste fler företag omfattas av lagstiftningen.

Fackföreningarnas inflytande är oerhört centralt för att förstärka denna lagstiftning. Vi behöver effektiva och proportionerliga sanktioner mot de företag som bryter mot mänskliga rättigheter och skadar miljön.

Nu är det viktigt att vi rör detta i hamn för att skapa en framtid som skyddar människor och miljön, och där de som missköter sig hålls ansvariga för sina gärningar.

Deirdre Clune, rapporteur for the opinion of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection. – Mr President, we need to support and enable businesses to act more sustainably and responsibly in their global and their EU activities. This proposal is a step towards doing that while also bringing legal certainty and a level playing field when compared to the existing situation, where there's a varying degree of approaches taken across the Member States.

Products and services that are a result of human rights and environmental violations should not be allowed on the European market. The EU is capable of setting high standards and having a strong influence on global supply chains, and we can use this influence to address human rights violations and breaches of social and environmental standards.

I was concerned that the proposed directive took a minimum harmonisation approach because it leaves room for Member States to impose diverging obligations from those in this directive that may actually undermine legal certainty and that creation of that level playing field. So the improved text, with a dedicated article to fully harmonise the provision of this directive during its transposition, and thereafter there will be a revision of six years to assess whether it should be turned into a regulation, is an improvement and it will lead to an increase of harmonisation and cross-border cooperation.

Axel Voss, im Namen der PPE-Fraktion. – Sehr verehrter Herr Präsident, sehr verehrter Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen – insbesondere aus der Arbeitsgruppe des JURI-Ausschusses! Ich danke recht herzlich für die sehr vertrauensvolle und respektvolle Zusammenarbeit. Auch wenn wir immer inhaltlich extrem auseinanderlagen, so haben wir es am Ende doch geschafft, hier zumindest Kompromisse zu erreichen.

Es ist ein sehr politisches Thema – auch innerhalb der EVP –, und deshalb ist es auch nicht einfach für uns. Wir sind hier auch an einen Punkt gelangt, wo wir sagen müssen: Wir müssen den bürokratischen Aufwand gerade für die Unternehmen stoppen, und insbesondere natürlich auch für die kleinen und mittelständischen Unternehmen. Und wir müssen dabei auch die Realitäten beachten, in denen wir uns im Moment bewegen – ob das jetzt COVID ist, ob das der russische Angriffskrieg ist oder ob das die Expansion von China ist. Deshalb ist es ein schwieriges Umfeld, und deshalb würde ich auch sagen, dass ich eigentlich ursprünglich von der Kommission einen noch besseren Vorschlag erwartet hatte, in dem das mehr ausbalanciert ist.

Worauf wir besonders viel Wert legen, ist im Grunde eine Vollharmonisierung. Die Unternehmen brauchen einen Binnenmarkt, in dem sie auch arbeiten können, und nicht, dass wir das eigentlich den Mitgliedstaaten überlassen. Da hätte ich mir mehr Mut gewünscht, mehr forscheres Vorgehen – obwohl natürlich die rechtliche Situation schwierig ist, aber ich glaube, das wäre schon adäquat gewesen.

Die Brancheninitiativen, die wir jetzt vereinbart haben, sind etwas, wo ich Hoffnung schöpfe, dass wir zumindest hier etwas mehr Harmonisierung reinbekommen. Für uns ist auch der risikobasierte Ansatz besonders wichtig, mit dem wir uns konzentriert auf die Stellen oder die Lieferketten orientieren, an denen auch wirklich Risiken bestehen, und wir nicht einfach so etwas ins Blaue hinein machen.

Was für uns natürlich immer wieder extrem wichtig ist, ist, den bürokratischen Aufwand hier so gering wie möglich zu halten. Ich glaube nach wie vor, wenn wir die Unternehmen noch mehr umarmen würden und sie fragen und ihnen sagen würden: „Macht doch dieses!“ – und sie fühlen sich den Zielen verpflichtet, dann würden wir bessere Ergebnisse erreichen, als wenn wir sie jetzt einfach nur so verpflichten werden.

Aber ich denke, die Kompromisse sind da. Wir haben eine gute Grundlage, mit der wir arbeiten können. Nicht alles, was dort drinsteckt, gefällt mir oder uns. Aber ich hoffe, dass wir auch noch die eine oder andere Verbesserung im Trilog hinbekommen werden – auch im Sinne der Unternehmen und auch im Sinne von weniger Bürokratie.

Evelyn Regner, *im Namen der S&D-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, sehr geehrter Herr Kommissar und sehr geehrte Abgeordnete, die mit so viel Herzblut an diesem wichtigen, ganz wichtigen Dossier gearbeitet haben.

Unser EU-Lieferkettengesetz ist eine einmalige Chance. Es ist die Chance, dass wir den Unternehmen klare Regeln geben, was wir von ihnen erwarten, und zwar in einem Rahmen, der für sie machbar ist. Es ist die Chance, dass wir den Konsumentinnen und Konsumenten die Verantwortung abnehmen, wenn sie im Supermarkt oder im Geschäft stehen und nicht wissen, welches Produkt sie reinen Gewissens kaufen können. Es ist die einmalige Chance, dafür zu sorgen, dass jedes Produkt auf unserem EU-Binnenmarkt im Einklang mit Menschen- und Umweltrechten hergestellt wird.

Beim Lieferkettengesetz geht es um Transparenz, es geht um Inklusion der Gewerkschaften und der NGOs, es geht um Achtung der Menschen- und Sozialrechte, es geht um den Schutz der Umwelt. Und wir können es uns nicht leisten, das alles, diese einmalige Chance, zu verpassen.

Adrián Vázquez Lázara, *en nombre del Grupo Renew*. – Señor presidente, señor comisario, señorías, hace poco más de un mes se cumplía una década del trágico colapso de la fábrica textil de Rana Plaza: un accidente y una negligencia que se cobraron la vida de 1 134 personas y dejaron más de 2 500 heridos. Hoy sabemos que eso se podía evitar y se debió haber evitado. Esos trabajadores jamás debieron ser obligados a volver a su trabajo después de haberse detectado grietas estructurales en el edificio que se acabó derrumbando. Una tragedia que hace más importante, si cabe, que impulsemos leyes que eleven nuestros estándares, otorguen derechos a nuestros ciudadanos y también protejan nuestro planeta.

Mañana votaremos la Directiva sobre diligencia debida de las empresas en materia de sostenibilidad, una norma que tiene por objetivo que el desarrollo económico y el progreso social sean más compatibles con la protección de los derechos de las personas y del medio ambiente. Es un texto equilibrado que ha llevado horas y horas de negociación. Es equilibrado porque pone en la balanza la libertad y la competitividad económica junto con la responsabilidad y la protección. Porque la libertad sin responsabilidad es injusta y la responsabilidad sin libertad es insostenible.

Por eso yo pido a todos los diputados, a todos los grupos políticos, que apoyen esta Directiva, que va a ser un hito en esta legislatura y también en el futuro de nuestro continente.

Salgamos con una propuesta firme para que no se pueda decir que esta Cámara no ha hecho todo lo posible por ello.

Heidi Hautala, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Dear President, Commissioner, colleagues, since the adoption of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights over ten years ago, many businesses have worked hard to ensure that their activities are not linked to human rights violations or environmental destruction. European consumers and investors expect nothing less. Nevertheless, too many companies still act as free riders and gain unfair competitive advantage from irresponsible business activity.

The agreement that has now been reached in the Legal Affairs Committee offers to level the playing field. It is a balanced compromise, well aligned with widely-accepted international standards. A key feature is access to justice. Without access to justice, the directive would end up as a paper tiger. Victims of human rights abuses linked to corporate activities must have the right to seek justice and to hold companies accountable for dodging their obligations.

Now, the world is keenly watching what we decide here tomorrow. Yet another 'Brussels moment' could be at hand. As one of the world's largest markets, the EU can be a force for good in clearly defining the responsibilities of companies to respect human rights and protect the environment.

It should be noted that many developing countries producing goods destined for the EU market will need support in adapting to this legislation. Luckily, the EU has several avenues available, ranging from development cooperation to partnerships and integrating responsible business conduct into different instruments and dialogues.

This legislation is not about soothing the conscience of European consumers. It is about promoting the core values of our union and responding effectively to global environmental and human rights challenges. We must now seize this opportunity to leverage the power of business to strengthen respect for human rights and to fight environmental destruction throughout the world.

Jorge Buxadé Villalba, *en nombre del Grupo ECR*. – Señor presidente, señor comisario, señor ponente, hemos llegado al abismo del sentido común con este proyecto de diligencia debida en las empresas. Las violaciones de derechos humanos se persiguen con policía, jueces, cárcel o dejando de financiar a sátrapas extranjeros, pero no imponiendo más cargas, obligaciones, gastos e ideología a las empresas. La única consecuencia es que las empresas y trabajadores europeos van a ser más pobres y menos competitivos; y donde hoy hay empresas europeas, mañana habrá empresas chinas o americanas.

Si les decimos a nuestras empresas que no pueden subcontratar en terceros países donde no hay cuotas de género, pero sí firmamos acuerdos con teocracias islamistas o financiamos los planes de regadío de terceros países que no se comportan como buenos aliados, ¿por qué exigen a las empresas lo que no se exigen a ustedes mismos?

Quieren convertir a las empresas en agentes activos de la Agenda 2030, el evangelio de las élites. Llevan demasiado tiempo jugando con la vida y el dinero de los que están ahí fuera —las empresas tienen que crear empleo, riqueza y crecimiento—. Pero esto se acaba: el 23 de julio, España, con Vox, seguirá el camino de Italia, Suecia, Finlandia, Polonia y Hungría. Una nueva Europa de naciones y de libertades va a resurgir.

Gilles Lebreton, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, l'idée d'obliger les entreprises à veiller à ce que leurs partenaires respectent l'environnement et les droits de l'homme tout au long de leur chaîne d'approvisionnement est séduisante. Elle correspond à l'objectif ambitieux de procéder à une sorte de moralisation du capitalisme. Mais elle implique aussi de faire supporter aux entreprises de nouvelles et lourdes contraintes administratives. Il convient donc de n'avancer dans cette voie qu'avec prudence, après s'être assuré qu'on ne va pas déstabiliser des secteurs entiers de l'économie européenne.

Certaines garanties ont certes été obtenues, par exemple l'exonération des PME, qui ne seront soumises à l'obligation de vigilance que sur la base du volontariat, ou encore l'application du système aux grandes entreprises non européennes commerçant en Europe.

Mais des incertitudes demeurent, concernant notamment l'étendue des obligations écologiques à mettre en œuvre ou portant sur le caractère démesuré de la chaîne d'approvisionnement à prendre en compte, laquelle ne se limite, hélas pas, aux relations commerciales directes des entreprises. Ces incertitudes ne permettent pas aux entreprises de bénéficier d'un niveau de sécurité juridique acceptable. C'est pourquoi je ne soutiens pas ce texte.

Manon Aubry, *au nom du groupe The Left*. – Monsieur le président, chers collègues, c'est avec beaucoup d'émotion que je vous parle aujourd'hui d'une immense victoire contre l'impunité des multinationales. Une victoire pour les droits de l'homme et l'environnement, auquel les très grandes entreprises ne pourront plus porter atteinte sans en être tenues responsables devant des tribunaux. Une victoire pour les 100 000 paysans expropriés par Total en Ouganda, les familles des 6 500 ouvriers morts sur les chantiers de la Coupe du monde au Qatar, ou encore les milliers de Ouïghours exploités de force par les grandes marques de vêtements comme Shein ou Zara. Une victoire pour toutes ces victimes, qui pourront enfin accéder à la justice sans que les multinationales ne se cachent derrière leurs sous-traitants ou leurs filiales.

Une victoire, il faut le dire, chers collègues, arrachée aux lobbies, prêts à tous les mensonges pour protéger leurs profits délinquants sur l'autel des droits de l'homme et de l'environnement. Le résultat de quatre ans de combats acharnés ici à Bruxelles, où nous avons bataillé tous azimuts pour que ces crimes ne restent plus jamais impunis. Alors aujourd'hui, pour une fois, ici au Parlement européen, on a fait la démonstration que le pouvoir des gens pouvait l'emporter sur celui de l'argent.

Ivan Štefanec (PPE). – Vážený pán predsedajúci, zodpovedné podnikanie je dôležité nielen pre tvorbu nových pracovných miest, ale svojím príkladom aj pre rozvoj celej spoločnosti. Mnohé spoločnosti sa princípmi zodpovedného podnikania začali riadiť na základe vlastného rozhodnutia. Som presvedčený, že zodpovedné podnikanie sa nedosahuje administratívou a ani preň nepotrebujeme dodatočné výkazy, správy či nariadenia. Dodržiavanie ľudských práv nemôžeme vynucovať prostredníctvom navýšenia byrokracie, ktorá je už teraz obrovskou záťažou najmä pre malé a stredné podniky. Legislatíva by mala jasne definovať, ktoré oblasti sú skutočne rizikové. Spoločnosti nemôžu byť finančne zodpovedné za škody, na ktoré nemajú dopad, či nahrádzať úlohu štátu. Hlavným základom pre úspech musia byť jasne definované úlohy, zodpovednosť a rozsah tejto legislatívy. Bez takýchto úprav sa stane len ťažko vykonateľným nástrojom a prekážkou zodpovedného podnikania a nie jeho podporou.

(Rečník súhlasí so zodpovedaním otázky položenej zdvihnutím „modrej karty“)

Manon Aubry (The Left), question «carton bleu». – Monsieur Štefanec, je vous ai écouté attentivement, et vous dites que les entreprises ne peuvent pas avoir une responsabilité tout le long de leur chaîne d'approvisionnement. Mais j'ai une question assez simple: êtes-vous d'accord que les entreprises connaissent leur chaîne d'approvisionnement, et quand il s'agit de faire remonter les bénéfices, elles n'ont aucun souci à trouver l'usine où la main-d'œuvre est la moins chère. Alors pourquoi peuvent-elles faire remonter les profits, mais jamais la responsabilité quand il s'agit de violations des droits de l'homme? Et donc, en conséquence, pourquoi allez-vous vous opposer à ce texte?

Ivan Štefanec (PPE), odpoveď na otázku položenú zdvihnutím modrej karty. – Budem hlasovať proti tomuto textu, pretože ide nad rámec návrhu, ktorý bol pôvodne zámerom Európskej Komisie. A keď sa pýtate, či majú firmy vedomosti o svojich dodávateľoch, samozrejme, že majú. Ale nie všetky firmy v takejto forme môžu dodržiavať to, čo je navrhované. Táto smernica nie je vykonateľná. Stretol som sa s mnohými investormi, ktorí investujú v Európskej únii a hovoria, že nemôžu kontrolovať všetkých, ktorí dodržiať či nedodržiať takéto predpisy pri čo najmenších súčiastkach. Táto smernica je jednoducho nevykonateľná, vytvára dodatočnú administratívu, dodatočnú záťaž a som presvedčený, že, na základe svojej osobnej skúsenosti, zodpovedné podnikanie je ctou a že firmy, ktoré máme v Európskej únii, drvivá väčšina sa chváli zodpovedným podnikaním, že je to ich privilegium. Ale zodpovedné podnikanie nemôžeme vynucovať administratívou. Zodpovedné podnikanie je niečo, čo je prirodzené a takýmto nariadením zhoršujeme pozíciu podnikania a zhoršujeme pozíciu najmä malých podnikateľov, ktorí tvoria najviac pracovných miest.

Marek Belka (S&D). – Panie Przewodniczący! Gdy 10 lat temu zawałał się budynek szwalni Rana Plaza, ogromny ciężar spadł również na nasze europejskie serca i umysły. Oddając się czarowi zakupów z promocji albo przebiegając w ubraniach z metką „Made in Bangladesh”, zupełnie zapomnieliśmy, że za naszą niską ceną na półce mogą stać ludzkie tragedie, niewolnicza praca dzieci czy zdewastowane środowisko naturalne.

W idealnym świecie moglibyśmy oczekiwać, że klienci będą świadomi pochodzenia i prawdziwych kosztów kupowanych produktów. Niestety, gdy część korporacji, także polskich, poprawia warunki pracy i produkcji swoich wyrobów, inne godzą się na niewolniczą pracę Ujgurów czy dewastowanie środowiska naturalnego.

Właśnie dlatego należy poprzeć wprowadzenie dyrektywy w sprawie *due diligence* i sprawozdanie Lary Wolters, wprowadzające obowiązkowy mechanizm należytej staranności dla firm w dziedzinie praw pracowniczych, praw człowieka i ochrony środowiska. Pamięć o ofiarach Rana Plaza obliguje nas do tego działania. Namawiam wszystkie Koleżanki i wszystkich Kolegów z Polski, aby poparli kompromisowy projekt wypracowany w komisji JURI bez poprawek.

Katalin Cseh (Renew). – Mr President, dear colleagues, our smartphones, the devices we carry in our pockets, often contain minerals that finance bloody civil wars. Some 20% of global wool production originates from Xinjiang Province, where evidence clearly shows that Uyghur forced labour fuels the industry. Soybeans used in industrial cattle farming are directly linked to the destruction of the Amazon.

You know, over the last couple of months I've heard so many colleagues, so many lawmakers – and I have to say, sorry, but particularly from the right – dismissing these concerns saying that, yes, it happens in distant places, this is not really our business. Well I'm sorry to say, but this is literally our business at its core!

The Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive focuses on the footprint our European companies leave on human rights and the environment wherever they may operate in the world. We want our companies to be the agents of positive change. Should they cause harm, it is also our responsibility to hold them accountable here in the European courts.

So the European Parliament has made crucial improvements to the Commission's proposal and it is very important to stick to them. The time for progress is now!

Marie Toussaint (Verts/ALE). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, la situation est simple: si les entreprises ne respectent pas l'accord de Paris, alors nous ne pourrions pas limiter le réchauffement climatique à 1,5 °C. Et soyons clairs, soyons honnêtes, aucune des entreprises pétro-gazières européennes, ni Repsol, ni ENI, ni bien évidemment Total, ne se situe aujourd'hui sur la trajectoire de l'accord de Paris.

Les choses sont simples: si les entreprises continuent d'épandre du plastique ou des polluants éternels tout au long de leurs chaînes de valeur, alors nous ne pourrions protéger ni l'Arctique, ni l'Himalaya, ni les forêts du monde de ces pollutions qui rendent notre planète toxique. En somme, si nous ne sommes pas en mesure de réencadrer l'économie dans le cadre des limites planétaires, alors nous continuerons à rendre notre planète invivable.

C'est là tout l'enjeu du texte sur le devoir de vigilance que nous étudions et que nous devons impérativement adopter demain. Parce que les entreprises sont tenues de respecter les lois, les droits et les principes qui s'imposent à tous, et qu'elles doivent assumer leurs responsabilités sociales et environnementales.

Parce que les vies des ouvrières, brisées tant par le travail forcé que par les produits toxiques qui s'infiltrèrent dans leur corps, hors de nos frontières, ont tout autant de valeur que les vies que nous avons à préserver sur le territoire européen.

Parce que quand Hilda, Vanessa ou Patience nous demandent de protéger leurs parcs naturels et leurs terres des forages du projet EACOP de Total en Ouganda et que la jeunesse du monde clame son droit à un avenir, nous, dans l'Union européenne, nous nous devons d'agir.

Alexandr Vondra (ECR). – Pane předsedající, já jsem ještě ze staré tradiční kapitalistické školy. Myslím si, že úkolem byznysu je generovat zisk a ne do posledního puntíku prokazovat, jak jej kdo dosáhl, nebo projevovat loajalitu zdejší vrchnosti a její dominantní ideologii.

Hodně se tu mluví o Číně, ale k úspěšné konkurenceschopnosti s Čínou se určitě neproregulujeme. Koncept *due diligence* tak, jak jej pojímá tato zpráva, je podle mého soudu za hranou a nepřímou, o to však intenzivněji, zasáhne především malé a střední podniky, firmy, které tady vždycky všichni unisono a často pokrytecky vyzývají jako páteř evropské ekonomiky.

Pojďme se teď dohodnout, že to s nimi skutečně myslíme vážně, a odmítněme tuto hloupou a nebezpečnou zprávu.

Antonius Manders (PPE). – Voorzitter, commissaris, collega's, het CDA steunt enorm de voorstellen, de uitgangspunten, van maatschappelijk verantwoord ondernemen, want dat hoort bij onze normen en waarden. Er zit – en dat heb ik al verschillende collega's horen noemen, die het hebben gehad over een *level playing field* dat we moeten creëren in Europa – maar één weeffout in dit voorstel. Het is namelijk een richtlijn. En een richtlijn, die wordt omgezet in elk land. En dan krijgen we 27 verschillende systemen, en dat is geen *level playing field*.

Ik roep dus ook iedereen op om morgen amendement 423 te steunen, dat pleit voor een maximale harmonisatie, zodat de uitgangspunten waar wij volledig achter staan voor alle Europese bedrijven gaan werken. Dus ik roep de commissaris op om dat te steunen. Ik roep Lara op om dat te steunen in de dialoog en ik hoop ook dat iedereen daar morgen positief over gaat stemmen.

Last but not least wil ik graag vragen aan de commissaris – en ook aan Lara om te bevestigen – dat heel kleine ondernemers, zoals bijvoorbeeld de slager om de hoek, de bakker et cetera, maar ook de lokale voetbalvereniging en de lokale muziekvereniging, nooit ofte nimmer in de keten zullen vallen dat zij moeten rapporteren onder de voorwaarden van deze wetgeving. En dan zeg ik maar "better safe than sorry".

Patrizia Toia (S&D). – Signor Presidente, arriviamo a questa approvazione dopo mesi intensi e difficilissimi di negoziato. Voglio ringraziare la collega Lara Wolters per il lavoro che ha fatto, veramente profondo e attento.

Dopo campagne di sensibilizzazione a favore di una responsabilità delle imprese in tema ambientale e in tema di diritti umani – dobbiamo tutti ricordare la tragedia del Rana Plaza, se non siamo ipocriti, per le lacrime che allora abbiamo versato – il testo di compromesso adottato in commissione JURI è quello che si allinea in modo molto coerente con i principi e le raccomandazioni internazionali dell'ONU e dell'OCSE proprio in materia di condotta responsabile e vuole coinvolgere in ogni fase gli *stakeholder*.

Io sono della commissione industria, quindi posso ascoltare, e ho ascoltato, le perplessità che sorgono da una parte del mondo imprenditoriale, ma ricordo qui che con questo testo noi abbiamo previsto una maggiore assistenza alle PMI, attraverso ad esempio la regolamentazione dei processi di approvvigionamento o l'esenzione delle PMI dai costi legati alle attività di audit, o ancora la protezione da disposizioni contrattuali, che possono scaricare su di loro le responsabilità che magari invece sono in capo a grandi aziende. Insomma, sono certa che ho fatto il mio dovere e che ho dato, assieme alla collega e alla commissione JURI, le risposte più giuste alle esigenze più fondate.

Allora penso che l'industria europea può e deve essere pronta a questo cambiamento, che non solo è doveroso, ma può portare, come molte aziende hanno intuito, a nuove possibilità di business e di sviluppo.

María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos (Renew). – Señor presidente, la votación de esta Directiva sobre diligencia debida de las empresas en materia de sostenibilidad es un momento sin precedentes, porque establece obligaciones vinculantes y tiene un ámbito de aplicación que no tiene parangón en el ámbito global.

Yo, hoy, quiero pedir a todos los diputados que apoyen esta Directiva y que voten en contra de las enmiendas. Que la apoyen, porque es un paso adelante hacia la honestidad y la coherencia de los valores que decimos representar, para que, efectivamente, estos valores se respeten. Es un paso muy importante para las víctimas de catástrofes como las de Bangladés o Brumadinho, y para sus familias. Familias que buscan verdad y justicia, a las que esta Directiva garantiza el acceso y, también, el derecho de no repetición.

Que voten a favor, porque lo quieren la mayoría de los ciudadanos europeos —más del 76 %—. Que voten a favor, porque la mayoría de las empresas europeas lo quieren, porque la mayoría de las empresas europeas actúan con diligencia debida y tenemos que garantizar que las que no lo hacen lo hagan. Por lo que somos, por la defensa de los derechos humanos y del medio ambiente.

Sara Matthieu (Verts/ALE). – Voorzitter, commissaris, de sweatshops draaien nog steeds op volle toeren. De slachtoffers daarvan zijn de onzichtbare handen die onze goedkope kleding maken. Het gaat over miljoenen werknemers in de “fast fashion”—industrie, vooral vrouwen, die vandaag in zeer onveilige werkomstandigheden werken en aan een hongerloos. Een sterkere zorgplichtwet moet daar echt een vuist tegen maken. Het is tijd voor een radicale verandering.

De cowboys, die moeten eruit. Deze wet zal ervoor zorgen dat de hele keten onder de loep komt te liggen. Gedaan dus met verwijzen naar onderaannemers, waardoor misbruik blijft bestaan. Maar collega's, daar heb je recht op als consument: dat wat in de rekken hangt, op een verantwoorde manier is gemaakt. En ook voor de producenten die het wél goed doen, is dit heel belangrijk. Zij zijn vragende partij voor deze wet, want zo creëren we echt een eerlijk speelveld, een gelijk speelveld zonder concurrentie op de kap van de arbeiders.

Ibán García Del Blanco (S&D). – Señor presidente, señorías, léanse la Directiva. Las pequeñas y medianas empresas están expresamente excluidas de su funcionamiento. Luego, quienes tengan esa preocupación, que se la quiten; pueden tocar y pueden votar esta norma con toda tranquilidad. Las empresas de más de 250 empleados son las que están contempladas en ella, no las menores.

Pero yo les quería hablar fundamentalmente de una persona a la que he conocido esta misma mañana: se llama Segundo, es un descendiente afro-ecuatoriano que lleva trabajando en el sector de la vacada en una empresa multinacional desde los 9 años, que después de 49 años sigue viviendo hacinado, con montones de personas, sin agua corriente, sin seguro sanitario, sin derecho a la jubilación. ¿De verdad, señorías, estamos dispuestos a seguir avalando este tipo de prácticas por parte de nuestras empresas? También el trabajo infantil: ¿de verdad no somos mejores los europeos y las europeas que todo eso? Porque yo sí me considero mejor que todo eso y creo que la mayoría, la abrumadora mayoría de los ciudadanos y ciudadanas europeas son mejores que todo eso.

Así que hay momentos, señorías, queridos compañeros y compañeras, hay momentos en los que hay que escuchar a la conciencia. Así que mañana, de verdad, por favor, esta vez escuchen a su conciencia antes de votar.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Henna Virkkunen (PPE). – Arvoisa puhemies, on aivan selvää, että yritystoiminnan on oltava vastuullista ja jokainen yritys voi vastata oman toimintansa vastuullisuudesta.

Yritysvastuudirektiivissä on hyvät tavoitteet, mutta yritysten velvollisuudet menevät todella pitkälle, kun tämän lainsäädännön seurauksena yritysten täytyy arvioida omaa toimintaansa ja koko arvoketjun toimintaa tavarantoimittajien, kuljetusten, jakelun ja myynnin osalta. Yritysten täytyy selvittää ihmisoikeus- ja ympäristövaikutukset, ja se on erittäin iso tehtävä.

Täällä puhuttiin kansainvälisistä jäteistä. Tosiasiassa lainsäädännön rajana on nyt 250 työntekijän yritykset ja sitä suuremmat yritykset, mutta joka tapauksessa velvoitteet tulevat ulottumaan myös pienempiin yrityksiin, koska näiden yritysten arvoketjussa on erittäin paljon pieniä yrityksiä tavarantoimittajina, kuljetuksissa, jakelussa ja myynnissä ja kaikkien toimintaa täytyy tämän seurauksena selvittää.

Näin ollen tästä tulee kyllä merkittävästi hallinnollista taakkaa ja isot velvoitteet, joita on syytä jatkokäsittelyssä edelleen keventää. Samoin on arvioitava paremmin myös direktiivin vaikutuksia finanssialaan. Sitä ei ole tässä vielä nyt otettu huomioon. Jatkokäsittelyssä se on myös yksi tärkeä arvioitava asia. Samoin kuin se, että tämä menee myös erittäin pitkälle yritysten hallintoon ja päätöksentekoon, mistä sääntelyntarkastelulautakunta on jo todennut, että tämä ei ole hyvän sääntelyn ja paremman sääntelyn periaatteiden mukaista.

Maria Arena (S&D). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, alors jusqu'aujourd'hui, on sait que le monde de l'entreprise s'est opposé à toute loi imposant le devoir de vigilance. Aujourd'hui, c'est un grand pas qui sera fait si nous votons effectivement cette loi, parce que de quoi parle-t-on? On parle de TotalEnergies avec le projet EACOP qui est un projet climaticide. On parle de TÜV SÜD qui n'a pas correctement garanti les barrages au Brésil. On parle de Nike qui fait de l'argent sur le travail forcé. On parle de Syngenta qui exporte des produits chimiques hautement toxiques au Pérou. On parle de Seat qui est créateur de déforestation en Asie du Sud-est.

Et donc, chers collègues, les démarches volontaires ne marchent pas et elles conduisent à ce que nous vivons aujourd'hui, c'est-à-dire des catastrophes environnementales et des catastrophes humaines. Alors cette loi, elle doit nous permettre de prévenir, de minimiser, mais aussi de réparer grâce à l'accès à la justice, c'est-à-dire créer un cercle vertueux par rapport à nos entreprises. Alors nous devons faire en sorte que nos entreprises soient des acteurs de changement positif et non plus des complices de toutes ces violations en matière de droits de l'homme et environnementales.

Malte Gallée (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident, lieber Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Wahnsinnig oft höre ich immer wieder auf den Straßen, auf den Plätzen: Ja, was haben wir denn damit zu tun, wenn in Bangladesch ein Haus zusammenfällt? Oder: Was haben wir denn damit zu tun, wenn in Brasilien ein Damm bricht? Oder: Was haben wir denn damit zu tun, wenn in Uganda Menschen einfach enteignet werden? Da sollen sich die Länder doch selber drum kümmern.

Und genau diesen Menschen müssen wir sagen: Wir leben nun einmal mittlerweile in einer globalisierten Welt. Wir tragen Verantwortung dafür, was unsere Unternehmen weltweit so anstellen. Und das ist halt nicht immer die Sahnehaube.

Wir haben jetzt die riesengroße Chance, dafür zu sorgen, dass die Regeln, die wir für unsere Unternehmen in Europa auferlegen – mit Blick auf Menschenrechte –, dass die eben nicht nur hier bei uns gelten, sondern natürlich auch im Ausland. Das stärkt die europäischen Unternehmen, darüber müssen wir uns im Klaren sein, das verhindert Ausbeutung. Und deswegen bitte ich Sie alle, diesem Vorschlag zuzustimmen.

VORSITZ: OTHMAR KARAS*Vizepräsident*

Özlem Demirel (The Left). – Herr Präsident! 2012 starben 259 Menschen in einer pakistanischen Textilfabrik. Sie starben bei einem Brand. Sie produzierten für den deutschen Textildiscounter KiK. Die Angehörigen, die später KiK verklagt haben, wurden bei ihrer Anklage abgewiesen. Der Fall sei verjährt, hieß es. Welch ein Hohn, oder? Und KiK ist nicht das einzige Beispiel.

Im globalen Süden, in Lateinamerika, in Afrika, in Asien beuten multinationale Konzerne, westliche Konzerne – auch europäische Unternehmen – Menschen und Natur brutal aus. Sie höhlen die Rechte von Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmern aus, missachten Arbeitnehmerschutz-Richtlinien – und sie können das ohne mit der Wimper zu zucken, weil sie eben keine Sorgfaltspflicht haben.

Und da muss doch was gemacht werden, Herr Voss! Sie stellen sich hier hin und sagen: Dann setzen wir auf Freiwilligkeit. Dann umarmen wir mal die Unternehmen, denn die wollen das doch auch. Nein, Herr Voss, es ist nicht an der Zeit, die Unternehmen zu umarmen, sondern die Arbeiterinnen mal zu umarmen, die Gewerkschaften mal zu umarmen, die Umweltverbände mal zu umarmen, die seit Jahren genau auf diese Verletzungen, auf die Missachtung von Menschenrechten, Arbeitnehmerrechten hinweisen!

Und deshalb ist diese Richtlinie keine Revolution, sie ist das Minimalste, was man tun muss. Und im Übrigen sind es die Arbeiter, die dann tatsächlich auch den Wohlstand schaffen und nicht nur die Unternehmen. Herr Voss, ich bitte Sie, ich bitte die konservativen Kollegen: Stimmen Sie dieser Richtlinie zu, seien Sie nicht gewerkschaftsfeindlich!

Enikő Győri (NI). – Elnök Úr! Ez a javaslat egy újabb tördőfés Európa versenyképességének. Gúzsba köti a vállalatokat, miközben teljhatalmat ad az NGO-knak, hogy sakkban tartsák az általuk kipécézett céget. Olyan dolgokért kell felelősséget viselniük, melyekre nincs ráhatásuk. A vállalatok mostantól egymás csendőrei lesznek ahelyett, hogy érték- és munkahelyteremtésre koncentrálnának. Kérdezem a Bizottságot: hogy lesz így meg a beharangozott 25 százalékos jelentéstételi kötelezettségcsökkentés? Mi lett a „One in, one out” kezdeményezéssel? Hol a híres kkv-szűrő, miszerint a Bizottság nem áll elő olyan javaslattal, amely rossz a kkv-knak?

Csak az elmúlt öt évben majd 150, cégeket érintő jogszabály látott napvilágot. A háború és a szankciók következtében elszabadult infláció, az energiaárak különösen a kkv-kat hozzák nehéz helyzetbe. Legkevésbé adminisztratív és pénzügyi terhek növelésére van most szükség. Higgyük el, hogy a vállalatok fenyegetés nélkül is képesek tisztességesen eljárni. A baloldal mindig is üzletellenes volt, de kérem a Néppártot és a liberálisokat, ébredjenek végre fel, és ne szavazzák meg ezt a szörnyszülöttet!

Mónica Silvana González (S&D). – Señor presidente, somos el mayor agente de desarrollo del mundo. Por ello, tenemos una responsabilidad añadida. Esta Directiva, la Directiva sobre diligencia debida de las empresas en materia de sostenibilidad, en línea con la política comercial de la Unión, viene precisamente en apoyo de nuestro objetivo: evitar la corrupción en las cadenas de valor globales y las relaciones de negocios. Sin embargo, también es importante que se incluya a las pymes, que esta nueva norma se aplique a todo tipo de empresas, ya sean públicas o privadas, y que cuente con un sistema de responsabilidad que incluya responsabilidad administrativa, civil y penal.

Ahora debemos seguir luchando en los diálogos tripartitos para lograr una aplicación correcta, también en lo que respecta a los acuerdos que se están negociando, como el Acuerdo con Mercosur.

La aprobación de esta Directiva nos mantendrá a la vanguardia del respeto de los derechos humanos y de la sostenibilidad en todo el mundo. Por favor, no apoyéis las enmiendas; mantengamos el texto original, con el que estamos de acuerdo todas las comisiones.

Κώστας Παπαδάκης (NI). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, η οδηγία αποτελεί μνημείο ασυλίας για τα μονοπώλια. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση ξεπλύνει τους μεγάλους επιχειρηματικούς ομίλους και τους απαλλάσσει, ακόμα και από οποιαδήποτε τυπική επίπτωση ή κύρωση, για το γεγονός ότι, κυνηγώντας τη μέγιστη δυνατή κερδοφορία, προωθούν την εργασιακή γαλέρα ενάντια στους εργαζόμενους, τα εργοδοτικά εγκλήματα, την καταλήστευση των πελατών τους και τη λεηλασία του περιβάλλοντος.

Το καπιταλιστικό κράτος, και με τη βούλα της οδηγίας, εκχωρεί κάθε υποχρέωση ελέγχου των ομίλων στους ίδιους, κατά το «Γιάννης κερνάει και Γιάννης πίνει». Είναι αυτοί που αυτοαξιολογούνται, αυτοελέγχονται και παίρνουν διαπιστευτήρια δέουσας προσπάθειας, ως και βεβαιώσεις περί τήρησης ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων, προς αυτοδιαφήμιση έναντι των ανταγωνιστών τους. Στην ίδια οδηγία προβλέπεται ότι οι διευθυντές των εταιρειών είναι υπεύθυνοι να ελέγξουν την ίδια τους την εταιρεία.

Μιλάμε για προκλητικό εμπαιγμό του λαού. Στην Ελλάδα οι εργαζόμενοι, ο λαός, μπορούν να δώσουν απάντηση στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, το κεφάλαιο και τα κόμματά τους, θέτοντας ως κριτήριο το δίλημμα «ή τα κέρδη τους ή οι ζωές μας», με ένα πολύ πιο ισχυρό Κομμουνιστικό Κόμμα.

Maria-Manuel Leitão-Marques (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, quando era pequena, na aldeia dos meus avós, havia um rio escuro e poluído em cuja água não nos deixavam sequer tocar. Uma empresa de celulose tinha matado o rio, acabando com a vida no seu leito e nas suas margens. Tudo lhe era desculpado, em nome dos empregos que criava na região.

Hoje tal não seria possível, e sabemos que muitas empresas participam ativamente na criação de sociedades sustentáveis e que nós, cidadãos, valorizamos a sua responsabilidade empresarial. Esta diretiva serve para que sejam mais, sejam mais a prevenir em vez de remediar, de modo a não verem um dia destes a sua reputação destruída por terem sido descobertas práticas intoleráveis, aqui perto, ou num qualquer mundo distante que até julgavam bem escondido.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Didier Reynders, membre de la Commission. – Monsieur le Président, Mesdames et Messieurs les députés, permettez-moi de vous remercier pour vos contributions au cours de ce débat. L'Union européenne s'est, comme vous le savez, dotée d'un agenda ambitieux en matière de durabilité.

Avec cette initiative, que j'ai annoncée sept ans après la tragédie du Rana Plaza, nous avons la possibilité de mettre en œuvre concrètement nos engagements sociaux, environnementaux et en matière de droits de l'homme grâce à la gouvernance des entreprises.

La Commission a suivi une approche à la fois ambitieuse et proportionnée dans sa proposition de directive, dont les petites et moyennes entreprises sont exclues.

Je suis heureux d'avoir pu bénéficier d'un large soutien de votre Parlement dans cet effort qui permettra d'éviter une fragmentation à travers de multiples législations nationales dans l'Union européenne et de développer une économie plus juste et plus durable.

Je serais très heureux d'entamer les trilogues avant l'été si cela est possible. Ce dossier constitue, comme vous le savez, une des grandes priorités politiques de mon mandat et vous pouvez compter sur mon engagement personnel en vue de son adoption.

Lara Wolters, rapporteur. – Mr President, I should like to thank colleagues for this debate. Thank you to all those who participated. It's great to see the support expressed by so many colleagues here today. I hope that this backing will transform into a substantial majority tomorrow.

At the same time, let me address some of the criticism expressed here today. I hear that due diligence will affect Europe's competitiveness, but the very core of this law is a level playing field between EU and non EU companies. I have heard also that this would be a disproportionate burden for companies, but that overlooks the reality of what we're proposing here. We don't ask companies to go and fight every problem on this planet. We allow them to prioritise actions that are relevant to them and to the risks that they face. We're aware of the importance of industry collaboration in different sectors, and we're preventing heavy contractual obligations for SMEs.

Meneer Manders, die kan ik ook geruststellen. Zolang de lokale harmonie, de lokale voetbalclub of de carnavalsvereniging niet geregistreerd staan als bedrijf, geen 250 medewerkers hebben en 40 miljoen omzet, zullen zij niet onder deze wet vallen.

Let me also be clear about the world in 2023: not only are companies able to rise to the challenge of due diligence in the future, they are already doing it: Aldi, Ikea, Unilever, ASOS, Mars, Ericsson – those are just some of the companies calling for human rights and environmental standards that give more clarity on what we mean by responsible business. They are joined by prominent trade associations in the financial, pharmaceutical and technology sectors, to name a few.

Those who are now seeking to frustrate this law are siding with a minority of political and commercial interests, and they are electioneering. To my colleagues who need to vote tomorrow I want to say, if you're on the side of millions of citizens who want to see change, as well as the businesses and civil society that are pleading for that, if you're on the side of responsibility and a Europe fit to lead on the big questions of our time, then show that tomorrow: reject the amendments, back this compromise and let us go to trilogues.

And last but definitely not least, I want to very warmly thank the Commissioner for his leadership in this, all of my colleagues who have worked so constructively with me on this and who have been so involved, and my own team, Matthew Hogarth and H el ene Beaghe, whose very last working day in the European Parliament is tomorrow, and without whose help this would not have been possible. So thank you so much to you all.

Der Pr asident. – Die Aussprache ist damit geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung findet am Donnerstag, 1. Juni 2023, statt.

Schriftliche Erkl arungen (Artikel 171)

Andrus Ansip (Renew), kirjalikult. – Euroopa tarbijad tahavad olla veendunud, et nendele pakutav oleks toodetud k rgeid inim oiguste ja keskkonnastandardeid j rgides. Ettev tjad on huvitatud v rdsetest konkurentsitingimustest. Inim oiguste rikkumine ja keskkonda saastav tootmine pole vastuv etav tarbijatele ega ausatele ettev tjatele. Paraku annab n iteks lapst oj u v i orjat o kasutamine ning keskkonnahoiuks vajalike investeeringute tegemata j tmine konkurentsieelise k rgeid standardeid j rgivate ettev tete ees.  riiuhingu hoosuskohustust k sitlev liidu  igusakt edendab inim oiguste austamist ja keskkonnakaitset, loob liidus ettev tjatele v rdsed v imalused ja hoiab  ra killustatuse, mis tuleneb liikmesriikide omaette tegutsemisest. Hoosuskohustust tuleks kasutada vahendina, millega teha kindlaks v artusahela riskid ja suurendada vastupidavust ootamatutele muutustele. Paratamatult toob direktiivi rakendamine kaasa teatud halduskoormuse t usu. Direktiivi edasisel menetlemisel tuleb j lgida, et see oleks proportsionaalne eesm rkidega.

Marc Botenga (The Left), par  crit. – Il faut que les multinationales europ ennes respectent la loi et les droits des travailleurs. L'effondrement de l'immeuble du Rana Plaza au Bangladesh, en 2013, a caus  la mort de 1135 travailleuses et travailleurs. Deux mille personnes ont  t  bless es. Le b timent abritait des ateliers de confection pour les multinationales des v tements. Malgr  les fissures dans les murs, les patrons avaient pouss  les travailleurs   venir travailler. Cette loi doit limiter l'impunit  des multinationales. Le texte contient bien des points pour lesquels les syndicats et les ONG se sont mobilis s pendant des ann es afin d'en finir avec l'impunit  totale des multinationales. Bravo   celles et ceux qui se sont mobilis s. Cette premi re victoire prouve la force de la mobilisation. Mais la partie n'est pas jou e. Le texte propos  contient trop de lacunes. Plein d'entreprises, dont le secteur financier, y  chappent. L'acc s des victimes   la justice restera tr s difficile. Sans obligation de mise en  uvre, la partie climatique du texte restera lettre morte. Qui plus est, ce texte risque m me de ne jamais  tre appliqu . Les multinationales et les gouvernements veulent l'affaiblir encore. Il s'agira de ne rien lâcher dans le bras de fer qui s'annonce. Les travailleurs du monde m ritent mieux.

Milan Brglez (S&D), pisno. – Predlog zakona o (dru beno in okoljsko) odgovornem poslovanju podjetij pomeni konkreten korak na poti k novemu dru benemu dogovoru,  igar sestavni del predstavlja (dejansko) uresni evanje zavez Unije o re evanju okoljske in podnebne krize, ki je utemeljeno na socialni dimenziji.

Okoljsko obremenjenost našega planeta, ki v poslovnih modelih predvsem nekaterih (velikih) multinacionalk sovпада z izkoriščanjem delovne sile ter kršenjem človekovih in delavskih pravic, je potrebno zamejiti in preprečiti. To lahko storimo le z novimi zavezujočimi pravili na ravni Unije, ki zagotavljajo, da se podjetja vedejo odgovorno pri njihovem poslovnem ravnanju, v celotni vrednostni verigi njihovega delovanja, od načrtovanja in proizvodnje do prodaje in distribucije, tako znotraj kot zunaj Evropske unije.

Kot največji skupni trg in v vlogi svetovnega akterja z normativno močjo ima Evropska unija dolžnost in priložnost postaviti zavezujoče okvire odgovornega poslovanja podjetij, katerih cilj je odprava anomalij v celotni oskrbovalni verigi, ki predstavljajo tveganje za okolje in podnebje ter grožnjo spoštovanju človekovih pravic. V posebno čast mi je, da je pobuda za oblikovanje te zakonodaje prišla pred tremi leti iz vrst Skupine naprednega zavezništva socialistov in demokratov (S&D). S tem smo enkrat več pokazali, da se kot evropska politična skupina znamo soočiti s sodobnimi zahtevnimi izzivi in tudi predlagati konkretne rešitve.

András Gyürk (NI), írásban. – A háború és a rosszul megalkotott szankciós politika miatt Európa versenyképessége történelmi mélypontra van. A nagyvállalatok leépítik európai tevékenységüket, az elszálló energiaköltségek, az infláció és a Bizottság következtelen gazdaságpolitikájának árát pedig így elsősorban a kvk-k fizetik meg. Ez a javaslat pedig tovább növeli a pénzügyi és bürokratikus terheket. A Bizottság és a baloldal javaslata szerint a vállalkozásoknak a teljes értéklánc mentén nem csak a közvetlen beszállítóik, de áttételes partnereik tetteiért is jogi felelősséget kellene vállalniuk.

Elfogadhatatlan, hogy az érték- és munkahelyteremtés helyett, a cégeknek egymás csendőreivé kellene válniuk, és szűkös erőforrásaikat újabb- és újabb jelentéstételi kötelezettségek teljesítésére kell fordítaniuk. Ezzel a javaslattal a baloldal és a Bizottság a vállalkozások helyett újra az NGO-k oldalára állt, amik így lehetőséget kaphatnak arra, hogy sakkban tartsák az általuk kipécézett cégeket. Európa megint önmagát lőné lábba, ha ez a javaslat jogszabállyá válna, ugyanis az Unió kivüli cégeknek nem lesznek ilyen terhei, tehát az ő versenyképességük fog nőni a mieink rovására. Remélhetőleg az intézményközi tárgyalások során sikerül az európai vállalkozások érdekeit is figyelembe vevő kompromisszumot elérni.

Eugen Jurzyca (ECR), písomne. – Cieľom tejto smernice je eliminovať negatívne dopady činnosti veľkých firiem a ich dodávateľských reťazcov na ľudské práva a životné prostredie, a to aj v krajinách mimo EÚ. Regulované firmy budú musieť napríklad preukazovať, že všetci ich obchodní partneri a dodávatelia nevyužívajú detskú či nútenú prácu a nezhoršujú biodiverzitu. Ochranu ľudských práv a životného prostredia podporujem. Za problém však považujem to, že predkladatelia k tomuto návrhu nepredložili analýzu, ktorá by preukázala efektívnosť navrhovaného riešenia. Mám dlhoročné skúsenosti s tým, že populistickí politici často presúvajú regulácie z miest, kde sú viditeľné, na miesta, kde ich vidno nie je. Aby verejnosť nevnímala náklady takejto prenesenej regulácie. Tie však stále existujú, často ešte väčšie, a preto sú potrebné analýzy. Podľa môjho názoru je efektívnejšie, keď sa o verejné statky, ktorými sú aj ľudské práva a životné prostredie, stará prioritne štát, na to vlastne je. Nemá túto starostlivosť masívne prenášať na podniky. Z uvedených dôvodov budem hlasovať proti tomuto návrhu.

Benoît Lutgen (PPE), par écrit. – Madame, Monsieur, La directive sur la «due diligence» que nous votons aujourd'hui sera bénéfique à la planète, soutiendra nos valeurs et aidera nos entreprises. Elle sera bénéfique à la planète car le contrôle du respect des normes en matière d'environnement par les chaînes de valeurs des entreprises participera à la lutte contre le changement climatique et la préservation de la biodiversité. Elle soutiendra nos valeurs car le respect par ces chaînes des normes en matière de droits de l'homme permettra de faire passer des messages essentiels à nos partenaires commerciaux. Nous n'acceptons pas le travail des enfants ! Nous soutenons les droits syndicaux ! Nous refusons l'exploitation des personnes détenues par des régimes répressifs comme la Chine avec les Ouïghours. Enfin, l'adoption de normes nationales par trop divergentes, alourdissant les tâches des entreprises obligées de se conformer à des principes différents selon les Etats membres, aurait été une atteinte à un des fondements essentiels de notre Union: le Marché unique. C'est pourquoi je suis heureux qu'en plus des syndicats et ONGs, ce texte soit également soutenu par de nombreuses entreprises. Cela montre que la société européenne est unie dans la défense de ses principes et valeurs.

Katarína Roth Nevedálová (S&D), *pisomne*. – Správa o náležitej starostlivosti podnikov v oblasti udržateľnosti zdôrazňuje kľúčovú úlohu, ktorú udržateľnosť a zodpovedné obchodné praktiky zohrávajú pri formovaní prosperujúcejšej a inkluzívnejšej spoločnosti. Touto pripravovanou smernicou sa zavedú povinnosti pre spoločnosti z EÚ a spoločnosti mimo EÚ pôsobiace v rámci EÚ, pokiaľ ide o skutočné a potenciálne nepriaznivé vplyvy na ľudské práva a nepriaznivé vplyvy na životné prostredie v súvislosti s ich vlastnými operáciami a operáciami ich dcérskych spoločností a iných subjektov v ich hodnotovom reťazci. Považujem ju za dôležitú, lebo sa ňou presadzujú hodnoty EÚ v prostredí podnikov a má za cieľ napomáhať zabráneniu porušovania základných ľudských práv. Podniková udržateľnosť nie je len morálnou požiadavkou, ale aj strategickou výhodou, nakoľko spoločnosti, ktoré uprednostňujú udržateľnosť, s väčšou pravdepodobnosťou dosiahnu dlhodobější úspech a odolnosť v aktuálne rýchlo sa meniacom svete. Zároveň je však dôležité, aby sa našla rovnováha a nebola vytváraná nadmerná administratívna či finančná záťaž pre európsky podnikateľský sektor.

Waldemar Tomaszewski (ECR), *raštu*. – Ponia Pirmininke, Europos Sąjunga turėtų būti grindžiama pagarba žmogaus orumui, laisvei, demokratijai, lygybei, teisei valstybei ir pagarba žmogaus teisėms. Šie principai turi būti be išimties taikomi ir įmonių veiklai. Atsakingas verslo valdymas taip pat turi būti labai svarbus aspektas vykstant veiklą, turime užtikrinti padarų darbą ir darbuotojų teisių apsaugą. Tai pavyzdys, kaip Europos socialine rinkos ekonomika galima bus atnaujinti ekonomikos valdymo praktika, kad paskatintume įmones vykdyti savo išpareigojimus ir ginti žmogaus teises bei orumą. Todėl ši direktyva visų pirma turėtų padėti įgyvendinti Europos socialinių teisių ramstį, kuris remia teises, užtikrinančias sąžiningas darbo sąlygas. Tai taip pat padidins šio ramsčio matomumą, įmonių išpareigojimą šiam ramsčiui, kuris yra būtinas veiksmingam jo įgyvendinimui. Tai taip pat yra ES politikos ir strategijų dalis, susijusi su sąžiningo ir padoraus darbo teikimo skatinimu. Atsižvelgdamos į visa tai, įmonės turi būti atsakingos už savo žmogaus teisių patikrinimą, nustatydamos, užkirsdamos ir sušvelnindamos neigiamą savo veiklos poveikį žmogaus teisėms, taip pat atsakydamos už tai, kaip jos reaguoja į šį poveikį. Pagal šias gaires įmonės turėtų vengti žmogaus teisių pažeidimų ir reaguoti į jų sukeltą neigiamą poveikį.

14. Breaches of the Rule of law and fundamental rights in Hungary and frozen EU funds (debate)

Der Präsident. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärungen des Rates und der Kommission zur Missachtung der Rechtsstaatlichkeit und der Grundrechte in Ungarn und eingefrorene EU-Gelder (2023/2691(RSP)).

Peter Kullgren, *rådets tjänstgörande ordförande*. – Herr talman! Ärade ledamöter, kommissionär Reynders, kommissionär Hahn. I dagens geopolitiska situation är det viktigare än någonsin att vi tillsammans försvarar våra grundläggande gemensamma europeiska värden.

Jag vill börja med att tacka Europaparlamentet för ert arbete med rättsstatens principer och att ni sätter dessa frågor högt upp på dagordningen. Europaparlamentet spelar och har spelat en viktig drivande roll i EU:s rättsstatsarbete, inte minst när det gäller framtandets av en effektiv villkorlighetsförordning.

Respekten för rättsstatens principer är en nödvändig förutsättning för att unionen och dess inre marknad ska fungera väl och för att unionens medel ska betalas ut på ett rättssäkert sätt, med respekt för europeiska skattebetalare. Att upprätthålla rättsstatens principer är en fråga om trovärdighet för unionen. Det är därför som upprätthållandet av rättsstatens principer och grundläggande värden är prioriterade frågor för det svenska ordförandeskapet. Respekten för rättsstatens principer, demokrati och individuella fri- och rättigheter är grundläggande europeiska värden som vi måste försvara.

Vi har de nödvändiga verktygen och processerna för att säkerställa att våra grundläggande värden upprätthålls. Det är viktigt att vi använder dem i konstruktiv anda, i dialog med den berörda medlemsstaten. När det gäller förfarandet enligt artikel 7 om Ungern fortsätter vårt ordförandeskap arbetet inom rådet, samtidigt som vi upprätthåller en öppen och konstruktiv dialog med Ungern.

I går hölls en sjätte utfrågning av Ungern i rådet för allmänna frågor. Den berörde alla frågor som togs upp i Europaparlamentets motiverade förslag, så att rådet kunde få en uppdaterad överblick av situationen. Inför utfrågningen hade ordförandeskapet, genom min ministerkollega Jessika Roswall, ett informellt och bra utbyte med Europaparlamentets föredragande, Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, och med skuggföredragandena. Mötet ägde rum den 11 maj. EU-minister Roswall beklagar att hon inte har möjlighet att vara här vid dagens debatt.

Som ni vet finns det också viktiga kopplingar mellan EU:s budget och rättsstatens principer, till skydd för unionens ekonomiska intressen. Jag vill påminna om att rådet antog genomförandebeslut om godkännande av Ungerns plan för återhämtning och resiliens den 15 december 2022. Planen omfattar 5,8 miljarder euro.

Rådets beslut innehåller tuffa milstolpar som Ungern måste uppfylla. Flera av dem gäller domstolarnas oberoende. Dessa så kallade supermilstolpar måste uppfyllas innan några utbetalningar kan göras. Det är upp till kommissionen att bedöma om Ungerns reformer uppfyller dessa milstolpar på ett tillfredsställande sätt. Ungern har ännu inte lämnat in någon begäran om utbetalning. Vi noterar också att Ungern nyligen vidtagit lagstiftningsåtgärder för att ta itu med några av de reformer som krävs.

Vidare antog rådet den 15 september 2022 inom ramen för villkorlighetsförordningen – och för allra första gången – ett genomförandebeslut om åtgärder för att skydda EU:s budget mot brott mot rättsstatens principer i Ungern. Det var ett historiskt beslut.

Rådet enades särskilt om två specifika åtgärder. För det första att hålla inne 55 procent av budgetåtagandena för tre program inom sammanhållningspolitiken. För det andra ett förbud att ingå rättsliga åtaganden med allmännyttiga stiftelser som upprättats på grundval av en ungersk lag från 2021, som främst påverkar ungerska universitet och deras tillgång till EU-finansiering. Dessa åtgärder är tillämpliga på Ungern tills Ungern genomfört nödvändiga reformer.

Det är vår uppfattning att de ungerska myndigheterna arbetar konstruktivt och nära kommissionen för att ta itu med situationen. Vi uppmanar Ungern att uppfylla de uppställda kraven.

I likhet med faciliteten för återhämtning och resiliens är det återigen upp till kommissionen att nu bedöma om eventuella korrigerande åtgärder som Ungern föreslår löser de rättsstatsproblem som identifierats i Ungern. Om och när ett förslag om att lyfta de villkorlighetsåtgärder som är tillämpliga på Ungern läggs fram av kommissionen är rådet redo att agera snabbt för att hantera frågan om ett eventuellt lyftande av åtgärderna.

Vi är beredda att som ordförande hantera alla frågor som kan uppstå under återstoden av vårt halvår som ordförande.

Johannes Hahn, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, Minister, honourable Members, thank you for inviting us today. Your commitment in a constructive dialogue matters and helps us enforce the Conditionality Regulation. This is of fundamental importance as the protection of the Union budget is in the direct interest of all Europeans.

The European Parliament is a valuable partner in the implementation of the Conditionality Regulation, and I am also grateful for your continuous cooperation in this matter. As you are aware, in December last year the Council adopted an implementing decision that suspended 55% of the funds for three operational programmes in cohesion policy. This corresponds to an amount of approximately EUR 6.3 billion in total for the period 2021–2027. The Council implementing decision also prohibited entering into any new legal commitments with public interest trusts or entities maintained by them under any Union programme, directly or indirectly managed by the Commission, notably due to unaddressed risks of conflict of interests for those who sit on the boards of such entities.

Since the Council decision of last December, the Commission has been in continuous contact with Hungary about the outstanding issues identified in the Council implementing decision. On almost all of the issues concerned, we have discussed very concrete ways in which Hungary could, in the Commission's view, resolve the issues at hand. On public interest trusts, the Commission services have already informed Hungary that in order to proceed with the agreements to be signed under the Erasmus+ call for 2023, the cut-off date is fast approaching. The awards should, in principle, be done by mid-July. Only on the 23 and 24 May did Hungary submit informally revised proposals following comments the Commission sent to Hungary in March and April to address the issues for which the Council took measures, including on public interest trusts. We have been assessing these proposals and will provide feedback to Hungary as soon as possible.

Very soon, there will be no time to have the measures on public interest trusts lifted by the Council in time for the Erasmus+ funds for 2023. You are aware that the actual lifting is likely to take two months. It includes the COM analysis and the College decision, then the Council analysis and their decision. Hungary knows this as we have been making this point explicitly for months, including publicly. Nobody can say they were not aware. Hungary's Recovery and Resilience Plan contains 27 specific 'super' milestones. All of them need to be fulfilled before the Commission starts carrying out payments under the Recovery and Resilience Facility. These milestones incorporate all 17 remedial measures presented by Hungary in the context of the rule of law conditionality mechanism. This means that actual payments under Hungary's RRP are conditional on the successful resolution of the concerns raised under the Conditionality Regulation in line with the Council implementing decisions. RRP payments will take place only after the Commission's assessment that Hungary has successfully implemented fully and adequately all the remedial measures.

Finally, to unlock reimbursements for the funds covered by the Common Provisions regulations, notably cohesion funding management by Hungary, Hungary must fulfil the horizontal enabling conditions requiring effective mechanisms to ensure compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU in the implementation of the programmes. Also here, RRP payments are conditional on the fulfilment of so-called super milestones on judicial independence. My colleague Reynders will elaborate more on this.

Didier Reynders, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, on 3 May, after intense discussions between Hungary and the Commission, the Hungarian Parliament passed an omnibus law. That law gives new powers to the National Judicial Council, reformed the functioning of the Supreme Court, limits the role of the Constitutional Court and removes the possibility for the Supreme Court to review preliminary references to the Court of Justice. These reforms seek to fulfil the four milestones relating to judicial independence of the Hungarian recovery and resilience plan and are an important step in the right direction.

This is, however, not the end of the process. It is for Hungary to still prepare the accompanying implementation steps foreseen in the plan. As with all Member States, the formal assessment by the Commission under the Recovery and Resilience Facility will only be made when Hungary will submit its first payment request regarding the milestones and targets of the first instalment, including all the super milestones as set out in the agreed plan.

As regards the horizontal enabling condition on the Charter of Fundamental Rights applicable to cohesion funds, it will be considered fulfilled – as regards the deficiencies in judicial independence – once Hungary has taken all the measures on the judiciary to which it has committed under its recovery and resilience plan and after the Commission has positively assessed their implementation.

Let me also note that despite a country-specific recommendation in the context of the 2020 European Semester, interference with business activities and the stability of the regulatory environment continues. On 24 May, the Commission proposed that the Council adopt a new country-specific recommendation for Hungary to avoid selective and arbitrary administrative interventions and the use of tailor-made legislation providing undue advantage or disadvantage to specific companies. We have also proposed the Council to recommend reducing the use of emergency measures to what is strictly necessary in line with the principles of the single market and of the rule of law. These issues were also raised yesterday in the General Affairs Council during the sixth hearing of Hungary under the Article 7 procedure initiated by the European Parliament.

The Commission's assessment of the rule-of-law situation in Hungary is clearly set out in our annual rule-of-law reports. This year's report will be adopted in July. You can be certain that the Commission remains fully committed to ensure the respect for the rule of law in Hungary as the unprecedented budgetary measures taken clearly show. We will continue our discussions with the Hungarian authorities to ensure that all the necessary reforms are implemented, to meet all the different criteria applicable under the different instruments at stake. Of course I will, with my colleague, listen very attentively to your remarks and we thank you for your attention.

Petri Sarvamaa, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Mr President, dear Commissioners, *kära svenska ordförandeskapet*, colleagues. It is important to note that the primary purpose of the conditionality regulation and this resolution is not to bully any Member State. The existing conditionality regulation serves actually as the best preventive measure in place.

Two weeks ago, the Budgetary Control Committee of this House conducted a fact-finding mission in Hungary. The message of this crucial mission was clear: EU funds must be distributed to Hungarian citizens and the economy in a fair and unbiased manner and in accordance with the protection of the Union budget. During this mission, our delegation uncovered various shortcomings, including issues with public procurement concerns regarding the effectiveness of the State Audit Office, discriminatory measures against certain businesses, etc. For example, sudden changes – as the Commissioner mentioned – to laws and to the budgetary process are clear evidence of still breaching the rule of law, especially when it comes to legal certainty in Hungary.

So, dear Members, in these unprecedented times, it is imperative that the Council is led by a country capable of strong collaboration among Member States in decision making, particularly on critical matters such as sanctions against Russia or support for Ukraine. We will therefore keep a close eye on how the rule of law situation on the ground in Hungary develops in the coming months and going into next year.

Thijs Reuten, *namens de S&D-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, commissaris, minister, collega's, vorige week bezocht ik het Hongaarse parlement in Boedapest. Prachtig gebouw. En toch was ik verdrietig. Het is een parlement in een autocratisch land waar oppositiepolitici niet eens hun werk kunnen doen, niet aan het woord komen in de door Orbán gecontroleerde media.

En de Hongaarse premier denkt dat hij de EU als pinautomaat kan gebruiken, terwijl hij ondertussen de Hongaren beknot en geld in eigen zak steekt. Met minimale inzet hoopt hij nu een maximale hoeveelheid Europees geld vrij te spelen. Maar zo werkt het niet. Pas ná echte blijvende hervorming kan er weer geld naar Boedapest. De ongegronde noodtoestand in Hongarije is genoeg bewijs dat dit absoluut nog niet het geval is.

En ook is helder dat een regering met een premier die flirt met Poetin en zomaar op het vliegtuig naar Moskou kan stappen, dikke vrienden is met Vučić en Dodik, volstrekt ongeschikt is om het EU-voorzitterschap te vervullen. Dat moeten we voorkomen.

In Boedapest sprak ik studenten, activisten, die voor hun rechten blijven strijden. Maar ze worden steeds moedelozer. In een Hongarije onder Orbán's volledige controle is de EU – zijn wij – hun laatste hoop. Daarom roep ik de Commissie en de Raad op: trap niet opnieuw in de val van Orbán, zet eindelijk echte stappen in de artikel 7-procedure, doe alles binnen je macht om Hongarije een democratische toekomst te bieden.

Sophia in 't Veld, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, colleagues, Commissioner, the reason for today's debate was concerning and irritating signals that the Commission, Commissioner Hahn, was close to a deal with the Orbán government. However, I think we should make it very clear that there is no deal, because there are no negotiations. There is an assessment of the compliance with the criteria, which incidentally concern the rule of law and not accountability. So let us stop spreading rumours and issuing signals that there is a deal forthcoming.

With regard to the presidency, the Member States themselves decide on the Council Presidency, obviously, but as usual they have not dared to take any steps because the European Council is the place where the rule of law goes to die.

But this House decides if and how to cooperate with the Council Presidency. I suggest that we strip the presidency to the bone. No glitter and glamour. We shall not provide Orbán with a podium for his propaganda. Instead, we should give a podium to those Hungarians who have been silenced by Orbán – NGOs, independent media and academics.

Colleagues, let us make it the EU Presidency of the Hungarian people and not the Presidency of Orbán!

Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, the Hungarian Government has pushed through new legislation asking citizens to report activities that go against the Hungarian way of life – in other words, anything that does not conform with the official Hungarian Government's narrative on the rule of marriage, the traditional family or the illiberal democracy. The wording in this legislation was withdrawn this Friday after two months of pressure, coming notably from this Parliament.

But let us reflect on what was at stake. A society based on generalised surveillance, where you are encouraged to spy on your neighbours, your colleagues, your friends, and then to denounce them for their personal thoughts or their love life. A new step on the path towards authoritarianism. A society of constant fear, the end of freedom of expression, the end of privacy.

This is the world the Hungarian Government wants us all to live in – a parallel world inspired by Vladimir Putin, where minority rights are not protected, where rainbow families are unlawful, where the Russian war in Ukraine is not recognised, where European values and the definition of democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights are denied, and where disinformation about what the European Union does is on billboards and in official speeches nearly every day.

Should we let the Hungarian Government set the agenda of the EU for six months when they themselves say they do not respect what we are and what we stand for? What the European Parliament is asking for is only to start the conversation about this crucial issue.

Jadwiga Wiśniewska, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Po raz kolejny dyskutujemy o Węgrzech i dlatego też po raz kolejny chciałabym zwrócić się do Komisji Europejskiej, żeby nie przekraczała uprawnień, do których została powołana. Jeśli chodzi zaś o samą rezolucję, to chciałabym zwrócić uwagę, że stanowisko EKR w tej kwestii jest jasne. Nie zgadzamy się na rozszerzanie kompetencji instytucji unijnych. Z tego względu złożyłam kilka poprawek.

W pierwszej wzywam do odrzucenia politycznie motywowanych ataków i szantażu finansowego i jednocześnie podkreślam konieczność przestrzegania kompetencji i równego traktowania wszystkich państw członkowskich. W drugiej przypominam o ograniczonych kompetencjach instytucji unijnych w zakresie ochrony wartości i podkreślam, że wypłata funduszy unijnych nie może być uzależniona od zmian w obszarach wyłącznych kompetencji państw członkowskich. W trzeciej z kolei wzywam Radę do zakończenia trwającej procedury z art. 7, ponieważ nie przynosi ona żadnych rezultatów.

Ponadto uważam, że dyskusja o odebraniu Węgrom prezydencji jest absolutnie niestosowna i nie na miejscu, i nie będzie dobrze służyła Unii Europejskiej.

Jean-Paul Garraud, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Monsieur le Président, face à la résistance de la Hongrie pour préserver sa souveraineté et face à toutes vos tentatives pour la contraindre de l'abandonner, cette résolution exige en fait que la Hongrie n'exerce pas la présidence du Conseil de l'Union européenne en juillet 2024, comme cela est pourtant prévu par les traités. C'est cela le véritable objectif de cette résolution. Nous étions habitués au chantage financier de Bruxelles vis-à-vis des États refusant ses politiques immigrationnistes, sociétales et va-t-en guerre, mais cette nouvelle initiative consiste littéralement à bafouer l'esprit des traités et à humilier la Hongrie et son peuple.

Je note au passage qu'en soutenant le dépôt de ce texte, les eurodéputés du parti français «Les Républicains» démontrent qu'ils sont tout, sauf des gaullistes. En fin de compte, l'Union européenne, qui s'autoproclame défenseur des traités, se prépare à ne pas les respecter quand l'orientation politique du pays en cause ne lui convient pas. Ce comportement de type totalitaire n'est plus supportable, et les Européens l'ont encore fait savoir dimanche dernier en Espagne. Bruxelles devrait faire son propre examen de conscience, nous allons l'y aider en 2024 avec les futures élections européennes.

Malin Björk, *för The Left-gruppen*. – Herr talman! Det har nu gått flera år sedan rådet startade artikel 7-förfarandet mot Ungern, och sedan dess har situationen för demokrati, rättsstat och mänskliga rättigheter förvärrats.

Ungern är inte längre en fullvärdig demokrati, och EU har därför strypt EU-pengar till landet. Det är välkommet. Men runt hörnet står nu ett ungerskt EU-ordförandeskap. Och alla vet att det är djupt olämpligt att Ungern och Orbáns regim får hålla i den där EU-ordförandeklubban. De hotar demokrati, de hotar rättsstat, de hotar mänskliga rättigheter, de hotar domstolarna, medierna. Dessutom är Orbán också Putins bästa vän i EU. Man kan till och med tala om en riktig "bromance".

Så rådet: Det räcker inte med de här talespunkterna ni håller er till. Ni måste agera. Vad kommer ni att göra för att förhindra att Orbán sitter där med ordförandeklubban när hösten 2024 kommer? Och vad kommer ni i kommissionen att göra för att stötta rådet i det beslutet?

Márton Gyöngyösi (NI). – Elnök Úr! Megértem az európai adófizetők felháborodását, amikor azt látják, hogy a Magyarországra küldött támogatásokat az Orbán rendszer szétlopja. Azt is megértem, hogy nem akarják Orbán oligarcháit pénzelni, de képviselőtársaim, ne tegyünk úgy, mintha ez a rendszer tegnap alakult volna ki. Magyarországon 13 éve ugyanaz folyik, és ezt éveken keresztül az EU finanszírozta. Most pedig, amikor elégük van Orbánból, azokat a magyar embereket büntetik meg, akiknek az országában EU-s pénzből épült ki egy antidemokratikus rezsim.

Orbán azt akarja elhitetni, hogy ő maga egyenlő Magyarországgal. Ha megvonják a pénzeket, megint neki hisznek. De el kell mondjam, hogy létezik egy normális Magyarország is. Önkormányzatok, civil szervezetek, dolgozó emberek képviselik. Juttassák el a nekik járó forrásokat közvetlenül, ne vonják be az Orbán kormányt, és ne adjanak neki támogatást. Támogassák a magyar embereket, mert a támogatás nekik jár!

Isabel Wiseler-Lima (PPE). – Monsieur le Président, en 2017, le Parlement européen déclenche la procédure de l'article 7 à l'encontre de la Hongrie. Depuis lors, l'état de droit en Hongrie n'a cessé de se détériorer. Le gouvernement de Viktor Orbán se permet aujourd'hui de légiférer par décrets et de passer des lois, de nuit, sans que le Parlement ait son mot à dire. Nous avons une conception différente de la démocratie. Nous présentons en plénière une résolution relevant pour la énième fois d'anciens, mais également de nouveaux, manquements du gouvernement hongrois à l'égard de l'état de droit et réaffirmons notre détermination à protéger le budget de l'Union.

De plus, nous attirons l'attention du Conseil sur le fait que la Hongrie doit reprendre la présidence de l'Union européenne à partir de juillet 2024. C'est le moment où un nouveau Parlement commencera ses travaux après les élections européennes. Ce sera également le semestre où une nouvelle Commission sera nommée. C'est donc un moment particulièrement important de la législature.

Aussi, les auteurs de cette résolution tiennent-ils à exprimer leur profonde inquiétude, car les déclarations que Viktor Orbán a pu faire sur l'Union européenne, mais aussi les visites officielles qu'il pourrait être amené à décider, ou les personnages qu'il pourrait décider de recevoir lors d'une présidence hongroise, pourraient poser de vrais problèmes de crédibilité pour l'Union européenne.

Nous respectons les traités. Il ne nous revient pas de dire au Conseil ce qu'il a à décider en la circonstance. Toutefois, il est de notre devoir de rendre le Conseil attentif à nos préoccupations plus que justifiées, et de lui demander d'agir. Et il y a urgence. L'article 7 donne une large marge de manœuvre au Conseil, encore faut-il qu'il agisse.

Eider Gardiazabal Rubial (S&D). – Señor presidente, señor comisario, señor ministro, el contexto económico y político en Hungría, desde luego, no es nada bueno y esto, en parte, es consecuencia directa de las acciones y omisiones del Gobierno de Orbán.

La Unión Europea tiene unas reglas y, sobre todo, más que eso, tiene unos principios y unos valores de los que nos sentimos muy orgullosos. Si estos se respetan, estamos en una situación ganadora: gana el país y gana la Unión Europea en su conjunto. Pero si no, quienes pierden sobre todo son los ciudadanos húngaros, porque viven en un país que no respeta los derechos fundamentales, la libertad de expresión, no respeta las minorías, la libertad de prensa o la independencia de la justicia; y también pierde el país en su conjunto porque no puede desplegar los fondos Next Generation EU como lo estamos haciendo el resto de los países de la Unión Europea. Y también pierde el Gobierno, porque no se le van a reembolsar los proyectos europeos ya realizados.

La situación en Hungría es así de cruda y así de triste. La solución es que el Gobierno de Orbán rectifique y ponga en marcha todas las medidas pactadas, porque aquí no vamos a dar ni un paso atrás en la defensa del Estado de Derecho.

Moritz Körner (Renew). – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, sehr geehrte Kommissare! Heute ist Viktor Orbáns Geburtstag, aber wir machen ihm kein Geldgeschenk. Denn die Kommissare haben gerade sehr deutlich gemacht: Die entsprechenden Meilensteine sind nicht erreicht, und deswegen kann auch noch kein Geld fließen. Aber wir haben in unserer Entschließung auch darauf hingewiesen – und ehrlich gesagt bin ich entsetzt, dass wir als Parlament darauf hinweisen müssen und nicht die Institution selber, der Rat –, dass ein Mitgliedstaat, gegen den ein Verfahren nach Artikel 7 läuft, gegen den ein Rechtsstaatsverfahren läuft, bei dem die Gelder zurückgehalten werden, dass dieses Land nicht fit ist, tatsächlich im nächsten Jahr die Ratspräsidentschaft zu übernehmen.

Das wäre tatsächlich, als würde man den Schulhofschläger zum Schuldirektor wählen. Das kann es doch nicht sein. Natürlich muss der Rat hier eine Lösung finden. Es kann zum Beispiel auch sein, dass man die Rechtsstaatsfragen aus der Ratspräsidentschaft herausnimmt. Das ist rechtlich möglich, das ist das Minimum, was man eigentlich erwarten kann. Denn wenn Viktor Orbán mit uns – ich will mit diesem Autokraten nicht über Grundrechte verhandeln –, wenn Viktor Orbán mit uns in Europa über Grundrechte verhandeln würde, dann würden wir wirklich den Bock zum Gärtner machen, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen!

Aber ich will hier auch ganz deutlich sagen, dass der Rat erkennen muss: Es geht darum, endlich zu sehen, dass wir es nicht mehr mit einem normalen Mitgliedstaat und einem demokratischen Staat zu tun haben. Wir als Parlament werden das auf jeden Fall nicht akzeptieren. Wir werden die entsprechenden Maßnahmen ergreifen, wenn der Rat entsprechend nicht bereit ist, das zu ändern. Wir werden dann tatsächlich nicht mit Viktor Orbán über Grundrechte verhandeln.

Daniel Freund (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident! Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Wir waren vor anderthalb Wochen noch einmal mit einer Mission des Haushaltskontrollausschusses in Ungarn vor Ort. Wir haben uns vor Ort angesehen und mit vielen Menschen darüber gesprochen: Wie ist denn nun die Situation?

Seit neun Monaten gibt es ein großes Paket, 27 super Meilensteine, die zwischen der ungarischen Regierung und der Europäischen Kommission ausgemacht wurden. Und wie ist jetzt der Stand? Was hat sich bewegt? Und Sie, Herr Hahn, Sie waren ja bei uns im Ausschuss vorige Woche und haben gesagt, dass es seit Dezember keinen einzigen Fortschritt gegeben hat. Es hat keine Notifizierung der ungarischen Regierung gegeben, und damit ist in dieser ganzen Zeit nicht ein weiterer Meilenstein erfüllt worden. Und das ist auch das Bild, das wir vor Ort gesehen haben, dass es sich nicht in die richtige Richtung entwickelt, dass wir in einigen Bereichen sogar sehen, dass sich die Situation weiter verschlimmert.

Jetzt soll in dieser Situation Viktor Orbán am Tag nach der Europawahl die Ratspräsidentschaft übernehmen. Und da muss ich doch fragen: Wie soll denn das eigentlich funktionieren? Wie soll denn ein Land, das per Dekret regiert wird, wo man nicht die Zeit hat, auf das Parlament zuzugehen und im normalen demokratischen Prozess zu regieren, wie sollen die jetzt in so einer entscheidenden Phase noch die Ratspräsidentschaft zusätzlich machen? Das kann nicht sein, damit muss sich der Rat auseinandersetzen.

Patryk Jaki (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzu ! Otóż jestem przeciwny współpracy Węgier z Rosją. Jednak gdyby sądzić za to, to wielu z Was dostałoby najwyższe wyroki, z niemieckim i francuskim rządem na czele. Więc o co tak naprawdę chodzi? Mówicie, że Orbán przejmuje wpływy w mediach, na uniwersytetach, w kulturze, w wymiarze sprawiedliwości i to jest złe. A dlaczego? Bo przejmuje je od Was, od tego, co zostało po lewicowych rządach i jest powszechne w większości lewicowo-liberalnych państw w Europie. Więc zakazujecie mu praktyk, które sami do bólu stosujecie. Wszystko, co nie jest waszymi ideami, jest łamaniem praworządności. Inne poglądy są mową nienawiści. Obrona dzieci w szkołach przed praktykami, które tak doskonale zbadała i opisała w swojej książce ideowo przeciwieństwa wasza dziennikarka Abigail Shrier, jest sprzeczna z wartościami europejskimi. Czyli obrona dzieci jest sprzeczna z wartościami europejskimi.

I w końcu musimy sobie zadać pytanie. Co to jest w ogóle za demokracja, gdzie nie Orbánowi, ale Węgrom możecie narzucić wszystko wbrew ich woli. Bo bardzo dobrze wiecie, że większość społeczeństwa węgierskiego popiera politykę Orbána. To chcecie być komisarzami, którzy za Węgrów będą robić wszystko, co sobie wymyślicie? To nie jest demokracja, to jest dyktatura.

Joachim Kuhs (ID). – Herr Präsident! Meine Damen und Herren! Seien wir doch mal ehrlich: Wenn in diesem Haus vom Rechtsstaatsprinzip gesprochen wird, dann denken doch die meisten von Ihnen automatisch an Ungarn und Polen – kommt ja heute auch noch dran – und wie wir sie noch effektiver sanktionieren können.

Dabei geht es doch, wenn es um das Rechtsstaatsprinzip geht, in erster Linie darum, dass wir es sind, die unsere Bürger zum Beispiel experimentellen Impfstoffen ausgesetzt haben, die Frau von der Leyen in dubiosen Geschäften besorgt haben soll. Wir sind es doch, die aufgrund des Green-Deal-Wahnsinns dafür sorgen, dass Energie und Lebensmittel unerschwinglich werden. Wir sind es doch, die unter dem Vorwand der Bekämpfung von Desinformation unsere Meinungs- und Pressefreiheit gefährden und mit der Gender-Agenda unsere traditionelle Lebensweise aufs Spiel setzen.

Der einzige Mann in der EU, der zu all dem Nein sagt und der versucht, das Wohl seines eigenen Volkes zu mehren und die wahren europäischen und christlichen Werte zu verteidigen, der wird von Ihnen angegriffen. Das ist einfach nur noch heuchlerisch.

Balázs Hidvéghi (NI). – Elnök Úr! Lássuk be, ez a ház mára néhány szélsőséges, kontrollt vesztett képviselő foglyává vált, akik éjt nappallá téve Magyarországot támadják. Az európaiság és jogállamiság úgynevezett bajnokai most éppen a tanácsi elnökséget akarják elvenni Magyarországtól. Mindezzel azonban pont maguk azok, akik durván megsértik az uniós jogot és a Szerződést. Ha van jogállamisági és egyébként korrupciós probléma, az itt van Brüsszelben és nem Budapesten.

Mindebben újra lelkesen részt vesznek a magyar baloldali EP képviselők. Szégyen, képviselőtársaim, hogy miközben otthon sorra elveszítik a választásokat, itt azért áskálódnak, hogy a magyar emberek ne jussanak hozzá a nekik jogosan járó forrásokhoz. Maguknak nem tetszik, hogy Magyarország a saját útján jár, és mer nemet mondani Brüsszelnek, ha egy javaslat helytelen vagy káros. Nem tetszik maguknak, hogy nemet mondunk a migrációra, hogy ragaszkodunk a saját kultúránkhoz, hogy védjük a gyerekeket és a hagyományos családmódot, és nem tetszik maguknak, hogy a békéről beszélünk. De értsék meg végre: a magyar egy szabad és független nemzet, amely maga dönt a saját útjáról. Az Európai Parlament pedig nem felettes szerve az országnak.

Paulo Rangel (PPE). – Mr President, Council, dear Commissioners, we know that being part of the European project means respect for our core set of values, democracy, the rule of law, fundamental rights. They are not negotiable, and all Member States have voluntarily committed themselves to these values when they joined the EU. So being part of the European Union is not a cherry-picking exercise.

I have to say that the behaviour of the Hungarian Government is not an option, is totally against our values, and we have to blame the Council because the Council has the tools to avoid what is taking place now. We activated Article 7. If they were under Article 7, we could avoid a lot of deterioration of the situation that we are now finding is worse and worse.

I really have to say, and have to ask Mr Orbán in Budapest, where is the fighter for freedom of the late 1980s? He fought for freedom against communism to bring Hungary to a kind of authoritarian and dictatorship regime? It is unthinkable that someone that in his youth was fighting for the rule of law and democracy is today the bad example in the European Union that we have really to condemn.

I urge the Commission not to give funds to Hungary!

Lara Wolters (S&D). – Voorzitter, het is en blijft een zorgenkindje en een hoofdpijndossier. Twee weken terug was ik met een onderzoekscommissie van het Europees Parlement in Hongarije en opnieuw werden daar onze zorgen over de democratie en systematische corruptie bevestigd. Journalisten, ngo's en de oppositie vertelden ons hoe ze willens en wetens worden tegengewerkt door Viktor Orbán's regering. Bedrijven worden onder druk gezet om zich te laten uitkopen en meneer Orbán deelt nog steeds lucratieve contracten uit aan zijn vriendjes. Daarnaast riep hij al meer dan een jaar geleden de noodtoestand uit, zodat hij met decreten kan regeren. Met recht dus, dat onder druk van het Europees Parlement de Europese geldkraan dichtgedraaid is.

En de Hongaarse regering beweert nu dat ze hervormingen tegen corruptie doorvoert. Niets wijst daar echt op. En ook als hervormingen wel ingevoerd worden, dan kan de Hongaarse regering nieuwe regels zo weer terugdraaien. De boodschap van het Parlement moge duidelijk zijn vandaag. Wij laten ons niet met een kluitje in het riet sturen. Europa onderhandelt niet met dictators. En aan de Raad en aan de Commissie: neem geen genoegen met loze beloftes of half werk, hou de hand op de knip totdat er echt vooruitgang is.

Anna Júlia Donáth (Renew). – Elnök Úr! A magyar kormány hosszú ideje nem hajlandó betartani az Európai Unió játékszabályait. Ezzel az egész magyar nemzetnek súlyos károkat okoznak, hiszen ennek következtében most már lassan egy éve nem érkeznek újabb uniós források Magyarországra. Bizonyára hallottak róla, hogy az elmúlt hónapokban sorozatosan történnek diák- és tanártüntetések Magyarországon, a kormány oktatásellenes politikájának következményeként. A magyar oktatás súlyos válságban van. Akkora a baj, hogy véleményem szerint ez már sérti a magyar diákoknak az Alapjogi Chartában meghatározott oktatáshoz való jogát is, és emellett a Bizottság sem mehet el.

Ezért fordulok most a Bizottsághoz, és kérem, hogy az EU-s pénzekért cserébe követelje meg a magyar kormánytól a pedagógusokat rabszolgasorba taszító státustörvény azonnali eltörlését, a pedagógusok 50 százalékos béremelését és a magyar oktatás átfogó reformjának megkezdését, a tanárok és a diákok érdemi bevonásával. Azt kérem az Európai Bizottságtól, hogy a meglévő jogállamisági feltételeken túl kösse a magyar oktatás reformjához az uniós pénzek kifizetését. Az EU-s pénzek nélkül nincs jövője a magyar gazdaságnak. A magyar oktatás válságának megoldása nélkül viszont nincs jövője Magyarországnak.

Ezért bízom benne, hogy ha már az oktatás és Magyarország jövője nem is érdekli a magyar kormányt, az EU-s pénzek hazahozatalának érdekében hajlandó lesz végre tenni az oktatási válság megállításának érdekében. Habár tegyük hozzá, hogy az EU-s források hazahozatalának egyedüli akadálya és okozója a magyar kormány saját maga.

Gerolf Annemans (ID). – Voorzitter, of een Europese samenwerking ooit in oorsprong bedoeld is geweest om ook een of ander maatschappijmodel aan de lidstaten op te leggen, daar hoeft zelfs geen discussie over te bestaan. Neen, dat was niet de bedoeling van de Europese samenwerking. De bedoeling was meer stabiliteit en welvaart te brengen, en dan nog heel terughoudend. Een eenheid in verscheidenheid moest het worden. Want in die Europese verscheidenheid zat juist de kracht van wat als geheel een superieure beschaving had opgeleverd, met een sociale en welvarende economie erbovenop.

Nu Hongarije willen uitsluiten van het beurtsysteem om de Raad te kunnen voorzitten, getuigt van een welhaast neo-communistische en centralistische arrogantie, ten aanzien van een land nog wel dat als eerste de stappen heeft gezet om zich te bevrijden van de Sovjet-Unie, waarin wij als West-Europeanen heel Oost-Europa uit lafheid hebben achtergelaten na de Wereldoorlog.

Afschuw heb ik voor dit voorstel.

Miroslav Radačovský (NI). – Vážený pán predsedajúci, neposlušný Orbán, neposlušné Maďarsko.

V roku 1960 v Kongu bol demokraticky zvolený prvý premiér Patrice Lumumba. Bol neposlušný. Chcel nadviazať vzťahy so Sovietskym zväzom. Za pomoci CIA, Francúzska a Belgicka bol zavraždený a rozpustený v kyseline sírovej. Bol dosadený diktátor Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu Wa Za Banga, a ten už bol poslušný a vládol v Kongu 30 rokov.

Dnes už máme iné metódy, ako prinútiť Maďarsko, aby bolo poslušné. Odobrať rotujúce predsedníctvo a zmraziť finančné prostriedky. Ale v princípe je to to isté. Rozpustiť pána Orbána a stranu Fidesz v kyseline sírovej a dosadiť tam svojho poslušného diktátora.

Prajem pánu Orbánovi z príležitosti jeho dnešných 60-tych narodenín veľa šťastia a zdravia.

Monika Hohlmeier (PPE). – Herr Präsident, meine Herren Kommissare, lieber Herr Minister, liebe Ratspräsidentschaft, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Lassen Sie mich zu Anfang sagen: Jeder von uns wünscht sich, dass das Geld so rasch wie möglich den Ungarinnen und Ungarn zur Verfügung gestellt wird und ihnen hilft, sich wirtschaftlich aufzubauen und weiterzuentwickeln. Dazu muss es aber möglich sein, dass alle denselben Zugang dazu haben, dass alle Nichtregierungsorganisationen, alle Unternehmen, alle die Möglichkeit haben, tatsächlich auch von den Fonds profitieren zu können.

Und um hier eines klar zu sagen: Zur ungarischen Tradition gehört es nicht, dass das Geld größtenteils oder vielfach in kleptokratische Hände fällt. Zur ungarischen Tradition gehört es nicht, dass willkürliche Verordnungen über Nacht erstellt, dass Gerichtsurteile durch Verordnungen wieder aufgehoben, dass sektorenweise bestimmte Unternehmen mit Strafzöllen, mit diskriminatorischen Maßnahmen überzogen werden und dass diejenigen, die sich nicht nach dem Willen verhalten, bis hin zu Besuchen von Geheimpolizei alle möglichen diskriminierenden Maßnahmen über sich ergehen lassen müssen. Das alles gehört nicht zur ungarischen Tradition.

Und ich möchte sehr deutlich sagen, meine Herren Kommissare, dass es für mich wesentlich ist: Wenn Ungarn bereit ist, in Form einer Integritätsbehörde und dem nationalen Richterrat und ähnlichen anderen Maßnahmen das Justizwesen zu normalisieren und rechtsstaatlich zu gestalten, dann ist es aber notwendig, dass nicht per Ausnahmezustand dieselben Gesetze wieder aufgehoben werden können, die uns gegenüber vorher bestätigt worden sind, sobald das Geld angekommen ist.

Csaba Molnár (S&D). – Elnök Úr! Azt tudom, hogy Önök mit gondolnak arról a kormányról, amely az európai uniós támogatásokat a saját polgárai elől ellopja. De hadd mondjam el Önöknek, hogy mit élnek át a magyarok ez alatt a kormányzás alatt, hogy hova vezetett a demokrácia és a jogállam leépítése és a tömeges korrupció a hétköznapi életben is. Magyarország, az egykori sikerország, ma azt éli meg, hogy a fizetések az országban az európai uniós rangsorban az utolsó előtti helyre csúsztak vissza.

A magyarok ma azt élik meg, hogy miközben az Unióban az átlagos infláció 8 százalék volt, akkor nálunk 26 százalék. A magyarok azt élik meg, hogy az élelmiszerek áremelkedése az 50 százalékot is meghaladta. Hogy pár éve a magyar nyugdíjak még a bérek több mint kétharmadát érték, most pedig kevesebb mint a felét érik. Hogy nálunk halnak meg legtöbben rákban, hogy nálunk jelentősen csökkent az iskolába járó gyerekeknek az aránya.

Az orbáni, diktatórikus hatalomgyakorlás az Európa-rekord orbáni inflációhoz vezetett. A jogállam leépítése a fizetések és a nyugdíjak értékvesztését is elhozta. A szabadság csorbítása az oktatás és az egészségügy leépülésével járt kéz a kézben. Szolgáljon ez mindenki tanulságára Európában, mert az önkényurak jól ismerik a sorrendet. Először elveszik az emberek szabadságát, és amikor az emberek már szabadságjogok híján nem tudják megvédeni magukat, akkor elveszik az emberek jólétét is. Ez történik ma az orbáni Magyarországon.

VORSITZ: RAINER WIELAND

Vizepräsident

Ramona Strugariu (Renew). – Mr President, ‘no teachers, no future’ said one of the banners from the widespread protests that took place in Hungary last fall, asking for a reform of the education system and respect for teachers’ social rights. The response of the government was to rush through a draft bill that suffocates academic freedom in the country and punishes teachers for their courage to speak up.

Nearly 5 000 teachers have warned that they will quit if the so-called ‘Status Law’ is passed – a move that would put the Hungarian education system at risk of collapse. The bill also reduces teachers’ right to protest and bans public criticism of the school system. At the beginning of the month, teachers and students protesting the draft law were teargassed in the heart of Europe.

Will we sit and watch, or are we going to finally act? Are we ready to prepare a glorious Presidency of the Council for Mr Orbán and his team? Mr Orbán, just to be clear, you are responsible for denying your own citizens the benefits of the EU: money, rights and freedoms.

Teachers, businesses, students, people who are losing their jobs right now – you answer to them why you want to isolate their country and humiliate them!

(The President cut off the speaker)

Milan Uhrík (NI). – Vážený pán predsedajúci, kolegovia, celá táto debata mi príde trošku bizarná. Na jednej strane chcete odobrať Maďarsku hlasovacie právomoci a eurofondy, lebo údajne nedodržia nejaké európske hodnoty, a na druhej strane oficiálne zástupca Európskej komisie na Slovenskum, istý pán Šucha, nedávno vynadal a označil všetkých Slovákov, že sú geneticky menejcenní, lebo nechcú akceptovať rodové kvóty z Bruselu, a to nikomu nevádi. Ten človek tam naďalej sedí, akoby sa nič nedialo.

A ja sa pýtam, čo toto znamená ? O čom toto svedčí? To je teraz ako nejaký nový spôsob komunikácie Európskej únie s členskými štátmi a s občanmi? Každý, kto nebude súhlasiť s Bruselom, bude označený za geneticky menejcenného a budú mu odobraté hlasovacie práva a eurofondy, alebo možnosť nejakého predsedníctva?

Vy tu v Bruseli idete rozprávať niečo o právnom štáte a demokracii? Nikto v Európe, nikto v Európe nemá k totalite bližšie ako práve táto liberálna progresívna ľavicová tu v Bruseli. A pevne dúfam, že voliči to v nasledujúcich voľbách týmto ľuďom všetkým spočítajú.

György Hölvényi (PPE). – Elnök Úr! Egy egész ország és tízmillió uniós polgár ellehetetlenítése egyszerűen semmilyen módon nem lehet politikai cél. Ez az állásfoglalási indítvány, ha közvetetten is, erre tesz kísérletet. Radikális módon beleszól a magyar kormány és az Európai Bizottság közötti tárgyalási folyamatba, ezzel a konstruktív párbeszédet és az elért kompromisszumokat utasítja el. Az igazi gátlástalan politikai cinizmus, hogy az előrelépések ellenére mégis azt követelik, hogy Magyarország semmiképp, semmi körülmények között ne kapja meg az uniós forrásokat. Külön tragédia persze, hogy ebben a politikai mélyrepülésben magyar társakra találtak.

Sőt, azt is megkérdőjelezzik, hogy Magyarország képes-e ellátni a 2024-es elnökségi feladatokat, ezzel a Tanács intézményi rendszerét is támadják. Milyen szerencse, hogy a hatáskör hiánya miatt erről nem az Európai Parlament dönt. A tervezet mindenfajta bizalomépítés lehetőségét tovább nehezíti, szinte lehetetlenné teszi. Úgy tűnik, mindig vannak politikusok, akik Magyarországot használják fel politikai elismertségük növelésére, és itt mondhatjuk úgy, hogy valótlanságokat állítanak. Mekkora a józanság a Tisztelt Házban az egyre kirekesztőbb, a párbeszédet elutasító őrülettel szemben? Mert őrületről van szó. Igazából itt ma ez a kérdés. Erre kell megoldást találni, Hölgyeim és Uraim! Magyarország eddig is sok mindent kibírt, és ezt is ki fogja bírni!

Valérie Hayer (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Ministre, Messieurs les Commissaires, chers collègues, depuis plusieurs années, Viktor Orbán détricote les institutions démocratiques de son pays. Il conspu, attaque, et bloque l'Union européenne. Il bloque la taxation des multinationales. Il bloque toute avancée en matière migratoire. Il prend l'Ukraine en otage. Il se montre complaisant à l'égard de Moscou. Il ne respecte plus le droit européen. Il en appelle même à démanteler le Parlement européen, la seule institution dont les représentants sont directement élus par le peuple.

Bref, Viktor Orbán ne montre aucun signe d'aptitude à présider le Conseil, à parler au nom des 27 États membres, alors que ce rôle requiert impartialité et volonté, mais aussi, bien sûr, le respect de nos valeurs. C'est pourquoi les États doivent se montrer responsables, intransigeants, et empêcher l'illibéralisme de s'étendre à l'ensemble de l'Union européenne.

Jérôme Rivière (NI). – Monsieur le Président, cette assemblée devrait retrouver ce que Pascal appelait «l'esprit de finesse». Il a ses principes, écrivait-il, dans l'usage commun et devant les yeux de tout le monde. Ces principes, on les voit à peine, on les sent plutôt qu'on ne les voit. On a des peines infinies à les faire sentir à ceux qui ne les sentent pas d'eux-mêmes. Clairement, ici, dans cette assemblée, cet esprit de finesse, vous ne le sentez pas.

Érigeant de façon arbitraire et arrogante de pseudo-valeurs communes en axiomes, vous tentez d'imposer un État souverain, dont le gouvernement et le président ont été démocratiquement élus, des réformes et des politiques dont le peuple hongrois ne veut pas. Ce faisant, vous donnez chaque jour plus d'arguments à ceux qu'insupporte le fonctionnement autocratique et brutal de cette Union européenne.

Cette mandature aura vu la sortie du Royaume-Uni. Ces débats incongrus préparent une sécession plus large encore pour résister à vos ingérences injustifiées. Comme l'a dit Judit Varga, la ministre hongroise de la Justice, cette discussion est insensée. Votre pression politique est illégitime et inconvenante. En bafouant les droits de la Hongrie, vous dévoilez le véritable visage de l'UE: celui d'une institution à la dérive, s'éloignant des principes démocratiques, méprisant les peuples, cherchant à imposer une idéologie à tout prix.

Clara Ponsatí Obiols (NI). – Mr President, it is certainly a problem that the EU Presidency is occupied by a government that is democratic only in name – a country that puts dissidents in jail, spies and represses political opponents, prosecutes its minorities and savagely violates immigrants' human rights. Such a country should never preside the Council.

Beyond Hungary, this applies to Spain. It would be a shame to have Pedro Sánchez presiding the Union starting in July. It is also true that the Council has long neglected its obligations to protect the rule of law in Hungary, and the situation is only getting worse. Thus, we wholeheartedly support this Parliament's call for action in the matter.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señor presidente, Estado de Derecho en Polonia. Este Parlamento Europeo adoptó su primera Resolución nada menos que en 2016; en ella exigía la activación del procedimiento extraordinario de sanción contemplado en el artículo 7 del Tratado de la Unión Europea ante la constatación de un riesgo claro de violación grave de los valores comunes del Estado de Derecho, la democracia y los derechos fundamentales.

Desde entonces, he perdido la cuenta del número de resoluciones adoptadas por este Parlamento Europeo. Seis audiencias monográficas en el Consejo de Asuntos Generales. Veinticinco hitos clamorosamente incumplidos todavía por el Gobierno de Hungría.

Por tanto, solo caben tres caminos: en lo inmediato, mantener la presión, lo que significa mantener el bloqueo del acceso al Mecanismo de Recuperación y Resiliencia. En lo mediato, hay que estudiar la posibilidad de restringir la agenda de la Presidencia húngara para evitar que aborde asuntos de Estado de Derecho y que, en lugar de cumplir con su responsabilidad, intente disolverla. Pero, en el medio plazo, es responsabilidad de la Comisión difundir una idea de lo que está en juego. Lo que está en juego no es una relación intergubernamental ni interinstitucional entre el Parlamento y el Gobierno, sino la ciudadanía húngara, que debe asumir la responsabilidad de exigir de sus gobernantes el cumplimiento del Estado de Derecho.

Ladislav Ilčić (ECR). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, dio kolega želi očito spriječiti Mađarsku da, prema redu koji joj pripada, preuzme predsjedanje Europskom unijom u srpnju sljedeće godine, a istovremeno se zaklinju u temeljno načelo Europske unije *jedinstvo u različitosti*. To otvara ključno pitanje: koliko ste različitosti vi spremni tolerirati? Znači li ovaj vaš prijedlog da je Mađarska prešla granicu vaše tolerancije, da biste željeli prestati surađivati s Mađarskom ili ju možda čak izbaciti iz Europske unije? Možda onda i Poljsku i koga još?

Sjetite se utemeljitelja Europske zajednice. Oni su znali nadići puno veće razlike, nadići tada još vrlo svježe rane rata, Drugog svjetskog rata, ubijanja, otmiranja teritorija, mnogih zločina. Sve su to nadišli da bi postigli suradnju i mir. A vi niste ni do koljena utemeljiteljima Europske unije koji su, usput da kažem, bili kršćani, praktični vjernici, vi ugrožavate Europsku uniju. Dakle, treba nadići ovu uskurdnost i težiti miru i suradnji.

Beata Mazurek (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Może nam się nie podobać to, co robi Orbán, szczególnie dla Rosji albo z Rosją. Jednak z niepokojem obserwuję nawoływanie do odebrania Węgrom prezydencji w Radzie Unii.

Zapoznajte się z podstawowymi przepisami unijnymi, na podstawie których funkcjonujemy. Parlament Europejski nie ma w tym przedmiocie żadnych kompetencji. Ingerowanie grup politycznych w sprawę wykraczającą poza ich zakres, czyli zakres tych kompetencji, zagraża pewności prawa. Podstawą praworządności jest funkcjonowanie zgodne z procedurami. Komisja Europejska musi przestrzegać przepisów proceduralnych określonych w rozporządzeniu. Nie może ulegać presji politycznej pewnych środowisk, które starają się wpłynąć na instytucję, która z założenia powinna być niezależna. Przestrzegam przed tym bardzo niebezpiecznym precedensem.

Zgodnie z artykułem 8 rozporządzenia Unii Europejskiej, o którym tutaj mówimy – w sprawie ogólnej warunkowości służącej ochronie budżetu Unii – Komisja Europejska ma obowiązek jedynie informować Parlament Europejski o wszelkich proponowanych, przyjętych lub zniesionych środkach. Inne decyzje powodują tak naprawdę eurosceptycyzm wśród państw członkowskich.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Johannes Hahn, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, dear Minister, honourable Members, the ball is in Hungary's court. Hungary must propose further effective remedial measures to solve the outstanding issues. The Commission is taking a constructive approach to make sure that the Union taxpayers' money is protected.

Concerning conditionality, the Commission will continue assessing the implementation of the remedial measures based on what Hungary reports to us and the requirements under the conditionality procedure. When Hungary submits a formal notification, the Commission will start its formal assessment. For the suspicion to be lifted, Hungary needs to implement fully and effectively all the 17 remedial measures agreed under the general conditionality mechanism as it had committed to during the procedure. As long as this is not the case, the budget protection measures adopted by the Council will remain in place.

So we should all want to work towards closing this case as soon as possible. This would mean successfully protecting the Union budget and in that respect I really welcome – and it was repeated today by the Chair of the CONT Committee, Monika Hohlmeier – that also Parliament is in favour to settle this case in a positive way but, of course, based on the conditions which are in place. It is not about saving money, but ensuring that the money is well spent under the guidance that European taxpayers' money is protected.

Therefore, no breaches of the principles of the rule of law should remain and affect the Union budget. The Commission is actively engaged to continue, therefore, working with Hungary constructively to address remaining concerns and protect our taxpayers' money. We want the solution, but again, it takes two to tango to arrive at this point. So thank you again for your continued collaboration.

We share also the interest that Erasmus+ and Horizon funding flows again for those universities that are linked to public interest trusts. But time for Hungary to find adequate solutions is shrinking, I have to repeat myself. We have already informed Hungary of the urgency to proceed accordingly. The Commission remains committed to finding viable solutions, solutions that would adequately and correctly address the issues identified in the Council implementing decision, solutions that bring an end to the breaches of the principles of the rule of law, and solutions that protect, of course, the Union budget. The Commission will also continue monitoring the situation in all Member States and would proceed with procedures where the conditions to apply the Conditionality Regulation are fulfilled.

I would like to close on a positive and forward-looking note. We are applying the Conditionality Regulation to fix problems and protect the budget, so we are keen to find solutions and to support reforms. We should all want to close this case as soon as possible because this means we protect the budget even better. Of course, we can only close it only once the problems identified have been addressed in substance. No breaches of the principles of the rule of law should affect the Union budget. This is the top priority. This is what counts.

Peter Kullgren, *rådets tjänstgörande ordförande*. – Herr talman! Ärade ledamöter, ärade kommissionärer! Tack så mycket för denna debatt och intressanta inlägg. Europaparlamentet spelar som sagt en viktig roll i EU:s rättsstatsarbete. Ordförandeskapet uppskattar ert arbete med att sätta frågor som respekt för rättsstatsprincipen och grundläggande värden högt på agendan.

Som jag nämnde tidigare är respekten för rättsstatsprincipen inte bara avgörande för att vår union ska fungera, den är också en väsentlig förutsättning för att genomföra EU:s budget och för att efterleva principen om sund ekonomisk förvaltning.

I det nuvarande geopolitiska läget är försvaret av våra gemensamma värden och rättsstatsprincipen samt en sund ekonomisk förvaltning av EU:s medel av största vikt. Ni är också flera som har pekat på möjligheten att anta rekommendationer inom ramen för artikel 7-förfarandet. Frågan har ännu inte diskuterats inom rådet, och det är därför för tidigt att uttala sig.

Det är dock viktigt att alltid se över hur de verktyg vi har kan användas så effektivt som möjligt för att bidra till en positiv förändring för rättsstatens principer och EU:s värden. Och vi utesluter ingenting. Det är viktigt att artikel 7 kvarstår på rådets dagordning, och gårdagens sjätte artikel 7-utfrågning om Ungern bevisar återigen att rådet noga övervakar utvecklingen. Vi överväger hela tiden hur rättsstatsverktygen kan användas mest effektivt och proportionerligt.

För att bredda diskussionen om hur vi kan förbättra den befintliga verktygslådan kommer det svenska ordförandeskapet att arrangera ett symposium om demokrati och rättsstatens principer i Stockholm om ungefär en månad. EU-minister Jessika Roswall har bjudit in en lång rad aktörer att delta, bland annat härifrån Europaparlamentet.

Slutligen: Ni är många som har lyft frågan om Ungerns ordförandeskap våren 2024, och jag noterar vad ni har sagt. Att vara ordförande i rådet innebär att företräda rådet, medlemsstaterna, i dess helhet. Ordförandeskapet ställer mycket höga krav på ansvarstagande, att vara en ärlig förhandlare och verka för unionens bästa. Det svenska ordförandeskapet förväntar sig att alla medlemsstater är beredda att axla det stora ansvaret.

Der Präsident. – Die Aussprache ist damit geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung findet am Donnerstag, 1. Juni 2023, statt.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)

Kinga Gál (NI), írásban. – Az Európai Parlament újabb Magyarország-ellenes vitája ugyanannak a politikai boszorkányüldözésnek a hatványra emelt formája, aminek 2013 óta vagyok szemtanúja. Hívták már Tavares, Sargentini, majd Delbos-Corfield-jelentésnek, azóta küzdök a hazánk ellen zajló zsaroláskísérletek ellen.

Ezeknek a kártyavárként épülő gyűlöletkampányoknak hol a migrációellenes álláspontunk, hol a gyermekvédelmi törvényünk, most épp a béke melletti kiállásunk, a háborúellenességünk a kiváltó oka. Ezúttal az uniós finanszírozás megvonásával zsarolnak, és el akarják venni hazánktól a 2024. második félévi uniós elnökséget. Ez példa nélküli és elfogadhatatlan, különös tekintettel arra, hogy az Európai Parlamentnek semmilyen szerepe nincs annak eldöntésében, hogy egy tagállami betöltheti-e az Unió tanácsának soros elnöki pozícióját.

A Magyarországot támadó igaztalan szöveg koncepciós vádirat, ami tartalmi szempontból a korábbiaknál is erőszakosabb és követelőzőbb. Felháborító, hogy az a magyar ellenzék, amely immár negyedjére szenvedett otthon megsemmisítő választási vereséget, nemzetközi kapcsolatrendszerét felhasználva mindent megtesz azért, hogy Magyarországot jogszerűtlen módon megfossza a jogosan járó uniós pénzügyi forrásoktól és immár a soros elnökség betöltésétől. Az Európai Parlament baloldali többsége ismét megbélyegez, és szítja a feszültséget, ideológiai megfontolásból próbálja megakadályozni a jogosan járó uniós források megérkezését és a magyar elnökséget. Ez tiszta politikai zsarolás, ami hosszú távon szétveri az Unió egészét és egységét. A Fidesz európai parlamenti képviselőjeként továbbra is küzdök minden Magyarországot, magyarokat érő támadással szemben.

Enikő Győri (NI), írásban. – A Parlament a mostani állásfoglalásával megzsarolja a Bizottságot és a többi uniós intézményt, hogy egyetlen fillért se folyósítsanak a Magyarországot megillető uniós forrásokból, sőt még a 2024-es uniós elnökségtől is meg akarnak fosztani minket. A képviselők jól tudják, erre semmi jogalapjuk nincs. Ez pusztán egy bosszú, mert Magyarország nemet mond a háborúra, a migrációra és a gender politikára. Az időzítés sem véletlen: Magyarország teljesítette a vállalásait az igazságügyi kérdésekben, a Parlament tehát gyorsan beavatkozik, hogy ne legyen megállapodás. Miközben a jogállamiságot kéri rajtunk számon, maguk sértenek jogot minden tettükkel. Mindig lesz újabb kérés, újabb elvárás. Napnál világosabb: amíg konzervatív kormánya van Magyarországnak, addig játsszák ezt a nemtelen játékot. Közben nemcsak a kormányt, hanem a magyar népet is sértegetik.

Mindazokat, akik komolyan veszik a munkájukat. A bírákat, akikről nem hiszik el, hogy függetlenül és pártatlanul ítélnének, a számvevőkről, hogy felelősen felügyelik a közpénzek elköltését. A tanárokért emelnek szót, miközben a források visszatartásával az ő fizetésük felemelését lehetetlenítik el. 2011-ben is kigyót-békát kiabáltak ránk az elnökség kezdetén. De akkor még el tudták ismerni a végén, hogy jó munkát végeztünk. Ma már annyira félnek attól, hogy uniós szinten is nagyobb figyelmet kap a konzervatív alternatíva, hogy jogot tiporva vennék el az elnökséget.

Livia Járóka (NI), írásban. – Az Európai Parlament évek óta tudatos politikai támadást folytat Magyarország és így a kormány tevékenysége ellen, mindezzel nagymértékben nehezítve az Európai Bizottság és Magyarország Kormánya között kibontakozó nézeteltérések békés rendezésének lehetőségét, ezáltal ellehetetlenítve a magyarok számára az uniós forrásokhoz való hozzáférést. A mostani jelentés is beállva ebbe a sorba tudatosan ferdít, és támadja alaptalanul a magyar jogállamiság helyzetét. Egyértelműen politikai indíttatástól vezérelve az Európai Parlament számos esetben saját jogkörén is túlerjeszkedve vádaskodik, a határozat kifogásai így legtöbb esetben általános megfogalmazású kritikák, mellőzve bármilyen konkrétumot.

Az Európai Parlament feladata azonban nem a politikai boszorkányüldözés és az alaptalan politikai vádaskodás kellene, hogy legyen, hanem a tagállami hatásköröket tiszteletben tartó, azok munkáját társjogalkotói szerepkörében segítő magabiztos intézményként való működés. Ehelyett azonban egy politikai sértettségtől fűtött véd- és dacszövetségként működik minden olyan tagállammal szemben, amely hisz a nemzeti szuverenitás és a szubszidiaritás uniós értékeinek univerzalitásában. Sajnálattal konstatáltam, hogy Képviselőtársaim a tényektől elrugaszkodott, a valósággal egyértelműen szembemenő vádaskodásai támogatói fogadtatásban részesültek a Parlament többsége által.

A jelentésben megfogalmazott kritikákat kategorikusan visszautasítjuk, és felszólítjuk Képviselőtársainkat, hogy hagyjanak fel végre a magyarok politikai és ideológiai alapon zajló folyamatos támadásával. Tartsák tiszteletben a magyar emberek döntését és Magyarország tagállami szuverenitását és jogköreit egyaránt. A jelentést mindezek fényében nem tudom támogatni!

Ivan Štefanec (PPE), písomne. – Naša únia je založená na dodržiavaní pravidiel a je prirodzené, že v prípadoch ich porušovania je potrebné konať. V Maďarsku naďalej dochádza k zhoršovaniu situácie v oblasti právneho štátu a základných práv. Nevykonávanie odporúčaní OBSE týkajúcich sa konania volieb, kampane proti EÚ, zneužívanie stavu ohrozenia, či manipulácia s rozpočtovým procesom ďalej podkopávajú demokratické zásady. Som znepokojený aj správami o zastrahovacích a diskriminačných praktikách voči niektorým spoločnostiam, ktoré poskytujú nespravodlivú výhodu konkurentom. Takéto konanie je v rozpore s pravidlami EÚ v oblasti hospodárskej súťaže a verejného obstarávania a poškodzuje dôveru medzi EÚ a Maďarskom. Zmrazenie finančných prostriedkov EÚ pridelených Maďarsku je v tomto prípade potrebné.

Edina Tóth (NI), írásban. – Az Európai Parlament előtt szereplő állásfoglalással kapcsolatban megállapítható, hogy a jelentés egyértelműen politikai indítatású. Szégyenteljes, hogy az Európai Parlament azért kívánja megakadályozni, hogy a 2024 második félévében Magyarország töltsen be az uniós tanácsi elnökséget, mert az intézmény baloldali többségének nem tetszik Magyarország békepárti álláspontja. Az Európai Parlament nem tiszteli sem a demokráciát, sem a jogállamot, hiszen olyan kezdeményezéssel szeretne élni, ami egyértelműen szembe megy az európai uniós szerződésekkel.

Korábban a bevándorlást ellenző álláspontunk volt a probléma, aztán a családok védelme, majd pedig a magyar kormánynak, a magyar emberek által támogatott békepárti álláspontja nem tetszik az Európai Parlament baloldali többségének. Visszautasítjuk a hazug támadásokat, s szégyenletesnek tartjuk továbbá azt, hogy a magyar „dollárbaloldal” EP-képviselői aktív részesei ezeknek a támadásoknak. Ahogy szégyenletes az is, hogy a magyar baloldali EP-képviselők azon munkálkodnak, hogy a magyar emberek ne juthassanak hozzá az uniós forrásokhoz. Magyarország készen áll arra, hogy az uniós Tanács elnökségét ellássa. Kiállunk Magyarország önállósága, szabadsága mellett és a magyar emberek védelmében, mert nekünk mindig Magyarország az első!

Tom Vandenkendelaere (PPE), schriftelijk. – Hongarije en Polen zijn al lang een doorn in het oog van Europa. Er wordt onvoldoende vooruitgang geboekt om de rechtsstaat te respecteren. Hoewel Polen en Hongarije zogenaamd stappen vooruitzetten om aan de Europese eisen inzake de rechtsstaat te voldoen, zodat ze hun deel van het Europees budget kunnen claimen, blijft de situatie zorgwekkend.

De laatste Poolse ontwerpwet om Russische beïnvloeding tegen te gaan, viseert vooral de eliminatie van de oppositie. De manier waarop Europees geld in Hongarije systematisch misbruikt wordt bij de aanbesteding van openbare projecten, kwam recent weer aan het licht. En toch blijven de lidstaten treuzelen om het stemrecht van Polen en Hongarije in de Raad op te schorten. Voor het Europees Parlement staat de geloofwaardigheid van Europa op het spel met de aankomende EU-voorzitterschappen van Hongarije en Polen.

Eén zaak is duidelijk: zolang de Hongaarse en Poolse overheden niet de maatregelen uitvoeren die de Europese Commissie eist, blijven EU-fondsen bevroren tot nader orde. Daarom stemde ik voor deze resolutie, die alle misstappen op het vlak van de rechtsstaat in Hongarije en Polen in het licht van hun aankomend voorzitterschap opnieuw aan de kaak stelt.

Henna Virkkunen (PPE), kirjallinen. – On sietämätöntä, ettei Unkarin hallitus ole tukenut EU-maiden rintamaa Venäjän hyökkäyssodalta puolustautuvan Ukrainan tukemisessa. Päinvastoin Unkari on hankaloittanut Venäjän vastaisten pakotteiden asettamista ja näin vähentänyt toimien purevuutta. Lisäksi on äärimmäiseen valitettavaa, ettei Unkarin demokratiaa, perusoikeuksia ja oikeusvaltioperiaatetta rikkovaan toimintaan ole vieläkään saatu muutosta. Komissio on perustellusti vaatinut Unkarilta yhteensä 17 toimenpidettä jäädytettyjen koheesiovarojen vapauttamiseksi ja sen lisäksi kymmenen muuta, erityisesti tuomioistuinlaitokseen liittyvää toimenpidettä elpymispakettivarojen saamiseksi. Yhteensä 22 miljardin edestä jäädytettyjä varoja ei pidä maksaa Unkarille niin kauan kuin komissio ei voi varmistaa varojen asianmukaista käyttöä maassa. On täysin perusteltua epäillä, miten näin räikeästi unionin perusarvoja polkeva maa voisi hoitaa vuoden 2024 jälkipuoliskolle sijoittuvan neuvoston puheenjohtajuusvuoronsa tehtävän unionin arvoja

kunnioittavalla tavalla. Unkarin vuoroa edeltävät puheenjohtajamaat ovat nyt paljon vartijoina etsimässä keinoja, joilla Unkarin puheenjohtajuuskausi voidaan siirtää tai hoitaa jollakin tavalla asianmukaisesti, mikäli Unkari ei saa toteutettua siltä vaadittuja oikeusvaltion tilaa parantavia toimenpiteitä.

15. Threat to democracy and the rule of law in Poland, in particular through the creation of an investigative committee (debate)

Der Präsident. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärungen des Rates und der Kommission zur Bedrohung von Demokratie und Rechtsstaatlichkeit in Polen, insbesondere durch die Einsetzung einer Untersuchungskommission (2023/2725(RSP)).

Peter Kullgren, rådets tjänstgörande ordförande. – Herr talman! Ärade ledamöter, kommissionärer! Låt mig återigen understryka att respekten för demokrati, för mänskliga rättigheter och rättsstatens principer är avgörande för unionen i sin helhet. Det är därför denna fråga är en av huvudprioriteringarna för det svenska ordförandeskapet.

EU:s institutioner och EU:s medlemsstater delar på det viktiga ansvaret att bevaka att EU:s värden upprätthålls. Dagens debatt handlar om en ny polsk lagstiftning som innebär att en kommitté upprättas för att granska ryskt inflytande. Rysslands anfallskrig i Ukraina har tydligt visat att vi i EU måste stå upp för demokratiska principer, som ett tydligt alternativ till auktoritära stater som bryter mot internationell rätt och mänskliga rättigheter. Det är därför naturligt att alla medlemsstater har goda skäl att se över ryskt inflytande. Men det måste så klart göras i enlighet med rättsstatliga principer.

Rådet har naturligtvis följt rapporteringen kring utvecklingen i Polen noga och är medvetna om att Polens president har skrivit under den aktuella lagen och skickat den till författningsdomstolen. Vid gårdagens möte i allmänna rådet hölls en utfrågning under artikel 7 då läget i Polen diskuterades, framför allt frågor som rör rättsväsendets oberoende.

Kommissionen nämnde den nya polska lagstiftningen i sin genomgång, men frågan diskuterades inte av rådet i substans eftersom den än så länge ligger utanför artikel 7-förfarandets omfattning. Det är kommissionens uppgift som fördragets väktare att på ett objektivt och sakligt sätt granska de åtgärder som vidtas i medlemsstaterna i förhållande till de åtaganden som alla länder i EU har enligt fördragen. Det är upp till kommissionen att bedöma om ytterligare steg behövs med anledning av den nya polska lagstiftningen.

Rådet och ordförandeskapet står självklart redo att fortsätta den viktiga dialogen om rättsstatens principer med Europaparlamentet.

Didier Reynders, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members, thank you for this debate on the rule of law situation in Poland. Allow me to start with the new law on the State Commission for the examination of Russian interference in the internal security of Poland in the period 2007 till 2022. This is a development which the Commission is following with great concern.

On 26 May, this law was adopted by the Polish Parliament and has then been signed by the President of the Republic. After the publication, this law is now in force. This new law creates a special committee to investigate Russian interference on the internal security of Poland in the period 2007 till 2022. It raises serious concerns in terms of conformity with EU law. As we understand, it grants significant powers to an administrative body which could be used to bar individuals from public office and which hence could restrict their rights.

Yesterday, I informed the Ministers during the General Affairs Council about this new development on the margins of the informal hearing of Poland under the Article 7 procedure. As you will be aware, the Commission also issued a statement yesterday. We have also taken note of a press statement issued by the United States Department of State expressing concerns over the potential use of this new legislation to target members of the opposition.

Yesterday, I spoke to the Polish Minister of EU affairs, Szymon Szynkowski vel Sęk, and today I sent a letter to the Minister requesting additional information on the new law. The Commission will carefully analyse this new law and any further developments in that regard. Based on its analysis, the Commission will not hesitate to take action as appropriate.

More broadly, when it comes to the rule of law situation in Poland, I had the occasion to update EU ministers yesterday in the General Council in the framework of the Article 7 hearing on Poland. Overall, despite a number of important positive changes, serious concerns remain. As regards compliance with rulings of the EU Court of Justice relating to the activities of the disciplinary Chamber of the Supreme Court concerning the Polish judges, you may be aware that the Vice-President of the Court of Justice lowered the daily penalty payment imposed on Poland from EUR 1 million to EUR 500 000 as from 21 April. This is given Poland's notable progress in complying with the interim measures Order of the Court of Justice of July 2021. However, until today, Poland has still not fully implemented the Order of the Court of Justice of July 2021. The Court of Justice is expected to deliver a final ruling in this case next Monday.

The notable progress noted by the Vice-President of the Court in his Order of April concerns in particular the law on the judiciary of 9 June 2022, which aimed at raising the standard of certain aspects of judicial protection. This new law introduced a number of important changes in the Polish legal system, but certain shortcomings still remained. In this context, the Polish Parliament adopted on the 13 January a new law with further amendments to strengthen certain aspects of judicial independence. In February, the President of the Republic referred this new law for review to the Polish Constitutional Tribunal, where it is still pending. The new law has therefore not yet entered into force.

The Commission will carry out a thorough assessment of the legislation in force only at the time of Poland's first payment request under the Recovery and Resilience Plan. It will be important that the final law, as adopted, raises the standards on judicial independence.

Let me now turn to the National Council for the Judiciary. The law on the National Council for the Judiciary is one of the central issues in the Commission's proposal under Article 7. The Rule of Law reports from 2020 to 2022 reiterate the Commission's serious concerns in relation to the independence of this Council, considering its role in the procedures of judicial appointment – concerns which have also been confirmed by the Court of Justice.

The Commission has noted with concern that although the Sejm appointed new judges members of the National Council for the Judiciary in May 2022, no steps were taken to address concerns in relation to its independence vis-à-vis the executive and the legislative branches. Furthermore, the National Council for the Judiciary has continued to adopt decisions and resolutions that cannot be reconciled with its duty to safeguard judicial independence.

The National Council for the Judiciary plays a key role in the appointment and promotion of judges in Poland. It is therefore crucial that the concerns expressed in the Commission's proposal, and further highlighted by the Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights, are remedied as a matter of urgency.

As regards the Supreme Court, there are serious doubts as to where a number of its judges, including its first president, comply with the requirements of independence stemming from Article 19 of the Treaty on European Union. Poland has still not taken any steps to implement the rulings of the European Court of Human Rights, which considered as inherently defective the process of judicial appointments to benches of the Chamber of Extraordinary Control and Public Affairs and of the Civil Chamber of the Supreme Court. Yet, these rulings of the European Court of Human Rights are final.

Finally, let me turn to the Constitutional tribunal, where serious concerns persist. In February, the Commission decided to refer Poland to the Court of Justice for violations of EU law by the Constitutional Tribunal and its true rulings issues in 2021, which challenged, among others, the primacy of EU law. So far, the Polish authorities have not taken action to address the concerns of the Commission, including those set out in the Article 7 proposal.

So you see that we have made the point in the General Council on all the issues that we have discussed since the beginning of the hearings of Poland in the Article 7 procedure, and we have explained the concern of the Commission about the creation of a State Committee that we have seen in the law published in the last days and in force since today in Poland. Thank you for your attention and, of course, I am looking forward for your interventions.

Andrzej Halicki, *w imieniu grupy PPE*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Jestem tutaj, żeby Was ostrzec, bo lex Tusk to nie jest kolejna ustawa, która łamie Konstytucję. To specjalne, nowe narzędzie, *modus operandi* takiej władzy autorytarnej, która wie, że traci społeczne zaufanie i poparcie, a chce utrzymać władzę na siłę. Tak było kiedyś, za czasów PRL-u, za czasów komuny. Tak jest teraz. Dokładnie tak jest teraz w Polsce.

Ta władza ma jeden scenariusz działania: oskarżyć innych o to, co sama robi, i jednocześnie wyeliminować opozycję z życia publicznego. Oskarżyć i wyeliminować, bo boi się przegranej. Ale polskie społeczeństwo jest doświadczone, bo wygraliśmy 4 czerwca. I pokaże teraz swoją siłę.

Oskarżenie o rosyjskie wpływy. Przecież wszyscy pamiętacie i wiecie doskonale, że Jarosław Kaczyński przyjmował gości tuż przed atakiem Rosji na Ukrainę. Tych sponsorowanych przez Kreml. Robił sobie z nimi zdjęcia. Mateusz Morawiecki: brudne interesy, Rosja, gaz rosyjski, paliwa, a nade wszystko uzależnienie od rosyjskiego węgla.

Nie zagłuszycie prawdy. Wiem, że niektórzy z Was się wstydzą i nie macie odwagi do tego się przyznać. Ale scenariusz działania nie powiedzie się, nie wyeliminujecie z polskiej przestrzeni życia tych, którzy mają rację i mówią prawdę. Nie zagłuszycie prawdy. Donald Tusk, Waldemar Pawlak czy Radosław Sikorski są wymienieni w tym dokumencie jako ci, którzy mają ulegać rosyjskim wpływom. Przecież oni właśnie mówili o uniezależnieniu się od rosyjskich wpływów. Oni to robili. Walczyli, chociażby fizycznie w Afganistanie.

Nie zagłuszycie dążenia polskiego narodu do wolności i 4 czerwca w Warszawie zobaczycie siłę polskiego społeczeństwa. Zobaczycie ją.

Bądźcie z nami. Wygramy jesienią, bo Polska będzie demokratyczna i będzie także europejska. Wszyscy, którzy walczą z Europą, będą bliżej Moskwy, są bliżej Moskwy. I to też jest oczywista prawda.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señor presidente Wieland, Consejo, comisario Reynders, el presidente del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea, Koen Lenaerts, ha declarado que la Unión Europea está viendo amenazados sus cimientos, esto es, sus valores, lo que pone en riesgo su propia existencia.

La deriva de Polonia ha sido objeto de resoluciones en este Parlamento Europeo desde el año 2018. Y nos encontramos aquí ante una vuelta de tuerca inaceptable con una ley que pretende hostigar penalmente, a través de una comisión de investigación, a los adversarios de la actual mayoría de Gobierno y del partido de Gobierno. Sencillamente inaceptable.

Solo tengo que exponer tres consideraciones al respecto. En primer lugar, que el hecho de que el presidente Duda haya anunciado que va a remitir dicha ley al Tribunal Constitucional, lamentablemente, no es ninguna garantía, porque ese Tribunal Constitucional ha sido declarado no conforme con el Derecho europeo del Convenio Europeo de Derechos Humanos por el Tribunal Europeo de Derechos Humanos y no conforme con la Carta de Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea, artículo 47, por el Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea en 2021.

Además, en segundo lugar, ese Tribunal Constitucional se ha declarado en rebeldía frente al principio de primacía del Derecho europeo.

En tercer lugar, es una triste ironía que, con el pretexto de prevenir la influencia rusa, Polonia esté intentando poner en vigor —el Gobierno polaco esté intentando poner en vigor— nada menos que una ley putinesca, una ley que putiniza el procedimiento legislativo en Polonia.

Por tanto, comisario Reynders, tiene que emplearse a fondo para evitar que esa ley entre en vigor.

Róża Thun und Hohenstein, w imieniu grupy *Renew*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Ta komisja, o której Państwo słyszą, a która rości sobie uprawnienia takie, jakie mają normalnie służby specjalne, prokuratura oraz sąd, ta komisja, która jest ściśle polityczna, zamierza wykluczać osoby publiczne z możliwości uczestniczenia w życiu publicznym. To nie jest problem ani jednej partii, ani jednego człowieka, to jest wielki problem dla nas wszystkich. I w tej sytuacji oczy wszystkich, dla których są ważne uczciwe i wolne wybory, dla których ważna jest demokracja, dla których ważne jest członkostwo w Unii Europejskiej, są zwrócone na instytucje wspólne, na instytucje unijne, na nas, Koleżanki i Koledzy! Cieszę się, że tak szybko zareagowaliście, że mamy dzisiaj tę debatę. Oczy wszystkich nas zwrócone są na Komisję Europejską, na Pana, Panie komisarzu, i bardzo dziękuję za Pana obecność podczas tej debaty.

Zastanawiam się, czy rząd w Polsce i czy prezydent Polski chce nas narazić na kolejne przegrane procesy, na kolejne kosztowne kary? Bo przecież wiemy, że Komisja Europejska ma obowiązek reagować tam, gdzie łamane jest prawo, a tu mamy do czynienia z naruszeniem artykułu 2 Traktatu, o wolności, demokracji, o równości, o państwie prawnym, z naruszeniem artykułów 47 i 49 Karty praw podstawowych, i tak dalej. A równocześnie – i może to jest najważniejsze – mamy tu do czynienia ze złamaniem przynajmniej ośmiu artykułów polskiej konstytucji.

Podkreślam, to już nie jest sprawa ani jednej partii, ani jednego człowieka. To jest bardzo niebezpieczny temat, który dotyczy nas wszystkich. I rzeczywiście, jak mówił Andrzej Halicki, nam pozostaje tylko jeden instrument – protesty uliczne. Ja jestem przekonana, że 4 czerwca w Warszawie na ulicach zgromadzą się tłumy. Bardzo Wam dziękuję.

Tineke Strik, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, Council, Commissioner, the Polish ruling party is on a warpath against democracy to win the elections at all costs. The Law on the Commission on Russian influence exploits the Russian aggression with the sole purpose to remove opposition candidates from the election list and to silence critical voices. A committee of politically-appointed members that would simultaneously investigate, prosecute, judge and sentence people for vaguely-defined crimes is violating virtually every fundamental legal principle under EU law. So make no mistake, this law is not anti-Russia. It is anti-democracy.

So, Commissioner, it's good that you are extremely concerned, but I urge you to immediately take action – we don't have time to lose – and also take action against the other acts violating the rule of law. I would like to urge you also to consider expanding the scope of the Article 7 procedure.

Towards the Council: Presidencies must be credible defenders of EU values, which should not be negotiable. So please prepare for 2025.

Beata Szydło, w imieniu grupy *ECR*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Szanowny Panie Komisarzu! Słuchając moich przedmówców, którzy zostali wybrani jako polscy europosłowie, zaczynam się zastanawiać, czy nie powinni przeprosić Polaków, że tutaj w Parlamencie Europejskim nawołują do rebelii w Polsce i wprost mówią o wyprowadzaniu ludzi na ulice.

I zastanawiam się też, Panie Przewodniczący, czy to już będzie praktyką, że będzie zezwolenie na to, ażeby w Parlamencie Europejskim w czasie wystąpień prowadzić kampanię wyborczą. No bo jak można odebrać te wystąpienia? Rozhisteryzowana wypowiedź pana Halickiego. Może Pan powie, panie Halicki, o czym Tusk rozmawiał z Putinem na molo w Sopocie? Bardzo proszę.

Szanowni Państwo, ale przejdźmy do meritum. Nasuwają się w związku z tą debatą trzy pytania, trzy proste pytania. Pierwsze: czy wszyscy z Państwa, którzy zagłosowali o tym, ażeby ta debata dzisiaj się odbyła, znają polską Konstytucję? Czy znacie treść ustawy, o której debatujecie? I przede wszystkim dlaczego sprzeciwicie się powstaniu komisji, które funkcjonują już w innych państwach, która między innymi funkcjonuje tutaj, w tym Parlamencie? Jutro będziemy debatować nad sprawozdaniem tej komisji.

Dlaczego bronicie ruskich wpływów, a dlaczego nie bronicie interesów polskich obywateli, których jesteście reprezentantami? Wstyd Sikorski, że był kiedyś ministrem spraw zagranicznych. Wstyd, że na tej sali są byli polscy premierzy, którzy kiedyś reprezentowali również partię, która zaciągała w Moskwie pożyczki. Nie pamiętacie tego? Ale to nie o to chodzi, Szanowni Państwo. Ten Parlament ma stać na straży demokratycznych praw obywateli europejskich.

Konstytucja polska nie jest łamana, nie jest łamane polskie prawo. A, Panie Komisarzu, chcę Panu przypomnieć, że jeżeli chodzi o sprawy związane z wymiarem sprawiedliwości, to zgodnie z traktatami leżą one w gestii suwerennych państw. I dobrze, że ta komisja w Polsce powstała, bo jeżeli mówimy o tym, jak silne są ruskie wpływy, to ta debata pokazuje, że są bardzo silne.

Clare Daly, on behalf of The Left Group. – Mr President, tomorrow Parliament votes on the second Kalniete report on foreign interference – a sprawling paranoid McCarthyist tract stigmatising whole sections of society and opposition politics under the spectre of Russian interference, calling for a battery of repressive measures.

Now, here we are discussing the threat to democracy and the rule of law because the Polish Government goes off on a mad one against its political opponents under the guise of exactly the same thing. For four years now, any time any old rumour of foreign interference has wafted out of the paranoid imaginations of the security sector think-tanks that parade in here day after day, we roll out the red carpet. We encourage, fund and amplify conspiracy theories about Russian interference based on the flimsiest of evidence.

From day one, The Left warned that this is a bad road to go down. Learn from history. Counterintelligence paranoia erodes democratic values and the rule of law. For four years we've been ignored, we've been slandered. And now, four groups, the willing little helpers of the foreign interference crusade, are crying foul: 'it is being abused'; 'it's a threat to fundamental rights'; 'it's a threat to the rule of law'. Well remember where you heard it first? We don't like to say we told you so, but we did tell you so. Pot – kettle – black!

Der Präsident. – Vielen Dank, Frau Kollegin Daly.

(unverständlicher Zwischenruf von Clare Daly)

Frau Kollegin Daly, bitte.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Mr President, I am sorry, but the colleague here has just asked me how much money I receive from Putin, which I find highly unacceptable and outrageous, and I would like that remark withdrawn. It's implying bribery and corruption, which clearly I have never been party to. So could you please clarify your remark and withdraw it?

(Interjection from Marek Belka)

You asked me how much money I got from Putin. Zero! What do you think? It's an outrageous violation and undermining of a legitimate point. You're as proletarian as your reactionary friends you give out about. You're a disgrace. You're just as bad as them!

President. – Ms Daly, I want to make it clear that asking how much money you get is a clear insinuation that there is money which is paid. So colleague, I call you to order and I do not intend to have a discussion about it.

László Trócsányi (NI). – Elnök Úr! Az Európai Parlamentben Önök előszeretettel foglalkoznak Magyarországgal és Lengyelországgal. Néhány perccel ezelőtt Magyarország, most pedig Lengyelország. Egy olyan országot kritizálnak, ami évszázadokon keresztül példát mutatott Európának, hogy miként kell védelmeznie szabadságát, függetlenségét. Lengyelország szuverenitása szent és sérthetetlen, a lengyel kormány feladata annak védelmezése. Az Európai Parlament ezt a jogot nem vonhatja el a lengyel néptől és a lengyel kormánytól.

A mai napi lengyel vita arról győz meg bennünket, hogy Önök olyanok, mint a Bourbonok voltak: nem tanulnak a történelemből. Jobb lenne, ha egy erős és bátor, a hazáját szerető kormány meggyanúsítása helyett az Európai Parlament saját problémáival vagy a versenyképességgel foglalkozna. Lengyelország és Magyarország elkötelezett Európa egysége mellett, de olyan európai közösséget szeretnénk látni, amely megvéd, és nem olyat, amely zsandárként viselkedik a tagállamok irányában.

Paulo Rangel (PPE). – Mr President, Council, dear Commissioner, what we are seeing in Poland is the final orchestrated attack on democracy and the rule of law in the country. After this, there will be nothing except a judiciary controlled by the government, media controlled by the government and, finally, opposition silenced by the government.

Because what is happening is under the pretext of fighting a dangerous enemy abroad, the ruling majority wants to eliminate the democratic, legitimate and pro-European political opposition at home. First, they granted us that they were democratic. After, they started to confess that they were disciples of illiberal democracy, which is a contradiction in terms. But now, even free elections without the rule of law they want to eliminate. So first they promised they are democratic, then they confessed that they are illiberal democrats, and now we see that they are not even democrats.

This is not about Russia. This is not about Russia. So when we see a law like this, where we kill democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, respect for opposition, for free and fair elections, we can see who is under Russian influence. It is PiS, its leaders and its government that are imitating Putin and Russia! They are under Russian influence!

Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz (S&D). – Mr President, Senator McCarthy is dancing with joy in hell. After decades of oblivion, his spirit has reborn – this time in my country, in Poland. Witch hunting is back.

The ruling party decided to eliminate its competitors before this year's general election, by a special body which has been placed above the law, authorised to neglect the law and guaranteed impunity.

Using the pretext of eliminating Russian influence on public figures in Poland, leaders of the so-called Law and Justice Party, many of whom had very dubious relations with Russian intelligence in the past, are trying to secure staying in power by disgracing the opposition.

The bill adopted last Friday and immediately signed by the so-called Head of State, breaks several articles of our Constitution.

It neglects the most fundamental principles of law, like *lex retro non agit* or *nullum crimen, nulla poena sine lege*. The political body has been authorised to limit or suspend the political rights of individuals. There is no real possibility to appeal, and so on.

All democratic forces in Europe should react to that. After leaving the community of countries respecting the rule of law, Poland is one step away from becoming another anti-democratic autocracy.

Moritz Körner (Renew). – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ich habe in den vergangenen Tagen *Die Moskau-Connection* gelesen, ein sehr lesenswertes Buch über den russischen Einfluss, insbesondere in Deutschland auf die SPD. Und wenn ich hier eben so die Putin-Versteherei der Kollegin Daly höre, da frage ich mich auch manchmal, welcher Einfluss denn da dahintersteht. Ja, das müssen wir aufklären, das müssen wir untersuchen, welchen russischen Einfluss es gab.

Aber diese Kommission in Polen, das ist kein Untersuchungsausschuss. Da geht es nicht um Aufklärung, da geht es um ein Scheingericht. Jahrelang wurde Oppositionschef Tusk von der PiS als Nazi dargestellt, jetzt soll er auf einmal russischer Kollaborateur gewesen sein. Also Sie müssen sich schon in Ihren Anwürfen mal entscheiden. Die Absurdität ist doch tatsächlich offensichtlich. Und es geht ja auch um andere Kandidaten.

Es muss klar sein: Jeder Versuch der polnischen Regierungsparteien, diese Kommission zu benutzen, um Kandidaten ohne rechtsstaatliche Verfahren von den Wahlen auszuschließen, wird die polnischen Wahlergebnisse in Zweifel ziehen. Und diese Gefahr für unsere europäische Demokratie, die können wir nicht zulassen.

Sergey Lagodinsky (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, colleagues, I would like to make sure that we are all on the same page regarding what the past one and a half years were all about. It was about defending Ukraine, but it was also about defending the aspirations of citizens, of Europeans, aspirations for freedom, pluralism and democracy.

Polish society has made an enormous contribution to this fight to our defending Ukraine and democracies. I thank all the Polish citizens and all the colleagues here from Poland, from all the parties with whom we have been tirelessly working on this. We have defended and we are defending Ukrainian freedom. Now it's time to defend democracy in Poland.

Yes, we owe it to all the Polish forces, to all the Polish citizens, because this year's election will be a landmark in our European history. That's why the Commission is urged to do everything possible to remain decisive on the line regarding rule of law abuses in Poland, to think about an urgent procedure right now against the commission. We should stop legalisation of electoral fraud, abusing the current security situation. Our continent deserves it. Poland deserves it.

Dominik Tarczyński (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Jakież to symboliczne, że przedstawiciele polskiej opozycji skupieni są wokół niemieckiego przedstawiciela niemieckiej partii PPE, która wniosowała o tę debatę. Jakież to symboliczne. Nie macie prawa wymachiwać palcem przed polską twarzą. Nie macie prawa, dopóki nie rozliczycie się z afery korupcyjnej, z najazdu służb niemieckich, belgijskich. Rozliczcie się i nie pouczajcie nas o praworządności.

Jakież to symboliczne, że kiedy Polska wpadła w sowieckie łapy po ataku niemieckim, przyniosła pokój partii komunistycznej. Kiedy Niemcy opływali w luksusy, my walczyliśmy z komunistami, a ten, który przed chwilą występował, członek partii komunistycznej, znany z tego, że sprawował władzę przyniesioną przez komunistów, teraz atakuje demokratyczny rząd wybrany ośmiokrotnie. Jakież to symboliczne!

Nie macie prawa wymachiwać i pouczać nas o praworządności. Rozliczcie się z Qatargate, rozliczcie się z sędziów TSUE, którzy jechali na polowania z lobbystami. Wtedy będziecie mieli prawo mówić o praworządności. Jeżeli się nie rozliczycie, nie macie prawa Polski pouczać.

Radosław Sikorski (PPE). – Mr President, Commissioner, ladies and gentlemen, in objecting to this debate, the leader of the group of our ruling party, Professor Legutko, said that there is nothing to protest about, that this proposed committee is standard parliamentary practice. No, Mr Legutko, it is not a parliamentary committee! Don't you read your own laws? It's outside of parliament. It's actually run from the cabinet office in Warsaw and it can include people who are not members of parliament.

Mr Legutko said that the proposed committee meets all democratic standards. No, it doesn't! There are no rights for defendants. The definition of Russian influence has not been given. There is no effective appeal. The chairman is both prosecutor and judge. And yet the committee has the power of a court; it can bar people from holding government office for ten years.

Helpfully, Mr Legutko confirmed that it's going to be a witch hunt. He said that it's needed because he doesn't like some gas contracts, and he says that Polish ambassadors were coached by Minister Lavrov. Mr Chairman, it's true. Minister Lavrov visited Poland in 2009 and made a speech to Polish ambassadors, who grilled him on the situation in Georgia. That's a reason to suspect someone of treason? Have you gone completely bonkers?

Mr Chairman, if you don't find evidence against someone, you may not do what you're proposing to do, at least in Europe. A couple more sentences, please. On Sunday, the people of Poland will march against [...] slide towards democracy.

(The President cut off the speaker)

Łukasz Kohut (S&D). – Panie Przewodniczący! Zobaczcie, co zrobiliście z Polską. Wy PiS, wasz sojusznik Ziobro i wasz długopis Duda. To, co robicie, to jest czysta sowietyzacja. Zareagował już nawet Departament Stanu USA. Wasz obóz to neosowiecka banda, która marzy o wypisaniu Polski z Unii Europejskiej. O niczym innym nie marzy Putin, o rozpadzie naszej wspólnoty.

Co wolno władzy w Rosji? Wolno im wszystko. Putin inwigiluje, kiedy chce i kogo chce. Putin decyduje, kto startuje w wyborach, a kto nie. Te ruskie standardy wprowadza w Polsce PiS. Komisja weryfikacyjna jest tego najjaskrawszym przykładem. Partyjne gremium, które będzie zastraszało i odbierało prawa obywatelskie.

Jesteście w stanie poświęcić sojusze, byleby wygrać wybory, byleby dopaść Tuska, i to kosztem pieniędzy europejskich dla obywateli. Dzisiaj przekroczyliście wszelkie granice. Wykorzystaliście do swojej propagandy ofiary nazizmu, do walki ze swoimi obywatelami, którzy mają już was dość. I tym bardziej nie damy się zastraszyć.

W najbliższą niedzielę idziemy z tysiącami obywateli Polski na marsz w Warszawie i idziemy wspólnie jako cała demokratyczna opozycja, bo miejsce Polski jest w Unii Europejskiej, a wasze miejsce jest przed Trybunałem Stanu. Polska to nie PiS.

Katarína Roth Nevedálová (S&D). – Vážený pán predsedajúci, každá krajina – a samozrejme aj všetky v Európskej únii – má právo na suverenitu nad svojím vlastným územím a prijímať zákony, ktoré si myslí, že sú správne pre jej obyvateľov. A ja veľmi nerada komentujem o jednom z členských štátov Európskej únie, ale myslím si, že prijatie tohto zákona, o ktorom teraz diskutujeme, v Poľsku, je nie úplne správnym krokom smerom k demokracii. Vytvorenie špeciálnej komisie, ktorá môže zabrániť napríklad ľuďom, aby mohli kandidovať demokratických voľbách, je absolútne nesprávne. Ak napríklad sa na to pozrieme len z právneho hľadiska, nemôže jedna komisia rozhodovať tým, že napríklad robí výskúmanie, preskúmanie toho, či niekto je nejaký agent cudzej krajiny a zároveň vydať rozhodnutie. Na to treba, aby sa zameriavali špeciálne súdy, ktoré sú na to určené. Myslím si, že Poľsko by malo zvážiť toto rozhodnutie, pretože nie je to úplne pozitívne. Ale zároveň by som rada dodala, že keď hovoríme o odobratí predsedníckeho miesta Poľsku ako členského štátu Európskej únie, absolútne toto nepodporujem, pretože predsedníctvo je niečo, čo je symbolické, čo je dané veľmi dopredu a nemyslím si, že to je rozhodnutie správnym smerom.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Patryk Jaki (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Otóż wcale się nie dziwię, że chcecie zakazać działalności komisji do spraw badania rosyjskich wpływów w Polsce, bo bardzo dobrze wiecie, że tutaj taka komisja przydałaby się jeszcze bardziej. Po ataku na Ukrainę w 2014 roku i aneksji Krymu, kiedy *nota bene* Ursula von der Leyen była jeszcze ministrem obrony Niemiec, dalej robiliście biznesy z Rosją, sprzedawaliście Putinowi broń, budowaliście Nord Stream. Putin korumpował waszych polityków. Na liście płac Kremla są między innymi były kanclerz Niemiec, premierzy Francji, Austrii. Do tego 20 mln euro Rosja wpłaciła na fundację premier niemieckiej Meklemburgii, a teraz na jaw wychodzą kolejne miliardy, którymi Putin dotował wasze ulubione organizacje ekologiczne.

Wiecie, że wasze wsparcie dla Putina to największa afera w Europie. Dlatego tak próbujecie to ukryć i bronić Tuska, aby ludzie nie usłyszeli, dlaczego umarzał długi Gazpromowi, wysyłał członków polskiej komisji wyborczej na szkolenie w Moskwie, chciał im sprzedać kluczowe polskie spółki i robił odprawy dla polskich ambasadorów dla Ławrowa. Do tego rozdzielił wizyty do Smoleńska, a jak to się skończyło, wszyscy bardzo dobrze pamiętamy. Chcielibyście, aby nikt waszych ludzi nie rozliczył z rosyjskiego lizusostwa, a wszyscy zachorowali na zbiorową amnezję.

Bogdan Rzońca (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Z całą powagą chciałem podejść do tej dyskusji i dlatego zacytuję apel, który wczoraj wydał Departament Stanu USA. A mianowicie apel o wyjaśnienie, czy te przepisy nie uniemożliwią wyborcom głosowania na wybranych przez nich kandydatów. To jest bardzo dobry apel, dlatego że to jest poważna instytucja. Mówimy o Departamencie Stanu USA. Jest też bardzo poważna odpowiedź Państwowej Komisji Wyborczej – organu, który w Polsce decyduje o tym, kto może startować w wyborach, kto nie może startować, kto ma prawa publiczne, kto nie ma praw publicznych. I Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza dzisiaj, 30 maja, wydała oświadczenie w pełnym składzie. Ono jest dostępne powszechnie. Otóż ogłosiła, że komisja weryfikacyjna nie może zabronić nikomu startu w wyborach do Sejmu i do Senatu.

Proszę Państwa, szanujmy to miejsce, Parlament Europejski. Nie kłammy. Nie mówmy nieprawdy, bo obniżamy rangę Parlamentu Europejskiego.

Beata Mazurek (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie komisarzu! Ta ustawa to nie jest *lex Tusk*, to *lex anty Putin*. Powołanie komisji wpisuje się w działania, którymi chcemy oczyścić życie publiczne z wpływów rosyjskiej agenty. Spełnia wszystkie demokratyczne kryteria. Będzie działała na podstawie przepisów prawa, tak jak każdy organ administracji publicznej, niezależnie od upływu kadencji.

Przypomnę, o czym Pan może nie wie, Panie Komisarzu, że w październiku 2022 roku człowiek, którego Pan zna, Donald Tusk, mówił, żeby powstała komisja, która zbada wszelkie wpływy agenty rosyjskiej na bezpieczeństwo energetyczne w Polsce. Co się stało, że dziś on i jego środowisko zmieniło zdanie? Nie wiem, czy Pan o tym wie, czy Pan dał się świadomie czy nieświadomie wkręcić w tę dzisiejszą debatę? Ale ja zadaję pytanie, co się stało, że w ciągu kilku miesięcy Donald Tusk i jego środowisko zmieniło zdanie? Odwrócił się Pan, to znaczy, że nie miał Pan o tym bladego pojęcia.

Jeszcze jedno chcę Panu powiedzieć. Być może też Pan o tym nie wie, że sondaże dają zwycięstwo Prawu i Sprawiedliwości. Więc nie jest prawdą to, co mówił poseł Halicki tutaj, że my te wybory przegramy. Wygramy. Bez waszej pomocy, ale wygramy.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Didier Reynders, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, apart from certain positive developments on some aspects, the situation of the rule of law in Poland continues to raise serious concerns – it was repeated yesterday in the General Affairs Council in the discussions about the Article 7 procedure, as regards especially the creation of a new special committee, an administrative body, in fact. I want to thank you for the debate today.

We expressed our concerns yesterday in a clear statement and again in the General Affairs Council. I want just to quote the statement of yesterday: the Commission is very concerned about the reports on the new law establishing a special committee. They are concerned that this new law may be used to affect the possibility of persons to be elected to public office without a fair trial and court.

We have started a dialogue with the Polish authorities, including the President of the Senate. The Senate has adopted a resolution against the creation of this committee. Now the Commission is carefully and swiftly analysing the new law and will not hesitate to take action as appropriate. More broadly, compliance with the primacy of EU law and the rulings of the Court of Justice interpreting the treaties are cornerstones of commitment to the rule of law. As I have said in the past, the Commission will continue to engage in a dialogue with the Polish authorities in order to resolve the existing concerns. But, we are also ready to take decisive action when it's needed.

Peter Kullgren, *rådets tjänstgörande ordförande*. – Herr talman! Kommissionärer, ärade ledamöter. Jag ska bara ge några korta avslutningsord. Tack så mycket för den här debatten, för era kommentarer och synpunkter som vi tar med oss.

Som jag nämnde inledningsvis, och som vi hörde från kommissionären, förlitar vi oss på att kommissionen noga analyserar den nya polska lagstiftningen.

Mot bakgrund av de stora utmaningar unionen står inför vill jag åter betona vikten av att vi gemensamt ansvarar för att upprätthålla unionens gemensamma värden och kommissionens roll som fördragets väktare.

Der Präsident. – Die Aussprache ist damit geschlossen.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)

Gunnar Beck (ID), *schriftlich*. – Wenn Sie der Meinung sind, dass ein Atomkrieg mit Russland keine gute Idee ist, werden Sie möglicherweise als russischer Agent gebrandmarkt und von öffentlichen Ämtern und dem Recht, in Polen zu kandidieren, ausgeschlossen. Wie unterscheidet sich das von der russischen Praxis, jeden Kriegsgegner als ausländischen Agenten zu brandmarken? Das ist nicht der Fall. Es ist gut, dass sich die Europäische Kommission mit diesem Problem befasst. Der Aufruhr in diesem Haus überrascht mich jedoch. Seit anderthalb Jahren verabschiedet dieses Parlament eine Entschließung nach der anderen und fordert immer mehr Sanktionen gegen Russland, russische Bürger und Maßnahmen gegen den russischen Einfluss in Europa. Da nun ein Mitgliedstaat solche Maßnahmen ergreift, herrscht Empörung. Liebe Mitglieder des Europäischen Parlaments, Sie müssen sich endlich zwischen Ihrem Hass auf die Polen oder Ihrem Hass auf die Russen entscheiden.

Joachim Stanisław Brudziński (ECR), *na piśmie*. – Jakże często, wręcz na zawołanie przeprowadza się tu, w tej instytucji, w tym parlamencie debatę na temat fałszywie postawionych tez, stawia się kłamliwe zarzuty, stawia się pod pręgierzem działania polskiego rządu i parlamentu. Tylko dlatego, że ktoś poczuł się zagrożony, że boi się o swoje dawne czy obecne interesy i powiązania z Rosją, z reżimem Putina. Kilka dni temu prezydent Macron przyznał, że przez ostatnie lata „straciliśmy okazję do wysłuchania was”. Mówił o Polsce. A Polska wielokrotnie ostrzegała przed rosyjskimi wpływami, przed interesami, które uzależnią całą wspólnotę od niezwykle niebezpiecznego kraju, który od lat prowadzi wojnę zarówno ekonomiczną, jak i hybrydową. W 2014 roku Rosja napadła na Krym, jeszcze poprzebierana za zielone ludziki, ale w 2022 roku napadła na Ukrainę już w swych narodowych barwach na mundurach, i natychmiast wiele masek opadło. Rozwiązał się mit Rosji, która szanuje sąsiadów, demokrację, z którą można i należy robić interesy. Polska ostrzegała i alarmowała. Teraz przyszedł czas, by powiedzieć – sprawdzam. Zgodnie z prawem i procedurami. Ale jak widać, natychmiast podnosi się krzyk, bo śmiemy pytać o rosyjskie wpływy. Stąd takie przerażenie wśród tyłu osób. I tyle obaw – lecz nie o demokrację, a o własne ciemne interesy z Rosją.

16. Social and economic costs of climate change in light of the floods in Emilia Romagna, Marche and Toscana and the urgent need for European solidarity (debate)

Der Präsident. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Erklärung der Kommission zu den Sozial- und Wirtschaftskosten des Klimawandels angesichts der Überschwemmungen in den Regionen Emilia-Romagna, Marken und Toskana und dem dringenden Bedarf an Solidarität in der EU (2023/2724(RSP)).

Janez Lenarčič, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable members, when disaster hit the region of Emilia-Romagna, in northern Italy, earlier this month, the country turned to Europe for help, and I am proud to tell you that the EU responded immediately after receiving the Italian requests for assistance. Less than 24 hours after Italy activated the EU Civil Protection Mechanism on 20 May, 9 Member States had offered their assistance, showing European solidarity at its best. The first emergency responders from Slovakia and Slovenia were on the ground in less than 48 hours. The French and Belgian teams joined soon after, working alongside national emergency responders, fighting the floods, river overflow and landslides that struck the region.

Four teams of nearly 130 specialised operators of heavy pumping equipment are based in the region. So far, they have evacuated enough water to submerge the Brussels Central Region by a metre over 12 times. All this is coordinated by the Emergency Response Coordination Centre and a dedicated DG ECHO liaison officer on the ground, and is aided by analysis and satellite maps from Copernicus.

It is no surprise that this response was fast and efficient: the Emergency Response Coordination Centre had been closely following the situation in Italy for some time as part of our preparedness work. Already on 2 May, Copernicus rapid mapping was activated upon request from the Italian National Civil Protection Department, so we were ready to help the minute we were asked.

Tragically, this disaster has already taken 14 lives and displaced more than 20 000 people. Communities were destroyed, businesses and farms have been gutted, infrastructure has been damaged, and the economic losses have been huge, impacting some of the crucial industrial and agricultural areas.

At this stage, Italy explained that they do not need further civil protection support, but it is important to understand that while the immediate emergency is over, Italy will most likely need longer-term support to recover from these unprecedented floods and to build resilience against potential future disasters. Europe is there to help. This is not simply rhetoric: we are ready with multiple funds to help support the reconstruction Italy needs. In 2012, sadly, the Emilia-Romagna region suffered devastating earthquakes. In response, the EU Solidarity Fund was activated to help the country. Today, the fund again stands ready to be activated, following an application by Italy and acting within its budgetary availabilities. The Commission stands ready to support the Italian authorities with the preparation of the application.

And we can mobilise the European Agricultural Crisis Reserve to support farmers who have lost crops and machinery. Emilia-Romagna has programmed the funds from the 2021-2027 European Regional Development Fund programme for tackling hydrogeological and flooding risks in the region, addressing the challenges it currently faces. The Commission is in contact with the region to check if further reprogramming is needed to tackle the emergency.

We are also there strengthening Italy's wider resilience to flooding. We will continue to support the implementation of Italy's recovery and resilience plans, investing EUR 6 billion to implement reforms and investments to reduce hydrogeological risks. This figure could rise to EUR 8.5 billion. Indeed, on 25 May, Italy requested the activation of the Copernicus mapping services for flood and landslide analysis, and this will help to build a stronger recovery.

In addition, the cohesion policy funds for 2021-2027 have earmarked EUR 1.3 billion to combat hydrogeological risks in Italy. So it is clear: Europe is standing by Italy, both with rapid response and in the long term supporting the country's recovery and resilience.

But we must also look at the bigger picture. This crisis is only one of the many growing instances of extreme weather events occurring with increased frequency and intensity around the world due to the climate crisis. Last year, Europe witnessed one of the worst wildfire seasons in recent history, hitting countries across the continent, including Italy. And two years ago, parts of Belgium and Germany were devastated by catastrophic flooding. Like the disaster we are discussing today, these emergencies are being exacerbated on all levels by the climate crisis. More and more often, they are overwhelming national capacities to respond.

We must therefore continue to strengthen the EU Civil Protection Mechanism in the face of this increasingly dangerous reality, building collective resilience and improving prevention, strengthening preparedness and growing our response capacity at national and European level. This is why last February, we established the five disaster resilience goals: to enable countries to anticipate and withstand future emergencies. We must mobilise everything we have and accelerate the green transition so as to achieve a safer, stronger Europe for our citizens.

President von der Leyen was at the disaster-struck region six days ago, meeting the Prime Minister, the regional authorities and also the EU civil protection teams and witnessing first-hand the devastation of the flooding. The President told Prime Minister Meloni and the people in Emilia-Romagna affected by this disaster, I quote, *'Tin bota, l'Europa è con voi.'* And I want to echo these words: Europe is with you. The Italian Government and the Italian people have our full support and we will do everything in our power to help you.

Herbert Dorfmann, a nome del gruppo PPE. – Signor Presidente, colleghe e colleghi, abbiamo assistito e purtroppo stiamo assistendo in Emilia-Romagna a una catastrofe che ha distrutto vite, famiglie, benessere, case e terreni agricoli e ha tolto la base di vita a migliaia di persone.

Voglio esprimere prima di tutto tutta la mia solidarietà alla popolazione colpita, e anche noi dovremmo fare qui, a Bruxelles, quello che possiamo fare per attivare tutti i sistemi di solidarietà europea.

Quando, e spero presto, le conseguenze più gravi di questo disastro saranno rimosse, la popolazione avrà però anche il diritto di conoscere le cause di quello che è successo, ed è troppo facile individuare, come spesso succede, come unico responsabile il cambiamento climatico, come tra l'altro suggerisce un po' anche il titolo di questo nostro dibattito di oggi.

Non c'è dubbio che il cambiamento climatico accentui gli estremi meteorologici; a una lunga siccità in tutta l'Italia settentrionale è seguita questa catastrofe, causata da precipitazioni abbondanti e torrenziali, ma è più che evidente che ancora una volta importantissime strutture di protezione civile o non c'erano o non hanno funzionato. Non hanno funzionato i bacini di espansione, non c'erano le opere di sistemazione idraulica, che avrebbero dovuto essere costruite tempo fa, la superficie sigillata è aumentata di anno in anno, tanti agricoltori in montagna e in collina hanno abbandonato le attività, accelerando il dissesto idrogeologico, creando erosione e frane.

Il cambiamento climatico è un dato di fatto; anche se noi raggiungiamo tutti gli obiettivi che ci siamo posti in quest'Aula, sarebbe assurdo pensare che nei prossimi decenni potremo risolvere i cambiamenti ormai causati. Nel migliore dei casi possiamo frenare i cambiamenti in atto.

Dobbiamo quindi anche prepararci a eventi come quello purtroppo successo in Emilia-Romagna. La protezione civile avrà un compito sempre più importante a livello europeo, nazionale e soprattutto anche a livello locale.

Elisabetta Gualmini, a nome del gruppo S&D. – Signor Presidente, l'Emilia-Romagna è stata, appunto, travolta da inondazioni che non hanno avuto precedenti. Un evento rarissimo, è stato detto più volte, una quantità di acqua in tre giorni pari a sei mesi, un ciclone con la forza di un uragano, fiumi che si sono alzati fino a 10/12 metri travolgendo strade, auto, case, purtroppo anche le persone. Quindici vittime, alle loro famiglie il mio abbraccio.

Il paesaggio ora nella mia Romagna è marrone, è un impasto di melma puzzolente, che fa confondere qualsiasi linea di separazione tra le case, che ha sommerso cantine, giardini, scalinate, camere, armadi e che ha costretto le persone a scappare. Abbiamo visto sommozzatori pescare le persone come fossero dei pesci un po' pesanti, abbiamo visto uomini, donne e bambini sui tetti, tirati su, risucchiati dalle corde degli elicotteri, e automobili e frigoriferi che tuttora nuotano per le strade.

Molti si sono dati da fare. Non è vero che in Emilia-Romagna le opere di messa in sicurezza non sono state fatte, né è vero che è una regione che ha cementificato troppo, anzi, abbiamo fatto la legge regionale sul consumo a saldo zero, grazie a tutte le istituzioni che si sono date da fare e grazie anche al Civil Protection Mechanism europeo.

Ma il racconto non basta, non basta neanche cantare «Romagna mia», e non dobbiamo nemmeno cedere agli insopportabili opposti estremismi, quindi o l'ambientalismo ottuso per cui non bisogna fare niente, nessuna piccola opera di contenimento, o il negazionismo, altrettanto assurdo, per cui i cambiamenti della natura sono una variabile indipendente dall'intervento dell'uomo: va trovata una sana via di mezzo.

Questo è fare politica, non è il male assoluto urbanizzare se fai scuole, case e asili nido, magari anche accoglienti. La transizione ecologica non può avvenire al costo di distruggere interi settori industriali. Per trovare questa via di mezzo abbiamo bisogno dell'Europa, di un fondo di solidarietà maledetto, diretto e subito per le persone che hanno perso tutto. Abbiamo bisogno di un'Europa semplice, non con una burocrazia ossessiva e pervasiva, e abbiamo bisogno di un'Europa che tratti le persone come cittadini e non come sudditi.

Per questo noi da qui lavoreremo e naturalmente «terremo botta».

VORSITZ: NICOLA BEER

Vizepräsidentin

Nicola Danti, a nome del gruppo Renew. – Signora Presidente, signor Commissario, onorevoli colleghi, la furia delle acque, le frane, la distruzione dei campi, le fabbriche allagate: sono alcune delle immagini di una catastrofe senza eguali. E mentre si piangono i morti e si spala il fango dalle case, ammiriamo la determinazione dei sindaci, dei volontari, di cittadine e cittadini e Comuni che affrontano le difficoltà a testa alta e con coraggio.

Diciamo grazie all'Europa per la pronta risposta delle sue istituzioni, a partire dalla presenza della Presidente von der Leyen e la rapida attivazione del Fondo di solidarietà. Ma adesso a noi è dato un duplice compito: da una parte, continuare ad affrontare la sfida del cambiamento climatico, dall'altra, mettere in atto tutte le misure che servono a prevenire o almeno a limitare l'impatto di fenomeni meteorologici estremi.

Sapendo che alluvioni, incendi e tempeste sono ormai una costante all'interno del nostro continente, per questo servono piani di manutenzione e di gestione del territorio, investimenti per contrastare i rischi del dissesto idrogeologico e rafforzare la prevenzione e serve un più efficace sistema europeo di protezione civile, che consenta agli Stati membri di condividere gli strumenti necessari e interventi di soccorso e ripristino delle condizioni di vita.

Signora Presidente, voglio rendere omaggio, in conclusione, alle comunità colpite. Persone che sono state capaci di rendere la loro terra tra le più innovative d'Europa nei settori dell'agricoltura, dell'industria e del turismo e che oggi da noi non si aspettano un'elemosina, ma una mano tesa per rialzarsi con le proprie gambe.

Rosa D'Amato, a nome del gruppo Verts/ALE. – Signora Presidente, stiamo piangendo le vittime dell'alluvione che ha colpito il mio paese.

I negazionisti del cambiamento climatico hanno perso un'occasione non dico per tacere, ma almeno per imparare dal recente disastro. In quest'Aula ci sono colleghi scettici sulla connessione tra alluvioni e crisi climatica. In Italia un ministro non solo esprime dubbi, ma sostiene che già in passato il nostro paese è stato vittima di alluvioni.

Siamo ancora all'ABC della scienza, cari colleghi, ma quando capiranno questi soloni che il cambiamento climatico non vuol dire che dal nulla sul pianeta sono comparsi degli eventi estremi, significa semmai che questi eventi sono sempre più frequenti, e con conseguenze sempre più drammatiche.

In Italia a un periodo di siccità estrema e inusuale ha fatto seguito un periodo di precipitazioni, anche queste estreme e inusuali. Certo, a spiegare la tragedia c'è anche un territorio forse non preparato, vuoi per la cementificazione, vuoi per la carenza di prevenzione.

L'Italia richieda al più presto il Fondo europeo di solidarietà – nel 2020 ero relatrice per i Verdi europei – lo abbiamo modificato affinché la parola chiave fosse «prevenzione». I nostri territori alluvionati vanno ricostruiti, sì, ma resi resilienti alle catastrofi.

L'Emilia-Romagna sia modello nel contrasto al riscaldamento globale. Si lavori per una rete di transizione del settore industriale e agroalimentare, tra i più sviluppati in Europa sì, ma anche tra i più inquinanti.

Infine, denuncio l'irresponsabilità della destra tutta, che si è ritirata dai negoziati sulla legge per il ripristino della natura. Una legge fondamentale per rendere i territori strumento di prevenzione contro le catastrofi naturali. Per la destra c'è sempre una ragione per dire «no» alla transizione ecologica. Il problema è che poi c'è chi piange la morte dei propri cari e chi addirittura deve piangere la chiusura della propria azienda. Proprio questo a causa di questi «no».

Sergio Berlato, a nome del gruppo ECR. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, esprimo la mia gratitudine alla Presidente del Parlamento europeo per aver citato le conseguenze delle devastanti calamità naturali che hanno colpito nelle scorse settimane alcune regioni d'Italia e in particolar modo l'Emilia-Romagna.

Ho sentito affermare che le cause a cui sono imputabili le terribili devastazioni verificatesi in queste regioni sarebbero legate unicamente ai cambiamenti climatici, mentre in realtà da un sopralluogo che ho effettuato personalmente nei giorni scorsi in quelle aree devastate ho potuto constatare che le cause di quanto accaduto sono imputabili anche all'incuria e anche alla mancata manutenzione del territorio.

Da troppo tempo i fiumi e gli altri corsi d'acqua sono privi di manutenzione e il loro alveo non è stato pulito dai detriti e dalle piante che vi crescono, diminuendone drasticamente la portata. L'ideologia e l'integralismo animal-ambientalista hanno impedito che venisse pulito l'alveo dei corsi d'acqua, forse perché si era più preoccupati di salvare le vite di qualche nutria, di qualche istrice o di qualche salamandra, anziché preoccuparsi di garantire la sicurezza idrogeologica e l'incolumità delle persone.

Da troppo tempo si favorisce lo spopolamento delle aree montane e collinari da parte degli imprenditori agricoli, degli allevatori, dei pastori e di tutti coloro che con le loro attività hanno sempre garantito la manutenzione del territorio, obbligandoli ad andarsene a causa delle continue predazioni del loro bestiame da parte di grandi carnivori come lupi e orsi o a causa della distruzione delle loro colture agricole ad opera di altre specie di fauna selvatica, come ad esempio i cinghiali.

Ci auguriamo che le risorse che verranno stanziare a favore di queste regioni colpite da queste calamità possano essere utilizzate non solo per rincorrere le continue emergenze, ma soprattutto per investire in opere di prevenzione e interventi di manutenzione del territorio.

Alessandra Basso, a nome del gruppo ID. – Signora Presidente, ringrazio innanzitutto la Presidente Metsola per le sue parole e la sua vicinanza alle regioni colpite. Ho apprezzato anche che l'intervento sia stato fatto in lingua italiana. Grazie anche a tutti i colleghi per la solidarietà dimostrata.

L'Italia, purtroppo, per la sua conformazione è sicuramente un territorio a rischio idrogeologico, però quello che è successo non è un fatto nuovo. Sono anni che questi disastri accadono e spesso negli stessi punti.

Martedì 16 maggio ero a Bologna e ho visto con i miei occhi la potenza dell'acqua che allagava le strade, che entrava nelle case, ma non era solo acqua, erano fango, detriti, rami. Questo per dire che sì, va bene il cambiamento climatico, ma siamo sicuri che la causa sia questa o solo questa? Ad ogni evento estremo per pioggia si rompe un argine, e questa volta, purtroppo, più di uno, e non è un problema di cambiamento climatico. E non sono io a dirlo, ma esperti geologi. Non vorrei che si utilizzassero queste tragiche occasioni per imporre nuove eurofolie *green*.

Cosa serve allora? Non servono solo interventi strutturali, serve anche potenziare gli uffici preposti alla gestione dei fiumi e degli argini, serve manutenzione, ed è evidente che non è stato fatto quello che si doveva fare, si doveva fare perché non è stata la prima volta.

Ringrazio anche la Presidente von der Leyen e tutti gli esponenti del governo che si sono recati a fare visita per verificare la situazione. E la situazione è purtroppo tragica: case distrutte, ponti crollati, coltivazioni devastate e, purtroppo, morti. Per fortuna il governo e la macchina dell'emergenza sono intervenuti tempestivamente e attendiamo gli aiuti dell'Europa.

Da ultimo, il mio più grande ringraziamento va a tutti i comuni cittadini che hanno donato materiali e cibo e aiutato come potevano spalando fango. In queste occasioni si vede il grande cuore degli emiliano-romagnoli.

Petros Kokkalis, on behalf of The Left Group. – Madam President, dear colleagues, *cari amici*, as summer returns to the Northern Hemisphere we to start again to talk about extreme weather events, these extreme weather disasters, as we do every year – floods in Germany, floods in Italy, droughts in Spain, droughts in Italy, fires from Greece to Siberia to Canada and China. Today it is Emilia Romagna. Tomorrow it's going to be your community.

The World Meteorological Organisation tells us already that, due to El Nino, we are heading towards the fourth warmest years since the glaciers retreated and humans moved out of caves. We know that as we cross 1.5 degrees, weather events will be more and more extreme. Even as we intensify our efforts for mitigation, we must enhance adaptation and build social, economic and physical resilience. Neither our material or non-material infrastructure is built for this, including rescue and the European Solidarity Fund.

Dear Commissioner, it is time to design a European loss and damage facility. Like the global one, agreed in Cop25, it will require a radical restructuring of our fiscal rules. It is time we moved from a Stability Pact to a Resilience Pact. It is time we make sure people are safe in Europe. This is our job.

Francesca Peppucci (PPE). – Signora Presidente, quello che è successo in questo mese di maggio in Emilia-Romagna, Marche e Toscana è una vera e propria tragedia.

I danni economici, appunto, sono drammatici, danni che riguardano l'allagamento di decine di migliaia di case, danni che vanno dai 7 ai 10 miliardi. E il danno sociale però non è quantificabile. Persone che hanno perso tutto, i sacrifici di una vita, e che hanno dovuto abbandonare tutto quello che avevano. Ma soprattutto morti. Quindici persone hanno perso la propria vita.

Il dibattito oggi si basa su cosa non ha funzionato e su cosa si sarebbe dovuto fare. Bene che la Commissione europea abbia attivato tutti gli strumenti necessari per fronteggiare questa situazione, ma cerchiamo di spostare l'attenzione su quello che da oggi dobbiamo iniziare a fare per evitare che certe disgrazie diventino la regola e l'eccezione siano i momenti di non emergenza. Lavoriamo affinché gli Stati membri, le regioni e i sindaci siano pronti a fronteggiare eventuali emergenze. E parlo da cittadina della regione Umbria, vicino alle regioni Emilia-Romagna, Marche e Toscana, la mia è una regione che conosce bene l'emergenza a causa non solo di alluvioni, ma anche di terremoti.

E allora lavoriamo per prevenirli, lavoriamo per essere pronti, perché non solo i cambiamenti climatici sono responsabili di questa situazione, sono urgenti investimenti e risorse idonee per permettere ai territori di fare investimenti di riassetto idrogeologico, investimenti in infrastrutture, in consolidamenti, studi adeguati del consumo del suolo, investimenti per la manutenzione degli argini. Sappiamo che la messa in sicurezza assoluta non è possibile, meglio parlare di mitigazione del rischio geologico.

E, concludo, dobbiamo fare di tutto per abbassare il livello di rischio, altrimenti ci troveremo domani a parlare nuovamente di quanto avremmo potuto fare e di quanto non abbiamo fatto.

Brando Benifei (S&D). – Signora Presidente, molte persone hanno perso la vita, oltre 30 000 hanno dovuto lasciare le loro case, la pioggia che cade in sette mesi è caduta in un paio di settimane, causando lo straripamento di fiumi, centinaia di frane, l'inondazione di 43 comuni e, pensate, oltre 100 000 tonnellate di rifiuti da smaltire. Queste sono le drammatiche cifre delle alluvioni che hanno colpito l'Emilia-Romagna due settimane fa, ma senza dimenticare anche i gravissimi danni che hanno colpito le Marche e la Toscana.

Oggi in quest’Aula abbiamo osservato un minuto di silenzio. Voglio ringraziare la Presidente del Parlamento europeo per le sue commosse parole di vicinanza al popolo emiliano colpito da questa tragedia.

Come ha potuto constatare di persona la Presidente della Commissione europea, i costi sociali ed economici di questo disastro sono enormi. Serve dunque l’aiuto immediato e concreto dell’Europa. È stata importante l’attivazione del meccanismo di protezione civile dell’Unione, ma adesso occorre il fondo di emergenza per l’agricoltura, i fondi di coesione, soprattutto il Fondo di solidarietà. Per questa importantissima misura servono un po’ di mesi, ma è fondamentale che venga attivata. Noi ci stiamo lavorando. Abbiamo chiesto da subito questo impegno perché si tratta di dare un sollievo immediato a chi ha perso tutto.

Come ha affermato il Presidente Mattarella, «tutta l’Italia vi è vicina, non sarete soli nella ricostruzione». Aggiungo io che tutta l’Europa è e deve essere vicina a queste persone. «Tin bota», come ha detto la Presidente, e mettiamocela tutta per dare il senso e il messaggio di un’Europa solidale.

Sandro Gozi (Renew). – Signora Presidente, nel 2021 Belgio e Germania, nel 2023 l’Italia. Stesse scene e stesso dolore. La lezione è chiara: davanti al cambiamento climatico siamo tutti uguali.

Sono stati per me giorni di grande preoccupazione e di grande orgoglio. Preoccupazione perché è stata duramente colpita la Romagna, e in particolare i luoghi in cui sono nato, Sogliano al Rubicone, e in cui sono cresciuto. Ci sono persone che ci hanno lasciato. Amici che hanno dovuto abbandonare le proprie case. Luoghi sfigurati dalla violenza delle alluvioni. Però anche orgoglio, perché tutta l’Europa ha visto la forza e il coraggio della gente di Romagna, che con i piedi ancora nel fango è già proiettata sulla ripartenza. Orgogliosi di come a Cesena è stata accolta la Presidente della Commissione Ursula von der Leyen, che ha portato la solidarietà concreta dell’Europa.

Alcuni in Italia hanno commentato: «Questa è l’Europa che vogliamo». Io la penso diversamente: questa è l’Europa che già c’è, delle soluzioni concrete, del sostegno ai cittadini che soffrono, l’Europa che è pronta. Noi siamo pronti ad attivare rapidamente i fondi di solidarietà che l’Italia chiederà. Dovremo anche attivare il fondo per l’agricoltura e l’Italia potrà usare i fondi di coesione e parte del piano di rilancio europeo per la ricostruzione e la prevenzione.

È stato ricordato, in Romagna si dice «tin bota», vuol dire «tieni duro», «sii coraggioso». Anche noi, come i romagnoli, cari colleghi, dovremo essere rapidi e coraggiosi e fare tutto il necessario per una ricostruzione più efficiente, sostenibile e resiliente.

Niklas Nienass (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin! Zunächst einmal möchte ich den Familien und den Angehörigen, die Menschen und Angehörige verloren haben, die ihre Lebensgrundlage verloren haben, mein herzliches Beileid aussprechen. Diese Katastrophe führt uns leider wieder einmal traurig vor Augen, dass wir mitten in der Klimakatastrophe sind. Und ich glaube, wir müssen daraus endlich lernen. Wir müssen daraus Schlüsse ziehen, die mehr als einfach nur ein Leugnen sind, dass die Klimakatastrophe ja nicht schuld wäre oder dass sie nicht existiere oder dergleichen. Was also können wir lernen?

Erstens an die Kommission: Kein Cent aus Europa darf in die Klimakatastrophe hineingesteckt werden – kein Cent mehr darf in mehr CO₂-Ausstöße reingehen, in mehr Gefährdung der Umwelt.

Zweitens: Die Kommission muss eine Karte vorlegen, aus der ganz klar hervorgeht, welche Regionen besonders stark von Katastrophen gefährdet sind, damit wir dort anfangen können, wirklich etwas Resilientes aufzubauen und einen Umbau zu gestalten, damit die nächste Katastrophe nicht so schlimm wird und nicht so viele Menschenleben kostet.

Drittens: Wir müssen uns um den Umbau des Solidaritätsfonds kümmern. Der Solidaritätsfonds ist eine gute Idee, aber er funktioniert nicht in dem Maße, in dem wir ihn brauchen. Er ist zu klein, zu umständlich, zu bürokratisch und einfach nicht geeignet, den Bedrohungen der Zukunft, der Klimakrise entgegenzuwirken.

Leugnen, Herr Dorfmann, nützt hier gar nichts. Wir müssen uns der Herausforderung stellen, auch im Ansehen der Opfer dieser Katastrophen, um ihnen gerecht zu werden und weitere zu verhindern.

(Der Redner ist damit einverstanden, auf eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“ zu antworten.)

Bogdan Rzońca (ECR), *pytanie zadane przez podniesienie niebieskiej kartki*. – Mam takie pytanie, ponieważ zgadzam się z Panem, że ten fundusz solidarności jest po prostu za mały, a biurokracja działa zbyt wolno w sytuacjach katastrof. Unia Europejska traci wtedy dobrą opinię. Co w takich sytuacjach katastrofalnych, dramatycznych? Teraz mamy przegląd wieloletnich ram finansowych. Czy nie uważa Pan, że przy okazji dyskusji o tych różnych przesunięciach powinniśmy po prostu zwiększyć ten fundusz i uprościć procedurę w oczywistych sytuacjach sięgania po te pieniądze?

Niklas Nienass (Verts/ALE), *blue-card answer*. – Well, I believe that the streamlining of the procedure would be helpful, but I don't think that a simple increase of the funds is enough, because honestly, we don't know when a catastrophe will come. We don't know if it is at the beginning or at the end of the MFF. We don't know in which size it will come for the future. I think what we need is an insurance scheme in which all Member States make sure that they pay in when catastrophes come, so that it is available all the time for all the region when it is needed. But bureaucracy will still be need to be reduced, and not just in the line of finances, but also in the rebuilding, meaning that we need to ensure that the regions at hand have it easier to access funding, have it easier to spend the money, and to get into building up and building up resistance instead of building up the same scheme over and over. Thank you for your question.

Camilla Laureti (S&D). – Signora Presidente, abbiamo tutti ancora davanti agli occhi le immagini drammatiche dell'alluvione che ha devastato l'Emilia-Romagna e in parte le Marche e la Toscana. Immagini che non possono e non devono sfumare, ma la memoria di quello che è accaduto deve trasformarsi in pratica di sostegno verso le famiglie e le imprese e verso queste comunità ferite ma resilienti. Interi settori, a partire da quello dell'agricoltura, hanno bisogno del nostro aiuto, ora.

Quel «tin bota» risuona dalla Romagna fino a quest'Aula e a noi spetta il compito di lavorare affinché attraverso strumenti finanziari dell'Unione, come il Fondo di solidarietà, sia dato pieno sostegno a un'area così importante anche dal punto di vista produttivo. Superata l'emergenza, deve iniziare la ricostruzione. Qui si gioca la partita della nuova Europa, quella del NextGeneration e della solidarietà comune, ma anche quella del Green Deal e della sostenibilità ambientale, economica e sociale.

Non abbiamo a disposizione un secondo tempo, come purtroppo ci ricorda questa tragedia.

Paolo De Castro (S&D). – Signora Presidente, signor Commissario, onorevoli colleghi, le alluvioni delle scorse settimane, che hanno causato quindici vittime e sommerso, solo in Emilia-Romagna, decine di migliaia di ettari, mettendo in ginocchio il 50 per cento delle aziende agricole della regione, sono solo l'ultima delle sempre più frequenti catastrofi climatiche che affliggono le nostre aree rurali e tutti i nostri cittadini.

In questa situazione l'Unione europea non può rimanere in attesa. Oltre all'attivazione immediata del Fondo di solidarietà europeo, occorre mettere in campo, caro Commissario, tutte le azioni che contribuiscono al ripristino del potenziale produttivo agricolo e zootecnico danneggiato, accompagnate da opportune risorse. In questo senso, va garantita quella flessibilità alla regione Emilia-Romagna, che deve modificare il proprio piano di sviluppo rurale, con misure straordinarie da finanziare tramite l'utilizzo della riserva di crisi della PAC, come Lei ha detto.

Servono dunque decisioni urgenti e ambiziose per dare risposte concrete agli oltre 40 000 operatori impegnati nella filiera agroalimentare emiliano-romagnola, pronti a rialzarsi ancora una volta, nonostante le enormi difficoltà che stanno affrontando.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, how many debates this week has Parliament played a destructive role in? Both the Nature Restoration Law and the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Regulation are being attacked by the big groups in here so as to ensure that biodiversity is destroyed and fossil fuel companies continue to get a free hand to cause global warming.

Yes, we say we're concerned about the people and the farmers of Italia, because they're suffering from global warming and biodiversity loss. Last year, over 70% of the rice crop in Italy was destroyed because there wasn't enough rain. This year the crops will be destroyed because there's too much of it and the soil is not able to actually deal with the water because it has deteriorated so far from artificial chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

And yet the EPP walked out of the Nature Restoration Law negotiations today. They walked out! You say you care about the people and the farmers of Italia. Well, if you do, you can start by voting for the Nature Restoration Law.

Jutta Paulus (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen, liebe Kollegen, lieber Herr Kommissar! Auch mein Mitgefühl gilt an allererster Stelle den Menschen in der Emilia-Romagna, die ihr Leben verloren haben, ihre Angehörigen verloren haben, ihr Hab und Gut verloren haben. Und ich weiß, wovon ich spreche, denn vor zwei Jahren hatten wir eine ähnliche Katastrophe in meiner Heimat in Rheinland-Pfalz im Ahrtal, wo auch über 100 Todesopfer zu beklagen waren.

Und, liebe Kolleginnen, liebe Kollegen, das wird nicht aufhören, das wird nicht weggehen. Wir werden eine Zunahme dieser Ereignisse sehen. Das ist das, was die Wissenschaft uns sagt. Und heute erst ist eine Studie vom *Stockholm Resilience Centre* rausgekommen, die zeigt, dass wir uns bei mehreren der planetaren Grenzen im unsicheren Raum bewegen.

Deswegen appelliere ich an alle, die es noch nicht mitbekommen haben: Die Natur ist unsere Alliierte, wenn es darum geht, den Klimawandel zu begrenzen und uns vor den Folgen des Klimawandels zu schützen. Mit der Renaturierung von Flüssen, von Feuchtgebieten können wir den *impact*, die Auswirkungen dieser Starkregenereignisse abmildern – aber dafür müssen wir auch was tun.

Bitte, liebe EVP, kommen Sie zurück an den Verhandlungstisch. Machen Sie mit bei den demokratischen Prozessen und hören Sie auf, nur zu blockieren, denn das wird den Menschen in Europa nicht helfen.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Janez Lenarčič, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, honourable Members, thank you for your valuable contributions today. It is gratifying to hear all the support for Italy and for people in need across the Emilia-Romagna region. The situation is slowly improving thanks to both national and European efforts. In the town of Sabatina, Belgian, Slovakian and Slovenian teams have helped to clear the water and are fixing the damage that is left behind. And in Ravenna, where European aid, coordinated by our civil protection mechanism, stopped the flooding of the historic city centre, operations have already been completed.

But this disaster and its impact will affect Italy for a long time into the future, and Europe will be there to help supporting the country's recovery and building its resilience with the aid of multiple funds such as the EU Solidarity Fund, the European Regional Development Fund programme, the Agricultural Emergency reserve, but also funding, such as the Recovery and Resilience Plan of Italy and Cohesion Policy funds, will help to strengthen the country in the face of this and future crisis. Together, we will rebuild and together will strengthen and build Italy's resilience to natural disasters.

But I repeat, we must not lose sight of the wider picture and of the wider challenge ahead. The climate crisis means that extreme weather events are occurring with increased frequency and intensity around the world, and Europe is not spared. We must be ready to better face the challenges of this new, more dangerous reality. The Commission will do its part.

Die Präsidentin. – Die Aussprache ist damit geschlossen.

17. Geographical Indications for wine, spirit drinks and agricultural products (debate)

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über den Bericht von Paolo De Castro im Namen des Ausschusses für Landwirtschaft und ländliche Entwicklung über geografische Angaben für Wein, Spirituosen und landwirtschaftliche Erzeugnisse (COM(2022)0134 - C9-0130/2022 - 2022/0089(COD)) (A9-0173/2023).

Paolo De Castro, Relatore. – Signora Presidente, Commissario, onorevoli colleghi, dopo oltre un anno di lavoro, ci accingiamo a esprimere la posizione del Parlamento sulla proposta di regolamento sulle indicazioni geografiche.

Una proposta, caro Commissario, che rappresenta uno dei pochi, se non l'unico atto legislativo discusso in questa legislatura a supporto di un settore agricolo e agroalimentare più competitivo, integrato e in grado di creare valore aggiunto a beneficio delle nostre aree rurali.

Voglio quindi ringraziare, innanzitutto, tutti i relatori ombra, i relatori dei pareri della commissione JURI e della commissione INTA e tutto il team negoziale del Parlamento per il lavoro svolto in questi mesi, che ha portato all'approvazione unanime del testo in commissione agricoltura.

Un risultato inatteso che dimostra come, quando si condividano obiettivi sostanziali, lasciando da parte istanze più superficiali e di parte, è possibile raggiungere compromessi ambiziosi, nel solo interesse dei nostri agricoltori e dei nostri produttori.

Venendo al testo, il nostro intento non è quello di rivoluzionare, ma di far evolvere un sistema senza eguali nel mondo, capace di generare valore senza bisogno di investire alcun fondo pubblico. Alcune modifiche sono quindi necessarie, già a partire dagli obiettivi di questa riforma, che dovranno garantire un reddito adeguato ai produttori di qualità, contribuendo al raggiungimento degli obiettivi dello sviluppo rurale.

Il lavoro del Parlamento si è poi incardinato su quattro pilastri: il rafforzamento del ruolo dei consorzi, la maggiore protezione, la semplificazione e il chiarimento del ruolo dell'EUIPO, la sostenibilità e la trasparenza.

In merito al primo punto, i consorzi, Commissario, rappresentano il motore dello sviluppo delle indicazioni geografiche e devono rimanere in mano solo ai produttori, con maggiori e migliori responsabilità, tra cui la lotta alle pratiche svalorizzanti e la promozione del «turismo a indicazione geografica», che riteniamo possa rivelarsi un vero volano per lo sviluppo dei nostri territori.

Passando all'obiettivo della protezione più efficace, chiediamo più coraggio riguardo alla protezione online, che potrà e dovrà, a nostro avviso, diventare ex-officio, e la protezione quando le indicazioni geografiche vengono utilizzate come ingredienti, rendendo obbligatoria l'autorizzazione da parte del consorzio.

Vogliamo poi eliminare tutte quelle falle del sistema che consentono a Stati membri o produttori di sfruttare indebitamente la reputazione delle indicazioni geografiche tramite norme tecniche nazionali o addirittura strumenti unionali, quali le menzioni tradizionali.

Per semplificare davvero il sistema di registrazione, abbiamo definito tempi certi per l'esame delle richieste e delle modifiche dei disciplinari di produzione da parte della Commissione. Allo stesso tempo chiediamo di ridurre ai soli casi strettamente necessari il doppio scrutinio – nazionale prima e della Commissione poi – che ad oggi rallenta significativamente ogni procedura di modifica.

Verranno quindi ridotti i dossier da analizzare a livello europeo, ed è per questo che si rende necessario un maggiore coinvolgimento, in particolare nella fase di scrutinio dei disciplinari, dell'Ufficio europeo della proprietà intellettuale.

EUIPO, invece, potrà dare un importante supporto consultivo su questioni tecniche, amministrative e contribuire alla tutela e alla promozione delle indicazioni geografiche, tramite lo sviluppo di un registro europeo.

Venendo al necessario obiettivo della sostenibilità, la natura stessa delle IG, la loro tradizione secolare, confermano come questi prodotti siano sostenibili di per sé. Ma per poter meglio comunicare ai consumatori l'impegno dei nostri produttori, chiediamo ai consorzi di elaborare un rapporto di sostenibilità che spieghi ciò che svolgono in termini di sostenibilità ambientale, economica e sociale e di rispetto del benessere animale.

Strettamente collegato al tema della sostenibilità è quello della trasparenza. Trasparenza verso il consumatore: per questo, chiediamo di indicare sull'etichetta di qualsiasi prodotto IG, il nome del produttore, e per prodotti IGP chiediamo che venga indicata l'origine della materia prima quando questa non è del paese membro dove è registrata.

Presidente, Commissario, onorevoli colleghi, non abbiamo più tempo da perdere perché i nostri agricoltori possano beneficiare al più presto delle opportunità derivanti da questo regolamento. Per questo, chiedo a tutti un mandato forte in vista dell'avvio dei triloghi che inizieremo già la prossima settimana con la Presidenza svedese.

Janusz Wojciechowski, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, I would like to thank Mr De Castro for his firm commitment in drafting this report, as well as Mr Vázquez Lázara, rapporteur for the Associated Committee on Legal Affairs. Thanks also to all shadow rapporteurs and honourable Members for their contributions and suggestions. It has been a year of intense and fruitful discussion.

I am glad to see you that you have supported the main objective of this review, which is to further strengthen the system of geographical indications, including the introduction of certain novelties that the Commission put forward in its proposal. I can assure you that we will carefully analyse all the amendments against this shared policy objective and will support the forthcoming institutional negotiations accordingly.

However, I would like to highlight three major elements of concern for the Commission. They concern the involvement of EU IPO, as well as changes introduced in relation to the wine sector and GI audits. Firstly, the amendments proposed by Parliament are considerably scaling down the proposed role of EU IPO by limiting it to certain supporting tasks that are of an administrative nature. In comparison to the current situation, this would negatively affect the efficiency of the registration process. I regret this choice. Our objective is to ensure that we can continue to effectively cooperate and join forces with EU IPO, including in areas such as further development of IT, tools and enforcement of our GIs. I would like to assure you that there is no aim to outsource the GI registration to EU IPO. This will stay with the Commission. What we seek is technical assistance of EU IPO during the scrutiny process, not more, not less.

A second major concern for the Commission are the amendments made in relation to the wine sector duplicating provisions in two pieces of legislation – The GI Regulation and the CMO regulation – which would lead to fragmentation and complexity. This would undermine the objective of the proposal to have one set of common rules on procedures and protection for all three sectors: wine, spirit drinks and agricultural products. Such an approach would also have an adverse effect on the international perception of our GI system.

Thirdly, and finally, let me also add a critical note on the reintroduction of the requirement for the Commission to perform audits on the GI system in place in the Member States, in failing to see how one audit in a time span of 20 years will bring any added value to the functioning of the GI control systems in place in the Member States, which is ultimately their responsibility.

Dear honourable Members, I look forward to a positive outcome today that will allow the start of discussions between the three institutions and to have the reviewed GI system as soon as possible.

Daniilo Oscar Lancini, *relatore per parere della commissione per il commercio internazionale*. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, finalmente una notizia positiva per l'agricoltura, dopo che l'avete massacrata con norme assurde, come la revisione della direttiva emissioni industriali o la folle etichettatura del vino come nocivo, per non parlare dei tagli della PAC.

Con le regole IG diamo più tutela alle eccellenze dei territori, li mettiamo al riparo dalle ingiuste incursioni di operatori senza scrupolo e dalle contraffazioni. Le indicazioni geografiche in Europa sono sinonimo di qualità. Territori, piccole imprese, filiere che da decenni dedicano attenzione alla sostenibilità e nel contempo alla produzione di eccellenza.

Per questo il sistema IG deve essere adottato nel suo complesso all'interno degli accordi commerciali con i paesi extra-UE. È bene che, grazie ai nostri emendamenti, sia stato disciplinato il ruolo di EUIPO. Se alla Commissione rimangono in capo le competenze amministrative, EUIPO entra in gioco quando si tratta di assistere facoltativamente i produttori negli accordi di libero scambio.

Questo suggerimento, partito da INTA, è stato recepito in AGRI ed oggi contribuirà ad aumentare gli strumenti a disposizione delle nostre filiere produttive.

Álvaro Amaro, *em nome do Grupo PPE*. – Senhora Presidente, Caras e Caros Colegas, a proposta de regulamento que estamos hoje a discutir decorreu de negociações que apresentavam dificuldades face às especificidades e face aos legítimos interesses em causa, quer dos produtores dos agrupamentos, quer dos comercializadores, quer, naturalmente, dos pontos de vista aqui e ali diferentes dos vários Estados-Membros.

Mas é este relatório que, certamente, amanhã veremos aprovado e que o foi, por unanimidade, na Comissão da Agricultura. Isto diz bem como foi possível, e permitam-me dizer que, naturalmente, com o trabalho de todos, senão não teria havido essa unanimidade, sem falsa modéstia, com o meu contributo, do meu grupo político, do PPE, conseguimos conciliar estes pontos de vista diferentes, por exemplo no caso particular do vinho, que teve tanta discussão.

E, aqui, referindo-me ao trabalho que o meu grupo político fez, que eu próprio fiz enquanto relator-sombra, obviamente que não posso esquecer o trabalho que todos os meus colegas também fizeram e, naturalmente, na pessoa do relator, o nosso colega Paolo de Castro, que também soube perceber e acolher muitos dos pontos de vista que tínhamos.

É um bom exemplo – e espero que a Comissão Europeia esteja particularmente atenta – de como é possível produzir legislação que concilie os vários interesses em presença. A votação unânime que tivemos na Comissão da Agricultura é uma boa lição de como na política é sempre mais importante defender os interesses dos destinatários das políticas públicas do que única e exclusivamente a ideologia.

Em relação ao vinho: obviamente que, havendo pontos de vista diferentes, conseguimos que, de facto, a especificidade de um produto tão importante para a economia agrícola, e tão importante para vários Estados-Membros, permanecesse na Política Agrícola Comum na sua parte substancial. E é, por isso, com muita satisfação que vejo esta posição da Comissão da Agricultura e que espero que nas votações de amanhã a consigamos manter.

Clara Aguilera, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señora presidenta, señor comisario, querido Paolo, quiero felicitar a nuestro colega, Paolo De Castro, por el trabajo que ha realizado, así como a los ponentes alternativos. Creo que se ha hecho un gran trabajo.

Es verdad que es un Reglamento muy importante. Aquí se unifica la mayor parte de la normativa relativa a las indicaciones geográficas —no todas, hay una parte del vino que permanece en la OCM única—. Pero yo creo que el acuerdo es bueno, sobre todo, porque estamos reforzando un sistema que no solo pretende reforzar una marca, no es una marca comercial, todos lo sabemos: es cultura, tradición, patrimonio, zonas rurales, nuestros pueblos. Esto es lo que significa este Reglamento; es muy, muy importante. Por tanto, yo me siento orgullosa del trabajo que se ha realizado por parte de todos.

Yo sé que el Comisario ha dicho que no le ha gustado el lugar de la EUIPO. Nosotros consideramos que la EUIPO puede ayudar, pero no tener un papel principal. Ese papel tiene que corresponder a la DG AGRI. Esa es la opinión de este Parlamento y yo creo que debemos felicitarnos todos.

Y, por último, quiero añadir que no solo hemos reforzado el sistema: esta es la base del sistema y la base de las zonas rurales. Por lo tanto, sigamos apoyando estas indicaciones geográficas que claramente son una marca de la calidad europea.

Irène Tolleret, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Commissaire, je voudrais tout d'abord féliciter le rapporteur, cher Paolo, te remercier et remercier tous les groupes politiques pour leur travail constructif sur ce dossier qui a reçu un vote à l'unanimité complète en Commission agriculture. Je vous invite donc, chers collègues, à soutenir ce texte dans sa version lors du vote de demain.

Je crois que ce rapport nous permettra d'aborder les trilogues en position de force. Je salue particulièrement le compromis que nous avons trouvé pour préserver la spécificité du vin, qui est un secteur-clé en terme d'indication géographique. Si je comprends ce qu'a dit Monsieur le Commissaire concernant la simplification administrative, nous devons nous demander à qui elle est destinée.

S'agit-il simplification administrative pour la Commission ou pour les organisations de producteurs? Pour moi, c'est clairement pour les producteurs.

Je me suis donc battue pour trouver une solution équilibrée qui tienne également compte de la nécessité de simplifier ces procédures. Et j'espère maintenant que le paquet «vin» contenu dans ce rapport sera bien accueilli par le Conseil. Le vin a toujours joué un rôle d'avant-garde dans l'amélioration du régime des IG et il serait dommage de le condamner à la stagnation.

Je me réjouis également que le Parlement se soit prononcé contre l'externalisation des tâches de gestion des IG, qui doivent rester entre les mains de la DG AGRI de la Commission. Le système de produits de qualité est un élément-clé de la PAC, le transfert des fonctions à l'EUIPO constituait un précédent dangereux. Merci à tous. Bon vote demain.

Claude Gruffat, *au nom du groupe Verts/ALE*. – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Commissaire, chers collègues, moi aussi, je vais commencer par remercier le rapporteur Paolo. Quel succès ce soir! Et si tous les rapporteurs avaient un tel succès dans leurs dossiers pour tout le travail fait et toute la collaboration avec les rapporteurs fictifs autour du dossier, ce fut vraiment un plaisir de travailler sur ce dossier.

Les indications géographiques font partie de notre patrimoine commun européen et ce rapport vise à le protéger au maximum. Plusieurs points que je vais évoquer ici vont dans ce sens. Tout d'abord, la DG AGRI de la Commission préserve son rôle dans l'approbation ou l'opposition de l'octroi d'une IG. Nous avons en effet, et en bloc, refusé que l'EUIPO obtienne cette prérogative. Il était important que l'Europe reste maître du jeu sur la gestion d'un patrimoine aussi précieux que celui des IG.

Nous avons permis à des groupes de producteurs reconnus d'avoir un pouvoir de décision dans leur cahier des charges. Et cela nous paraissait aussi quelque chose d'important pour le vin. Par souci de cohérence, les IG du vin resteront dans l'OCM, on était assez d'accord là-dessus.

Et enfin, dernier point qui me tenait particulièrement à cœur, sur lequel nous n'avons malheureusement pas été assez loin: ce sont les engagements de durabilité qui se font sur la base du volontariat. Ce n'est pas une mauvaise chose, mais on n'est pas allés assez loin sur les sujets qui peuvent être objets de cette durabilité, climat, biodiversité, etc. Mais je fais confiance aux acteurs de la qualité pour faire entrer ces préoccupations rapidement dans leurs préoccupations. Et j'invite aussi à voter ce texte.

Mazaly Aguilar, *en nombre del Grupo ECR*. – Señora presidenta, señor comisario, yo sigo sin entender por qué la Comisión se empeña en proponer una reforma que añade más burocracia a un sistema de indicaciones geográficas que funciona perfectamente y que es muy importante para el sector agrícola. Y como algunos de mis colegas ya me han escuchado decir, yo siempre digo que, si algo funciona, no se toca.

El posible traspaso de la gestión de estos regímenes de la Unión Europea a la Oficina de Propiedad Intelectual de la Unión Europea, la famosa EUIPO, no es una buena idea. Tiene que ser y debe ser la DG AGRI, que conoce bien los productos y la realidad agrícola, quien debe seguir siendo el interlocutor válido para estas indicaciones geográficas.

A la Comisión se le llena la boca hablando de sostenibilidad, pero me gustaría recordarle que, sin rentabilidad, no puede existir esa sostenibilidad. Y eso no hace falta recordárselo a los productores, la mayoría de los cuales son pequeñas y medianas empresas, que saben muy bien lo que significa esto, porque, de no ser así, deberían cerrar.

El informe de mi colega Paolo De Castro ha recogido fielmente las preocupaciones de todos los miembros de este grupo de trabajo de la Comisión de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural y corrige el documento de la Comisión que, como de costumbre, se aleja de la realidad del campo y de los agricultores. También quiero agradecer al resto de mis colegas su buena disposición y que hayan llegado a un punto en el que todos estamos de acuerdo.

Elena Lizzi, *a nome del gruppo ID*. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, saluto il relatore ombra De Castro, il Commissario e i colleghi di questo dossier.

Da relatrice ombra e per conto della Lega-Salvini Premier, sottolineo che votiamo a favore, come del resto abbiamo già fatto in commissione, di questa proposta di revisione perché è fondamentale per il comparto, fondamentale per l'Italia, che detiene anche il maggior numero di prodotti agroalimentari riconosciuti dall'Unione.

I casi Prosecco e aceto balsamico non dovranno più ripetersi. Signor Commissario, io non voglio più sentire da alcune persone che lavorano nella DG AGRI che non si possono confondere questi vini perché uno si beve con gli alimenti e l'altro si beve con il dolce. Per questo motivo abbiamo inserito due emendamenti per difendere le nostre indicazioni geografiche. Come Lega lotteremo su tutti i tavoli europei.

Visto che poi Lei ha citato il ruolo dell'EUIPO, deve ricordare che il voto è stato unanime, che è un chiaro messaggio anche a Lei e alla Commissione in generale. Il nostro gruppo manterrà una posizione ferma riguardo al ruolo dell'EUIPO, volendo limitare il trasferimento di deleghe dalla DG AGRI. Non vogliamo che venga trasformata, diciamo, la competenza ed essendo politicamente sensibili sull'argomento, continueremo a lottare affinché le disposizioni del settore del vino più importanti restino all'interno della PAC per consentire revisioni più snelle e avere più protezione.

Eugenia Rodríguez Palop, *en nombre del Grupo The Left*. – Señora presidenta, señor comisario, las indicaciones geográficas son un instrumento de desarrollo rural enormemente útil. Generan valor añadido en los productos agrícolas, benefician a los productores primarios y contribuyen al sostenimiento del empleo. Permiten que nuestra sociedad comprenda que las cosas no solo valen por sí mismas, sino también por la forma en que se producen, por sus vínculos con el territorio, las mejores tradiciones y el saber común. Por eso, las indicaciones geográficas no se limitan a proteger un nombre, sino que son, sobre todo, un instrumento de política agraria.

El sistema que hemos tenido hasta ahora ha dado muy buenos resultados, pero este informe los mejora. Refuerza el papel de las agrupaciones de productores, mantiene al sector vitivinícola en el marco de la política agrícola común, adjudica a la EUIPO el papel adecuado y deja claro que, cuando hablamos de indicaciones geográficas, no hablamos solo de marcas en competencia, sino de las personas que hay detrás, las actividades que comparten y los recursos que sostienen, que no se trata solo de regular mercados o adjudicar precios, sino de proteger bienes inmateriales de valor incalculable.

Quizás hubiera faltado una apuesta más contundente en favor de la sostenibilidad, pero felicidades, señor De Castro, y felicidades a todos los ponentes. Ha sido un gran trabajo y votaremos a favor.

Marc Tarabella (NI). – Madame la Présidente, les pratiques illégales relatives aux indications géographiques agricoles représentent 9 % de l'ensemble du secteur. Il était donc grand temps de réviser le système afin qu'il puisse profiter pleinement à l'économie rurale, et atteigne un niveau de protection plus élevé, en particulier pour le commerce en ligne. Je salue le rapporteur Paolo De Castro.

J'insisterais sur trois points: les avancées notoires dans le domaine, tels que l'interdiction d'utiliser une IG dans le nom d'un produit dont seulement un des ingrédients est une IG. Ensuite, la fermeture automatique des noms de domaine en ligne frauduleux utilisant des IG. Ou encore l'introduction de la durabilité dans les critères de qualité du produit.

C'est une réelle avancée pour les producteurs, les artisans et tous les consommateurs européens. Enfin, comme le suggère Eric Andrieu, mon ami et référent en matière de vitiviniculture, dont c'est la dernière plénière aujourd'hui, je voterai contre les amendements 264, 266 et 267 qui affaibliraient la réglementation IGP pour le secteur du vin.

Herbert Dorfmann (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Lebensmittel mit geografischen Ursprungsbezeichnungen sind ein Kulturgut unserer Union, der Regionen und vor allem der Menschen, die sie erzeugen. Natürlich sind diese Lebensmittel auch aus wirtschaftlicher Sicht wichtig. Wir produzieren in der Europäischen Union jährlich Lebensmittel mit geografischen Herkunftsangaben im Wert von rund 75 Millionen Euro, Tendenz steigend. 15 % der Lebensmittel, die wir exportieren, tragen eine solche Bezeichnung.

Aber es geht um mehr: Welche Produkte aus Europa schätzen Menschen weltweit? Weine, Käse, Spirituosen, Wurstwaren mit Ursprungsbezeichnung oder irgendein Magermilchpulver oder ein No-Name-Schweinefleisch? Diese Produkte sind Speerspitzen unseres Exports, und deshalb haben wir dafür zu sorgen, dass unsere Bezeichnungen in Europa und weltweit vor Missbrauch und Nachahmungen geschützt werden. Diese Produkte prägen aber auch Regionen in ganz Europa: Stellen Sie sich mal die Champagne, Barolo, die Mosel ohne Weinberg vor, den Comté ohne Käse.

Wir stimmen morgen über eine ambitionierte Reform unserer Gesetzgebung ab. Mit dieser Reform werden wir einen noch besseren Schutz der Bezeichnungen in Europa und in der Welt haben. Und wir sollten dem so zustimmen, wie wir es bereits im Agrarausschuss getan haben.

Isabel Carvalhais (S&D). – Senhora Presidente, eu gostaria de começar por saudar o Deputado Paolo De Castro, o nosso relator, pelo seu empenho num dossiê particularmente importante e relevante para o nosso mundo rural, ou não tivessem as indicações geográficas uma profunda conexão com as nossas comunidades e com todo o património cultural das nossas zonas rurais. E, por isso, é tão importante garantir a sua coerência com as políticas agrícola e de desenvolvimento rural, e penso que tal será melhor assegurado se forem alvo de uma gestão conjunta como aquela que aqui é proposta.

A revisão do regulamento das indicações geográficas é uma oportunidade para reforçar a defesa deste instrumento tão valioso na promoção de uma produção agrícola diversificada, mais harmoniosa com o meio ambiente e de maior valorização económica para os nossos agricultores.

Em paralelo, é também uma oportunidade para responder a muitos dos novos desafios que se colocam, seja por via do comércio eletrónico ou pela utilização de produtos processados. Portanto, eu acredito que o relatório do Parlamento inclui elementos muito relevantes para nos ajudar a responder a estes desafios e que permitirá reforçar a proteção das nossas indicações geográficas.

Nicola Procaccini (ECR). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, ciò che stiamo per approvare era atteso da tanti e da molto tempo.

La tutela delle indicazioni geografiche è una questione economica, ma è soprattutto una questione di rispetto per la storia, le tradizioni e la cultura agroalimentare delle nostre nazioni.

Per anni abbiamo assistito impotenti alla concorrenza sleale di prodotti come il Parmesan o il Prosec, che richiamavano meschinamente alle nostre eccellenze. Oggi possiamo finalmente mettere la parola fine a questo mercato alternativo che vive sulle spalle dei produttori. La maggiore trasparenza sulle vendite online e il divieto di evocazione delle denominazioni protette porteranno ad una giusta tutela del settore.

Approviamo questo testo all'unanimità, come abbiamo già fatto in Commissione. Proteggiamo ciò che ci identifica nel tempo e nello spazio. Lo dobbiamo a chi ci ha preceduto e a chi verrà dopo di noi.

Jean-Lin Lacapelle (ID). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, en tant que Français, nous sommes, peut-être plus que tous, particulièrement attachés au principe des appellations contrôlées et protégées. La France est pionnière, vous le savez, sur cette question, en créant dès 1935 les appellations d'origine contrôlée. Les indications géographiques doivent être un rempart contre la domination des marques venues de l'étranger, et dont les accords de libre-échange de l'Union européenne favorisent la concurrence déloyale.

Permettez-moi d'être chauvin. Qui ne se sent pas français lorsqu'on évoque les vins de Bordeaux, le champagne, le cognac, l'armagnac, qui font de nos terroirs des lieux irremplaçables de civilisation. Les appellations viticoles seront donc conservées dans le cadre actuel, et c'est une bonne chose car nos viticulteurs ont failli connaître de nouveaux déboires après l'extension des affichages obligatoires sur les bouteilles. Méfiance cependant sur le règlement à venir, sur le recyclage des bouteilles qui sera impraticable pour les liqueurs et plusieurs formats de vins spécifiques.

Une fois n'est pas coutume, je félicite l'ensemble de nos collègues pour avoir pris en compte un certain nombre de nos recommandations qui vont dans le sens des intérêts de nos viticulteurs. Nous défendrons toujours nos terroirs parce que, comme le disait Frédéric le Grand: «Il en est des hommes comme des vignes qui se ressentent toujours du terroir où elles ont été plantées».

Dino Giarrusso (NI). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, il sistema delle indicazioni geografiche ha fatto tanto per le eccellenze europee, risultando utile ai produttori, specie a quelli virtuosi e ai consumatori, europei e non solo. Per migliorarlo si potevano forse semplificare alcune procedure di riconoscimento degli enti, non altro.

La Commissione dovrebbe ricordare che gli operatori del sistema DOP e IGP in pochi anni hanno contribuito a creare un sistema alimentare di qualità riconosciuto in tutto il mondo, che vale oltre 75 miliardi di euro, e dobbiamo tutelarli, aiutarli, ancora e meglio.

La battaglia all'interno dell'Unione per primeggiare in un settore non deve essere accompagnata da regole che svantaggiano alcuni Stati membri favorendone altri. È per questo che i compromessi che abbiamo raggiunto in AGRI, anche grazie al lavoro fatto con il collega De Castro che ringrazio, ci rassicurano.

Abbiamo il dovere di preservare quelle buone pratiche, come il sistema DOP e IGP, che hanno portato alla ricchezza e allo sviluppo di interi settori e regioni e non permetteremo che, con la scusa di migliorarle, si affossi un sistema che in Europa ha funzionato e funziona.

Tomislav Sokol (PPE). – Poštovana potpredsjednice, povjereniče, kolegice i kolege, ovo je izvješće izuzetno problematično i ne mogu ga podržati u obliku u kojem je usvojeno na nadležnom odboru. Njime se očito želi onemogućiti zaštita hrvatskog prošek. Prošek je tradicionalno slatko desertno vino koje se bojom, mirisom, cijenom i načinom konzumacije u potpunosti razlikuje od talijanskog pjenušavog vina *prosecco*. Zbog toga je neprihvatljivo da se kroz pravila o homonimiji ovim izvješćem želi Hrvatskoj oduzeti legitimno pravo na zaštitu tradicionalnog naziva *prošek*.

Podsjećam, Europska komisija prethodno je zauzela stajalište da homonimija, odnosno sličnost u nazivu, sama po sebi nije dovoljan čimbenik za odbijanje zahtjeva za zaštitu tradicionalnog izraza te da dva slična naziva mogu koegzistirati. To je dijametralno suprotno od onoga što je sadržano u ovom izvješću. Pored navedenog, ovim izvješćem pokušava se stvoriti osnova za retroaktivno poništavanje odluke Europske komisije kojom bi se, u postupku koji je već u tijeku, Hrvatskoj priznala zaštita tradicionalnog naziva *prošek*. Ovdje bih naglasio da bi bilo posve nelogično kada bi *prosecco* uživao zaštitu po europskom pravu, samo zato što je Italija ranije od Hrvatske postala članicom Europske unije pa je utoliko ranije i ostvarila zaštitu naziva tog pjenušavog vina, a da se hrvatskom prošek takva zaštita uskрати.

Zato pozivam sve da sutra glasuju protiv štetnih amandmana o homonimiji i izvješća ovakvog sadržaja. Kolegice i kolege, prošek ima neprocjenjivo značenje u višestoljetnoj, povijesnoj i enološkoj tradiciji Hrvatske i ona ga ima svako pravo zaštititi kao svoj tradicionalni proizvod.

Daniel Buda (PPE). – Doamna președintă, în primul rând, dați-mi voie să-i felicit pe Paolo De Castro și pe raportorii din umbră pentru munca depusă. Indicațiile geografice reprezintă o garanție a calității produselor alimentare, indiferent de sectoarele despre care vorbim. Fermierii sau grupurile de producători își vor putea consolida poziția în lanțurile de aprovizionare, având la îndemână instrumentele necesare prin care să ofere consumatorilor produse cu o înaltă valoare adăugată și mai ales din regiuni bine definite. Mecanismele concepute în prezentul raport vor permite combaterea eficientă a concurenței neeloiale, aspect care va contribui la păstrarea patrimoniului cultural și gastronomic al regiunilor din Uniunea Europeană.

Atragem mai departe atenția, domnule comisar, asupra nevoii de simplificare a procedurilor pentru obținerea indicațiilor geografice. Comisia Europeană trebuie să intensifice acțiunile de promovare pentru a crește gradul de conștientizare a calității acestor produse în rândul consumatorilor, iar etichetarea trebuie să fie făcută de o manieră care să nu creeze confuzii. Indiferent că vorbim de Telemeaua de Ibănești ori de telemeaua de Sibiu sau Prosciutto di Parma, consumatorul trebuie să aibă garanția calității produselor pentru care oferă un ban în plus.

Anne Sander (PPE). – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Commissaire, chers collègues, les appellations d'origine sont l'âme de nos territoires, et elles en sont le reflet. Nous voulons donc les protéger. Cette idée même qu'une région, qu'un climat ou des savoir-faire donnent leurs caractéristiques à des produits est tout-à-fait unique. Nos appellations ne sont pas reproductibles à l'envi. Elles ne sont pas déplaçables d'un endroit à un autre, elles sont bien liées à un terroir.

Je voudrais vraiment saluer le travail de l'équipe de négociation du Parlement qui a su redresser la barre, et changer le cap initial de la Commission qui voulait finalement les assimiler à des marques en confiant leur examen à l'Office européen des marques.

Je voudrais aussi rappeler qu'elles sont des outils puissants au profit de la vitalité économique des zones rurales, puisqu'elles pèsent 75 milliards d'euros chaque année.

Enfin, je voudrais rappeler leur fragilité et dire qu'à travers ce texte, nous pourrions améliorer leur protection, en particulier sur internet, et lutter ainsi plus efficacement contre la contrefaçon. C'est un bon texte, bravo Monsieur le rapporteur.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Juozas Olekas (S&D). – Gerbiama Pirmininke, gerbiami pranešėjai, Komisijos nary. Iš tikrųjų sveikinu pasiektą rezultatą, kad mes galėsime labiau pažymėti mūsų gaminamus produktus geografinės kilmės ženklu. Tai suteikia ir ten gyvenantiems žmonėms galimybę turėti daugiau darbo vietų. Taip pat pagaminti ir pateikti sveikesnį produktą, nes kaip medikas galiu pasakyti, kad yra tas geografinis ryšys tarp ten augančios produkcijos, gaminamos produkcijos ir ten gyvenančių žmonių. Taip pat galėsime labiau išryškinti savo savitumą, nes mes turėtume didžiulį džiaugsmą, kad Europos Sąjungoje turime daug unikalių geografinių vietų, kur dirba žmonės, kur auginami produktai, kur pateikiami maisto produktai. Ir tai tarsi puokštė žiedų, kur kiekvienas jos elementas tą puokštę praturtina: ar tai būtų itališki vynai, ar tai būtų prancūziški sūriai, ar tai būtų lietuviškas medus. Ačiū Jums už pasiektą rezultatą.

Valter Flego (Renew). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, prijedlog Komisije o oznakama zemljopisnog podrijetla možemo slobodno nazvati Prijedlog o tome kako da velike ribe pojedu male ili velike države male države. I nikako, nikako ga neću podržati. Zašto? Prije svega zbog toga što izvjestitelj, ali vidim, nažalost, i mnogi kolege iz Italije žele zabraniti registraciju novih proizvoda koji svojim imenom podsjećaju na poljoprivredne proizvode koji već imaju europsku zaštitu, npr. hrvatski prošek, talijanski *prosecco* – dva potpuno različita vino, ali sličnog imena. To možda, gospodo, ima veze s političkim bodovima u Italiji, ali nema s europskom tradicijom i pomoći malim, kvalitetnim poljoprivrednim proizvođačima.

Povjereniče, ja sam vama pisao, a sada ovdje i upozoravam da bi prihvaćanje ovakvog prijedloga na dijalogu moglo imati katastrofalne posljedice na zemlje koje imaju sličan jezik. Na zemlje zapadnog Balkana, na primjer, koje čekaju na proširenje, a imaju sličan jezik. Šta ćemo s ajvarom, pitam vas? Zato nemojte pod krinkom nacionalnih interesa, pod navodnicima, dozvoliti uništavanje sjajnih poljoprivrednih proizvoda i donositi takve sulude zakone.

Ladislav Ilčić (ECR). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, poštovani kolege, apsolutno osuđujem postupke onih koji, kad kreiraju neki novi proizvod, daju mu neko ime koje je slično nekom kvalitetnom ili etabliranom drugom proizvodu, e ne bi li se okoristili sličnošću tih imena.

Međutim, pitanje sličnosti imena ne smije biti jedini kriterij. Primjerice, kao što smo čuli, u Hrvatskoj se proizvodi prošek, u Italiji *prosecco*. Hoćemo li gledati samo na sličnost imena ili ćemo uzimati u obzir i druge činjenice?

Prvo, proizvodnja prošeka se prvi put spominje već 1556. godine. Dakle, očito se ne radi o novom proizvodu. Drugo, prošek je, kao što smo čuli, slatko desertno vino, tamnije boje, dok je *prosecco* pjenušac. Dakle, radi se o dva potpuno različita proizvoda. I treće, prošek se proizvodi isključivo lokalno i to u izrazito malim količinama od 20 hektolitara godišnje i takva mikro proizvodnja nikako ne može ugroziti *prosecco*. Dakle, ovaj prijedlog nije dobro izbalansiran, mogao bi ići na štetu malih država i zato vas pozivam da glasujete protiv amandmana 272.

Sandra Pereira (The Left). – Senhora Presidente, em Portugal são vários os produtos que gozam de registo de denominação protegida ou indicação geográfica. Para além do vinho das diferentes regiões e outras bebidas espirituosas, na lista podemos encontrar outros produtos agrícolas, como batatas, arroz, azeitonas, bananas ou cerejas, vários tipos de enchidos e queijos, como o da Serra ou da Ilha, doçaria tradicional como o bolo negro de Loriga, entre tantos outros produtos de qualidade superior, de sabor extraordinário e que veiculam tradições locais.

É imperativo que sejam protegidas, de forma inequívoca, as produções com indicação geográfica e denominação de origem. Se, por um lado, a promoção destes produtos é fundamental, é igualmente essencial a simplificação do processo para o registo e para a obtenção do estatuto para novos produtos, ajudando técnica e financeiramente os produtores que o pretendam fazer.

Da mesma forma, não podemos esquecer o rendimento dos pequenos agricultores e produtores em toda a cadeia de produção e que contribuem para o produto final, evitando também sobrecarregá-los com despesas desnecessárias e injustificadas.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Janusz Wojciechowski, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, I would like to thank you for this very interesting debate and reiterate that the Commission remains committed to work with both the European Parliament and the Council in the forthcoming interinstitutional negotiations to reach an agreement on a legislative proposal that strengthens the system of European agricultural quality schemes.

We aim at ensuring a uniform, high-level protection of all GIs, continuing to support and protect the diversity of the European agricultural sector and heritage.

Paolo De Castro, *Relatore*. – Signora Presidente grazie, grazie Commissario e un grazie sentito a tutti i colleghi e alle parole che hanno voluto usare per ringraziare il team negoziale. Un lavoro di squadra davvero importante di cui sono orgoglioso, e chissà che domani non avremo qualche minuto di soddisfazione vedendo tutto l'emiciclo sostenere questa importante relazione che ha visto la partecipazione di tutti.

Non si tratta solo di curiosità gastronomiche. Vorrei concludere questo dibattito ricordando che stiamo parlando di un pezzo molto rilevante dell'agroalimentare europeo. Ormai abbiamo superato gli 80 miliardi di euro. Un pezzo di storia, di origine, di tradizione, di cultura europea. Dobbiamo essere orgogliosi perché è stata l'Europa che ha costruito questo strumento delle indicazioni geografiche. Lo ha fatto nel 1992, creando questo legame tra prodotto e territorio.

Un'idea straordinaria che continua a crescere. Grazie di nuovo a tutti. Votiamo tutti a favore. È importante avere una forza dal Parlamento europeo per poter negoziare con la Commissione e con il Consiglio.

Die Präsidentin. – Die Aussprache ist damit geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung findet am Donnerstag, 1. Juni 2023, statt.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)

Tonino Picula (S&D), *napisan*. – Podržavam potrebu za jasnim informacijama za potrošače i jačanjem njihove zaštite te pozdravljam ažuriranje postojeće regulative kao odgovora na izazove današnjice. Objedinjavanje regulativa i procedura, pojednostavljivanje administrativnih procedura te jasnija i koherentnija pravila mogu samo doprinijeti unaprjeđenju sustava zaštite i potrošača i proizvođača. Upravo stoga, oštro osuđujem pristup izvjestitelja koji je pokušao iskoristiti ovo važno izvješće za promoviranje partikularnih nacionalnih interesa na štetu odmjerenih i univerzalno primjenjivih pravila kao i neosnovano prejudiciranje rezultata zaštite tradicionalnog hrvatskog desertnog vina prošek.

Postojeća pravila usklađivanja sa zahtjevima geografskog podrijetla već su dovoljno čvrsta, univerzalno primjenjiva te dokazano štite proizvođače vrhunskih europskih proizvoda. U slučaju hrvatskog prošeka i talijanskog *prosecca*, postoje bitne razlike između dva proizvoda te se prosječni europski potrošač ne može zabuniti birajući između desertnog, tamno sirupastog i gustog prošeka u bočici od pola litre te aperitivnog pjenušavo-svijetlog *prosecca* u standardnoj vinskoj butelji. Zakonodavni proces EU, čega je izrada Izvješća ključan dio, ne bi smio biti temeljen na nacionalnoj isključivosti već pravičnosti i univerzalnoj primjenjivosti.

18. Sexual harassment in the EU and MeToo evaluation (debate)

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über den Bericht von Michal Šimečka im Namen des Ausschusses für die Rechte der Frauen und die Gleichstellung der Geschlechter über sexuelle Belästigung in der EU und die Bewertung von MeToo (2022/2138(INI)) (A9-0178/2023).

Michal Šimečka, *rappporteur*. – Madam President, Mr Commissioner, dear colleagues, it is indeed a privilege for me to introduce to you this draft report on sexual harassment and MeToo evaluation in the EU, and not just in my capacity as rapporteur, but also as a father of a three year old daughter, and therefore someone who cares deeply about the kind of society and the kind of environment that she and girls across Europe will grow up and live in. Now, our draft presented to you focuses mainly on the situation in the European institutions or in the European Parliament, but it is important to bear in mind the wider context and culture where harassment is still prevalent in many of our societies. And the problem, of course, is quite clear if you look at the figures and, although sexual harassment and harassment as such affects all Europeans, 90% of victims are women. And 55% of women in the EU have been sexually harassed at least

once since the age of 15. And much has been spoken about and written about this issue especially, and thanks to the MeToo movement more than six years ago. But words, colleagues are not enough and we must do more to eliminate any and all forms of harassment. And we owe it to the victims, not just here in Parliament, but across the continent. And we owe it to the next generation of Europeans.

Now, I would, at this point, like to thank so much all the shadow rapporteurs, all the policy advisers, the assistants and the external experts, because this is a joint product and it is a product of a very constructive work both before and during the vote in committee. The draft report addresses all the core issues and indeed has carried a broad majority in the committee with no one voting against it. And I am especially glad that most of the groups and all the democratic groups have cooperated on this report and that we've been able to find a consensus that can bring us closer to an EU free of sexual harassment.

I should also add that this is not the first resolution of this kind in this mandate. And it is true that many of the commitments from previous resolutions, commitments we have made to the victims here in the European Parliament, and indeed to all Europeans, to combat all forms of gender-based violence, that many of the commitments are yet to be fulfilled. And with this report we hope to close that gap. We propose several clear and easy or quick to implement solutions first and foremost. We as Parliament should put in place zero-tolerance policies that reflect the pain suffered by those who are subject to harassment or abuse. And the draft contains also many other measures, recommendations on anti harassment measures to the European Parliament, to the institutions, but also to Member States governments.

I personally think that the crucial aspect and the crucial thing, at least here in Parliament, but more broadly, is to break the silence of the victims who need our complete protection and support. Because, as we all know, cases here in the European Parliament are still under-reported, which means that existing both formal and informal channels of reporting need to be strengthened because – and this is also why it is important that we focus on the European Parliament – the EU institutions must lead by example here.

I understand and I know that it is not always easy to implement systemic change. It seems difficult at the beginning, but I'm glad to see that many bodies and colleagues here in the European Parliament are working on this, the advisory committees, the Quaestors, the High Level Group on Equality, the EP's own Bureau, but also the working committee in AFCO are engaged in this work and are carrying it forward. And I really do hope that by endorsing this report with a strong majority, we can help end discrimination and gender-based violence here in Parliament and in Europe. Thank you so much.

Johannes Hahn, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, today's debate is a very timely one, as tomorrow the Council will finalise the EU accession process to the Istanbul Convention of the Council of Europe, which aims at preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. I take this occasion to congratulate this House for the essential role it played throughout the process.

The scope of the EU accession also covers the EU public administration. EU institutions, agencies and bodies will need to implement the gold standards of the convention. The finalisation of this process gives additional impetus to the ongoing review of the policy on preventing all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment in the Commission.

This review was identified as a key priority in the Commission's new HR strategy adopted last year in order to apply and further enforce a zero tolerance policy to harassment and ensure a trust-based, inclusive and respectful workplace in line with European values. The review is an opportunity for a large-scale listening exercise and has brought the topic to the fore.

In spring 2021, we polled staff to better understand their views on harassment, but also the experiences of the support services we offer. We have also spoken to stakeholders across the Commission that represent different groups of staff, including LGBTQI staff groups, representing staff from minority backgrounds, senior and middle management staff and trainees.

At the same time, we have engaged in official discussions on the Commission's proposals with staff representatives. Since the start of 2023, we have had detailed discussions with them. This has given us a better insight into particular concerns, including work on prevention as well as on the safeguards that are needed in any redress process.

This wide-ranging dialogue with staff has had two results. One has been to provide us with valuable insights and input into the different texts that make up the review. The second has been to help open up the debate around the subject. Today's debate is therefore important because it frames the issue in a broader political context.

The Commission has a clear position against harassment and is committed to a zero tolerance approach. We are clear in our support for victims of harassment and we are equally clear that those responsible must be held accountable for their actions.

Our focus has been to continue to work on support processes that are closer to victims through a victim-centred approach. We encourage and empower victims to come forward. Without reporting and creating safe spaces to do so, we cannot begin the process of ensuring that those responsible are held accountable.

We believe that staff should continue to be able to have a choice between pursuing both formal and informal means of redress. The formal process involves the appointing authority, where possible disciplinary measures and sanctions. The informal aims to pursue accountability by other means, such as dialogue and conciliation.

Whichever avenue is chosen, all processes must be fair, robust and equitable. Whatever the process, we will also be careful that it cannot be abused. Our aim must be to help staff make a choice about which method best suits their needs by explaining in plain language how the different redress mechanisms work, how they are organised and what result staff can expect.

We continue to believe that confidential counsellors are an important element of support to staff. We are encouraged by those voices that confirm this choice, including those from Parliament and from the European Ombudsman. Anti-harassment training must continue to be open to all staff and offer spaces that are safe and supportive. More vulnerable populations like trainees can benefit from specific training events.

While the different EU institutions have their own policies on fighting harassment, it is also important that we continue to exchange our experiences about the different ways of tackling this phenomenon and ensuring that the Istanbul Convention standards are met so we can build a unity of equality free from violence by starting here at home.

Ewa Kopacz, w imieniu grupy PPE. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Szczególnie chciałam podziękować panu posłowi przewodniczącemu Šimečce za takie bardzo rzetelne i kompleksowe przedstawienie sprawozdania. Pozwólcie Państwo, że dodam jeszcze kilka uwag.

Zmieniają się zwyczaje, ewoluuje też nasza wrażliwość. Co więcej, zmieniają się też narzędzia służące opresorom do molestowania i naruszenia godności. Statystyki są przerażające. Co druga kobieta w Europie była ofiarą jakiejś formy molestowania, a jedną z głównych przyczyn prób samobójczych młodzieży jest hejt i molestowanie w mediach społecznościowych.

Jako Parlament Europejski mamy obowiązek, by odnieść się do zagrożeń dotyczących tak wielkiej grupy, przede wszystkim naszych wyborców, jak i tych, dla których Parlament Europejski jest miejscem pracy, przede wszystkim kobiet, ale przecież nie tylko. Molestowanie jest przecież formą przemocy i naruszenia godności o bardzo wielu twarzach. Jedna rzecz nie budzi wątpliwości, musimy być jako Parlament Europejski wzorem, zarówno gdy idzie o naszą wiedzę, przygotowanie, jak i skuteczność procedur.

Szanowni Państwo! Molestowanie to atak na godność człowieka. Molestowanie potrafi zaburzyć na lata poczucie bezpieczeństwa ofiary. Pozwólcie Państwo, że zarekomenduję przyjęcie tego sprawozdania, ale nie tylko. Proszę również o poważną refleksję nad tym, jak każdy z nas może się temu zjawisku przeciwstawić.

Carina Ohlsson, för S&D-gruppen. – Fru talman! Kommissionär! "If all women who have been sexually harassed or assaulted wrote 'Me too' as a status, we might give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem." #metoo.

Kvinnors mod och deras berättelser skakade om oss och tvingade oss att konfrontera verkligheten, och det med all rätt. Mycket har gjorts sedan dess, men långt ifrån tillräckligt. Det krävs en lagstiftning som på riktigt ger skydd och stöd till dem som drabbas av sexuella trakasserier samt ett tydligt arbetsgivaransvar som skyddar anställda från trakasserier.

Men låt oss vara tydliga med att ansvaret ligger på oss alla. Vi måste utmana och ifrågasätta de strukturer, attityder och normer som accepterar sexuella trakasserier. Vi måste vara medvetna om vår egen makt och använda den för att skapa en förändring.

Jag är stolt över betänkandet som vi nu arbetat fram. Nu gäller det att vi går från ord till handling, så att betänkandets innebörd också efterlevs i praktiken. Först då stärker vi kvinnors rätt till ett liv fritt från våld.

Terry Reintke, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group. – Madam President, 2017: it has almost been six years since reports hit the European Parliament about sexual harassment. Colleagues, I don't know how you feel about it, but I think we have wasted enough time because the demands in this resolution are very similar to the ones that we already adopted six years ago. There are demands to reform and to fight against sexual harassment here in the European Parliament, like, for example, mandatory harassment training, where right now we have a situation where not even half of the members of this parliament have done these harassment trainings, external audits to improve the situation, with independent experts looking at what we can do for a zero-tolerance policy, and a reform of the obviously dysfunctional complaints structures that we have here in the European Parliament. If I'm being honest, I really start losing patience. We have to stop only talking and adopting resolutions and we have to start acting.

Margarita de la Pisa Carrión, en nombre del Grupo ECR. – Señora presidente, señorías, todos estamos de acuerdo en que se debe velar porque el acoso no tenga espacio en nuestras instituciones. No obstante, no confío en que cursillos obligatorios para adultos y sanciones para quien no los haga u otras medidas con perspectiva de género vayan a ser positivas, más bien, incluso, lo contrario.

La ideología de género promueve un ambiente enrarecido de desconfianza y confusión. Solo entiende el enfrentamiento, lo que no ayuda, para nada, a una convivencia armoniosa.

En este informe se defiende un comportamiento ejemplar dentro de las instituciones. Pero les invito a la reflexión sobre si la exclusión que existe en este Parlamento hacia determinados grupos políticos merece esta consideración. Lo he vivido en primera persona por defender la voz de mis votantes y llevar a cabo mi actividad de diputada. Todos somos responsables del ambiente de respeto que merece esta Cámara.

IN THE CHAIR: MARC ANGEL

Vice-President

Christine Anderson, im Namen der ID-Fraktion. – Herr Präsident! Frauen vor sexueller Belästigung zu schützen – absolute Zustimmung. Dazu wird diese Initiative Plus keinen Beitrag leisten. Ganz im Sinne des fortgesetzten Massenimports einer bunten, toleranten, vielfältigen, vor allem aber frauenfeindlichen Multikulti-Kultur wird der Arbeitsplatz als Ort des Schreckens für Frauen ins Visier genommen.

Weit gefehlt! In den Freibädern, auf öffentlichen Straßen, Plätzen, in Bus und Bahn werden Frauen aufs Übelste sexuell belästigt, begrabscht, vergewaltigt und geschändet. Kein Wunder, denn das sind die Orte, an denen sich die schutzsuchenden Goldstücke den lieben langen Tag tummeln, um ihrem frauenverachtenden Tagesgeschäft nachzugehen.

Sie wollen Frauen schützen? Dann schließen Sie endlich die Grenzen, unterbinden Sie den Massenimport dieser brutalen und rohen sexuellen Gewalt an Frauen. Wenn das getan ist, dann können wir uns gerne mal darüber unterhalten, ob die Einladung zu einem Kaffee am Arbeitsplatz tatsächlich sexuelle Belästigung ist oder nicht einfach nur Höflichkeit unter Kollegen.

Eugenia Rodríguez Palop, *en nombre del Grupo The Left*. – Señor presidente, el acoso es una vulneración de derechos humanos que deteriora la salud física, psicológica y sexual de las personas, su autoestima y su entorno; impide que las víctimas accedan al mercado de trabajo, permanezcan en él o progresen profesionalmente, sobre todo si son mujeres.

Una vulneración de derechos que apenas se denuncia, entre otras cosas, porque está normalizada, porque se usan estereotipos que culpabilizan a las víctimas, por miedo a las represalias, a la revictimización o a la pérdida del trabajo. Una conducta que se sigue viendo hoy como un problema particular de quien la sufre.

El Parlamento Europeo no es un lugar seguro, y las medidas adoptadas hasta el momento son insuficientes. Llevamos años pidiendo formación obligatoria, auditorías externas, más datos y mayor transparencia, procedimientos más cortos, asesores confidenciales, mediadores externos, sanciones contundentes... y aquí seguimos.

Apenas conocemos nada de lo que pasa en nuestros pasillos y despachos porque demasiadas veces hay una estructura de poder anquilosada que se sostiene sobre el abuso, el silencio y la impunidad; pero no hay mal que cien años dure. Pueden estar seguros de que vamos a acabar con ella.

Evelyn Regner (S&D). – Mr President, two years ago we were standing here and talking exactly about the same topic, talking about MeToo in the European Union institutions. Since then, we have launched two internal procedures in the European Parliament, thanks to the perseverance of a few people who I really would like to applaud for their efforts.

In fact, it was actually five years, and not only two, since MeToo was first debated in this chamber. So you see, the resistance is still big from some within this House, from some people who are in power positions and do not see a need for changing the rules. So let me say to all those blocking people, this is about respect. Anyone can be affected by harassment. We all should be protected in cases of harassment. But even more so, we should be able to work without such a violation of our human rights. We all have a right to a safe and healthy workplace. We, the European Parliament, should be an example for other institutions with our anti-harassment measures as well as gender action plans.

It's high time we really treat each other respectfully and it's high time we eradicate any form of harassment and have actions follow our often-repeated words.

Johan Nissinen (ECR). – Herr talman! Jag vill börja med att tacka alla modiga kvinnor som trädde fram under metoo. Vi kan nu prata öppet om sexuella trakasserier och det är tack vare er. Sexuella trakasserier är betydligt vanligare i samhället och mer accepterat i samhället än vad många tror.

Jag hade hoppats på att det här betänkandet skulle lyfta det på en bredare front, men tyvärr blev det kidnappat av vänstern, och de har inte förstått någonting alls, som vanligt. Sexuella trakasserier handlar inte bara om män i maktställning som trakasserar kvinnor. Bli en man tagen på rumpen på arbetsplatsen eller taget på könet på ett uteställe av en kvinna, är det totalt socialt accepterat av samhället. Det anses som något löjligt om en man rapporterar det här. Precis som det var för kvinnor före metoo. Det är precis likadant inom hbtq-samhället, om inte ännu värre.

Sexuella trakasserier förekommer överallt, och det är fel oavsett vem som utför det. Därför är det viktigt att vi fokuserar på just det här och jobbar tillsammans över partigränserna för att skapa förändring på riktigt.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Mónica Silvana González (S&D). – Señor presidente, el informe que hoy debatimos, además del acoso sexual, hace referencia al acoso laboral y al acoso psicológico: sobre ello creo que existe una línea roja que no debemos confundir entre el acoso sexual y moral, y esto debe quedar muy claro. Pero creo que es necesario humanizar esta institución, proporcionando tanto a los diputados como al personal oportunidades seguras e informales de ser escuchados mediante una asistencia confidencial, independiente e imparcial a través de medios informales como el *coaching*, la diplomacia, los debates facilitadores y los servicios de mediación que hoy no existen.

Son los APA y a veces los políticos, quienes juzgan sin formación específica. Quizás sea necesario dotarnos de un servicio de mediación como el que ya funciona en otras instituciones internacionales, las cuales disponen de un servicio con órganos independientes externos. Es urgente que este Parlamento proporcione estos servicios alternativos de resolución de conflictos para hallar puntos de encuentro. Este servicio debería facilitar la comunicación entre las partes de un conflicto. Si no lo hacemos, si seguimos aplicando la dirección de la Mesa del año 2018, de seis años atrás —hecha con prisas para responder al movimiento #MeToo—, muchas de las víctimas reales seguirán sufriendo los actos de sus victimarios impunes y el derecho de la legítima defensa seguirá ausente.

Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana (Verts/ALE). – Monsieur le Président, le mouvement MeToo fondé par Tarana Burke en 2006 pour soutenir et renforcer les jeunes femmes afro-américaines qui ont survécu à la violence sexuelle s'est répandu dans le monde entier. Ainsi, de nombreuses victimes ont pris la parole pour briser le silence en racontant leurs histoires de violences sexuelles. Ces témoignages ont conduit à de nouvelles politiques et législations pour prévenir et combattre toute forme de harcèlement sexuel, sans oublier le harcèlement sur le lieu de travail.

Les formations de prévention contre le harcèlement au sein du Parlement pour les députés et le personnel ont un caractère facultatif. Il faudrait les rendre obligatoires afin que la question du harcèlement soit prise au sérieux. Le harcèlement est un délit qui affecte la santé et met en jeu la sécurité des femmes qui en sont les principales cibles. C'est une violation de leur dignité.

Si certains États membres condamnent et punissent avec de lourdes peines le harcèlement, cette mesure devrait s'appliquer dans toute l'Union européenne. Une criminalisation du harcèlement à titre de violences sexuelles ou morales serait un premier pas vers une législation commune, conformément à la convention d'Istanbul qui va être ratifiée. La collecte de données intersectionnelles sur le harcèlement et la violence dans l'Union européenne pourrait contribuer à améliorer la prévention en cours et l'aide aux victimes. L'Union européenne et ses institutions doivent mettre en œuvre les recommandations de la résolution. Nous voulons atteindre une tolérance zéro au sein de notre Parlement.

Ladislav Ilčić (ECR). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, poštovane dame i gospodo, temeljni uzrok ovog groznog nasilja nad ženama je taj što mnogi muškarci kod žena gledaju samo tijelo, a ignoriraju osjećaje, stavove i druge aspekte osobnosti.

I umjesto da cijelo društvo provodi programe koji promoviraju cjelovitost ljudske osobe, cjelovitost žene, dostojanstvo žene, mnogi od vas koji podržavaju projekt *Me too* ustvari sprečavaju te dobre programe, a promoviraju čudne društvene koncepte poput rodne ideologije, koji upravo ugrožavaju tu cjelovitost žene jer odvajaju tijelo od ostalih aspekata osobnosti.

Vi na taj način, ustvari, povećavate mogućnost za nasilje nad ženama i to vam pokazuju loši rezultati Istanbulske konvencije. Dakle, osuda ovog strašnog nasilja nad ženama nam je zajednička, ali različiti su nam načini borbe protiv tog nasilja. Vaš način očito ne donosi rezultate. Preispitajte ga.

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Domnule președinte, sigur, cei care sunt mai vechi în Parlament știu că se discută de ani de zile: toleranță zero la hărțuire, la hărțuire sexuală. Problema nu este că o să votăm, pentru că sunt convinsă că se va vota această rezoluție, dar ce facem cu rezoluția? Câte rezoluții n-am mai votat noi și nu s-a întâmplat nimic? Nu s-a schimbat nimic. Aici avem nevoie să răspundem: cum identificăm hărțuitorii, ce se întâmplă cu ei, care sunt pedepsele? Să pornim de la definiție. Eu sunt convinsă că acum conceptul de hărțuire sexuală este înțeles diferit de multă lume de aici.

Cum facem să nu avem victime? Ce facem cu statisticile (care, să știți, sunt departe de realitate)? Pentru că, dacă o femeie nu recunoaște că este hărțuită, sigur că statistica arată jumătate din femei. Sunt convinsă că mai mult. Eu cred că trebuie să trecem la fapte și trebuie să vedem măsuri concrete. Pe de o parte, aici, în instituțiile europene, evident, după aceea să extindem problema pentru a avea odată diminuare. Eu nu sunt... eu sunt realistă. Nu cred că o vom elimina total, dar măcar să diminuăm hărțuirea, pentru că este acum o situație extrem de gravă.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Johannes Hahn, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, I welcome the debate on this important aspect of our responsibilities as employers and the opportunity to listen to different viewpoints and perspectives.

The changes we have seen in the way we work post-COVID have brought with it new challenges. But the phenomenon of harassment has shown that it is able to adapt also to the digital environment. This will require employers to adapt and modernise our respective toolboxes to tackle the phenomenon of harassment.

Michal Šimečka, *rappporteur*. – Mr President, I'll be really brief, and I'd like to reiterate my thanks to the shadow rapporteurs and everyone who worked on this report, and also thanks to everyone who participated in this debate. I want to add one more thank you, which I forgot in the in the first intervention, and that is to the MeToo activists here in the European Parliament and beyond for keeping the issue on the agenda.

Now, also to speakers who voiced criticism and who might perhaps not vote in support of the draft report, I would say that it is perhaps better to think less in terms of ideological frameworks and more in terms of the victims and the pain and the suffering that they are going through, and what can we do in practical terms. The report has a lot of it. What can we do to minimise that pain and to minimise the number of victims, at least here in the European Parliament.

I share the frustration with many of you who've mentioned that we've been here before, we've had similar reports before and we've heard similar statements before. My only reply to that would be that the stronger the majority for this report and for the recommendation that it contains, the stronger the political pressure for those who can enact those changes to actually do so.

Finally, just remarking if people who are watching this debate and who might have been subject to sexual or psychological harassment, I would ask you to speak up and Parliament will stand by you.

President. – Thank you for your remarks. The debate is closed. The vote will be held tomorrow.

Written statements (Rule 171)

Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE), *por escrito*. – La igualdad de género es un valor fundamental de la Unión Europea y debe extenderse a todas nuestras políticas. Combatir la violencia contra las mujeres y la violencia de género es una prioridad absoluta de la Unión.

El acoso es una forma absoluta de violencia de género. Existen casos de acoso sexual en las instituciones europeas y por eso necesitamos combatirlo. Para ello es necesario lo siguiente: primero, un llamamiento a los Estados miembros para ratificar el Convenio de Estambul; segundo, la adopción de la Directiva sobre la violencia contra las mujeres, a fin de que el acoso se considere un eurodelito y se le dé una definición común y coordinada para poder luchar conjuntamente; y tercero, intensificar todas las medidas que hemos aprobado en el Parlamento en cuanto a la formación obligatoria, al refuerzo de los comités, a la red de asesores para poder prevenir y sensibilizar, para que el objetivo sea siempre romper el acoso normalizado, denunciar y castigar a los culpables, apoyar a las víctimas, agilizar los procedimientos de denuncia, evitar la estigmatización de las víctimas y aplicar sanciones más estrictas. Como legisladores y empleadores debemos dar ejemplo.

Gracias a #MeToo hemos avanzado, pero queda mucho camino por recorrer.

Sylwia Spurek (Verts/ALE), *na piśmie*. – Mamy 2023 rok, a kobiety doświadczają molestowania seksualnego w miejscu pracy, w służbach mundurowych, w sklepach, na ulicy, na uczelniach, w codziennych sytuacjach. Wiele kobiet powiedziało i mówi: metoo. Ale jest wiele kobiet, które nadal boją się lub wstydzą się powiedzieć, nadal nigdzie nie zgłasza przemoc, jakiej doświadczyły. Pilnie potrzebujemy systemu, który pryncypialnie stoi po stronie ofiar, który daje im wsparcie i poczucie bezpieczeństwa, w którym ofiary nie boją się i nie wstydzą się zgłaszać przypadków molestowania. Pilnie potrzebujemy także takiego systemu, w którym aktywną rolę w zwalczaniu przemocy będą odgrywać mężczyźni. Bo przemoc ma płęć. Nie wszyscy mężczyźni molestują, ale większość sprawców to mężczyźni. W 82% przypadków molestowania seksualnego wobec kobiet sprawcą jest mężczyzna. Dlatego to do chłopców należy kierować działania edukacyjne, antydyskryminacyjne i antyprzemocowe od najmłodszych lat. Dlatego mężczyźni zamiast czuć się obrażeni czy zaatakowani „metoo”, powinni zrozumieć, że to nasza wspólna sprawa – i kobiet, i mężczyzn, i powinni wziąć odpowiedzialność za problem.

19. Strengthening social dialogue (debate)

President. – The next item is the debate on the oral questions to the Council and the Commission on strengthening social dialogue in the European Union, tabled by Dragoş Pişlaru, Agnes Jongerius, Stelios Kypouropoulos, Abir Al-Sahlani, Rosa D'Amato, Elżbieta Rafalska, Eugenia Rodríguez Palop, on behalf of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (O-000019/2023 - B9-0020/23) (O-000020/2023 - B9-0021/23) (2023/2536(RSP)).

Dragoş Pişlaru, author. – Mr President, indeed it is late in the evening. We don't have, unfortunately, someone from the Council side for a topic that is indeed a question for oral answer to the Council and the Commission. Indeed, it is late in the evening and that was the schedule. But the topic that we are discussing right now is a crucial topic.

Social dialogue is a fundamental part of the European social model. It is not necessarily fit to discuss it at the end of an agenda with a room that is not necessarily full of colleagues. And that's actually the problem, that despite the fact that the social driver is a key driver for economic and social resilience, competitiveness, fairness, sustainable growth – crucial for finding balanced responses to new and existing needs and challenges related to the labour market and working conditions – despite all that, we still have issues in implementing those values and social dialogue at EU level. Moreover, there is a worrisome trend because over the past 30 years, the share of workers covered by collective agreements has declined, with the estimated EU average falling from about 66% in 2000 to about 56% in 2018, with the Covid situation being very worrisome as well.

And indeed, we are witnessing right now a new ambition at EU level to increase and strengthen social dialogue. And apart from the benefits of social dialogue and workers involvement in the working conditions of EU citizens, another benefit of social dialogue is that countries with robust frameworks of social dialogue and a high coverage of collective bargaining have more competitive and resilient economies. So social dialogue works. We have this ambition to strengthen social dialogue. And at the same time, we often minimise the importance of this particular topic. Given this, the Employment Committee – indeed, I am not necessarily the author here, but I am representing my colleagues, and I would like to congratulate all the champions in the EMPL committee, in the Employment and Social Affairs Committee, for pursuing this particular topic in the agenda – and I in my role as the Chair of the Employment and Social Affairs Committee, would like to formalise this particular debate by asking officially the Council and the Commission a couple of questions.

So first, I would like to address the Council with an empty seat, unfortunately, and maybe they can actually see it online and answer in writing. The first question would be how the Council encourage Member States to ensure an enabling environment for bipartite and tripartite social dialogue and due respect for the social partners' autonomy. How is the council going to ensure that the proposed recommendation complements Article 4 of the Directive (EU) 2022/2041 on minimum wages in particular in terms of measures to increase national collective bargaining coverage? How will the Council ensure that Member States remove institutional or even legal barriers to social dialogue and strengthen the organisational capacity of the social partners, including through the allocation of adequate resources? A very important topic. How will the Council and the Commission support Member States in addressing anti-trade union practices, lack of representation, the more fragmented workforce and the increase in non-standard forms of work that may lead to precariousness? How will the Council ensure that Member States promote timely access to information for social partners and timely consultation with them, so that they can be meaningfully involved in designing and implementing employment and social policies or even wider programmes like the RRF? How will the Council encourage Member States to ratify and implement all ILO Core Conventions, in particular the recently designated Core Conventions 155 and 187 and Convention 190?

And to the Commission, how will the Commission, jointly with the Member States and the social partners, monitor the effective implementation of the proposed recommendation? And what concrete indicators and data will be used to measure progress towards greater collective bargaining coverage? How will the Commission support Member States in promoting the inclusion of more sectors in social dialogue, ensure the allocation of – again – adequate resources, particularly to the European Social Fund Plus? How will the Commission ensure that the assigned Social Dialogue coordinators will be involved in all employment related aspects of EU policy-making across all policy areas – so no silo policy? How will the Commission guarantee financing for European Sectoral Dialogue in the long term? And last but certainly not least, what steps will the Commission take to promote the role of social dialogue in addressing climate and digitalisation issues in the workplace and achieving a just transition? Thank you very much.

Johannes Hahn, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, social dialogue is indeed essential to guarantee fairness and inclusion in the labour market. It is a core element of our social market economy, contributing to building a competitive and more resilient economy.

I am pleased that the Parliament has been calling more than once for a further reinforcing social dialogue at national and European Union level. The aim of the Commission's social dialogue initiative, prepared with the close involvement of social partners, is to give social dialogue a further boost in the Union.

It is important to recall that there is no one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to social dialogue. What works in a Member State might not work in another. Yet there are some common lines in well-functioning social dialogue systems that the Commission is recommending in its proposal for the Council recommendation.

The Commission proposes to regularly monitor the implementation of this recommendation jointly with Member States and social partners through tripartite meetings. The Commission also proposes to develop, jointly with the Employment Committee and social partners, commonly agreed indicators. I am grateful for the efforts of the Swedish Presidency to bring this recommendation forward for adoption at the June EPSCO Council.

There is obviously a link between the Council recommendation and the Minimum Wage Directive as far as both promote collective bargaining. The Directive contains provisions to promote collective bargaining in the context of adequate minimum wage. It asks Member States where collective bargaining coverage does not reach at least 80% of workers to put in place an enabling framework for collective bargaining and an action plan to promote it.

On the other hand, the proposed Council recommendation provides guidance to Member States to strengthen social dialogue more generally. The Commission will work constructively with Member States in view of avoiding duplication in this respect.

The proposed recommendation will support Member States in tackling existing legal and institutional barriers to social dialogue. It calls, for example, on Member States to ensure that the representative social partners are recognised for the purposes of social dialogue, but also to remove barriers to social dialogue covering new forms of work or atypical employment. The Commission will also continue to monitor social dialogue through the European Semester in cooperation with the Employment Committee.

Let me also underline that in a number of Member States social partners still lack the necessary capacities for effectively participating in social dialogue. I am therefore pleased to inform you that ESF+ funding for the capacity building of social partners has been programmed by 20 Member States. This support amounts to an over EUR 360 million contribution, and this represents over 0.4% of the total ESF+ amount.

Regarding EU social dialogue, the Commission proposes a set of measures to strengthen it, such as the establishment of social dialogue coordinators in all the relevant Commission services. I am confident that the coordinators will help in fostering a better understanding of social dialogue across the Commission and a more coherent approach to involving social partners. We also work together with social partners on a new approach for organising the meetings of the sectoral social dialogue committees.

To be clear, the Commission will continue to finance the organisation of sectoral social dialogue meetings. However, we need to explore the best way for ensuring the sustainability of these meetings. This is necessary in a situation where the Commission's administrative budget and its human resources are under pressure and where the Commission is committed to the greening of the Commission. We are in discussions with EU sectoral social partners on this question.

Finally, let me address your last question regarding the role of social dialogue in relation to the twin transition. Social partners play a central role in helping to anticipate and address the employment and social consequences of the transitions to a digital and climate neutral economy.

Social dialogue contributes to finding balanced solutions as well as supporting up- and reskilling and job transitions. This is also highlighted in last year's Council recommendation on ensuring a fair transition towards climate neutrality.

As you know, the cross-industry social partners are currently negotiating, with support from the Commission, a new social partners agreement on daily work and the right to disconnect. By doing so, social partners would demonstrate that EU social dialogue can deliver for the benefit of European workers and companies. So we look forward to the resolution on this topic to continue our joint cooperation on this important shared goal.

Dennis Radtke, *im Namen der PPE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ich kann Dragoş Pîslaru nur recht geben: Es ist schade, dass eine Debatte, die so wichtig ist für die Frage „Wie geht es weiter voran mit dem sozialen Europa?“ zu einer solchen Randzeit stattfindet. Aber das Wichtigste für mich ist erst einmal, dass diese Debatte stattfindet.

Der Kommissar hat gerade darauf hingewiesen: Wir als Parlament versuchen wirklich alles, um den sozialen Dialog auf der europäischen Ebene wieder in Gang zu setzen, weil die Entscheidung, wie wir beispielsweise mit der Frage „*right to disconnect*“ umgehen, die lag hier auf dem Tisch. Und ich weiß, dass es nicht wenige gab, auch bei den Sozialpartnern, die gesagt haben, am besten wäre es, Kommission und Parlament bringen da selber etwas auf den Weg.

Aber ich war immer einer derjenigen, die gesagt haben: Gerade bei einer solchen Frage müssen doch diejenigen, die näher dran sind an dem, was in den Betrieben stattfindet, die müssen doch die Lösung bringen. Und deswegen bin ich nach wie vor davon überzeugt, dass das richtig war. Und mittlerweile sehen das ja auch beide Sozialpartner so, aber diesen Prozess müssen wir fortsetzen.

Deswegen will ich ganz offen und ehrlich sagen, dass ich mich über manches ärgere, was jetzt in der Entschließung gelandet ist. Wir bringen mit Debatten über Telework beispielsweise, mit unserer Richtlinie zum europäischen Mindestlohn – das sind aktive Beiträge zur Stärkung von Sozialpartnerschaft, das ist das, was wir brauchen. Und dass wir dann in der Debatte jetzt eine Diskussion führen über das Verhältnis von Vorstandsgehältern zu Mitarbeitergehältern: Leute, das hat doch mit Sozialpartnerschaft nichts zu tun.

Lasst uns für mehr Tarifbindung, für mehr Sozialpartnerschaft kämpfen, dafür, dass die Leute eine anständige Vergütung haben. Dann sollen die Vorstände verdienen, was sie wollen, das sind Nebenkriegsschauplätze. Lasst uns uns bitte in Zukunft weiter auf das Wichtige fokussieren.

Agnes Jongerius, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, the eight-hour workday, holiday allowances, the weekends: we all owe a big thanks to trade unions for these rights.

We have to stand up for workers' rights to organise or the freedom to collective bargaining, as they are under attack. Even though we guaranteed the fundamental workers' rights in the directive on adequate minimum wages, the right-wing forces in this House still try to attack them, trying to harm the autonomy of social partners. And it's not only in this House; it's also in many workplaces: there is an increase of union busting led by companies such as Amazon and Starbucks. And therefore, we need to turn the tide.

Therefore, I call upon the Commission to show a little bit more commitment than just in the speech of Commissioner Hahn and invest in more financial, legal and technical support for the sectoral social dialogue to strengthen the social partners. We can only reach the aim of 80% collective bargaining coverage when we strengthen the social partnership and especially the trade unions.

In addition, I'm calling upon employers' organisations to come back to the table. Yes, they are at the table on the right to disconnect, but they are not at the table on many other topics. And you cannot have a social dialogue if you only say no. To have a true social dialogue, both sides of the table must invest and must show up. As they put it, it takes two to tango.

Abir Al-Sahlani, *för Renew-gruppen*. – Herr talman! Kära kollegor! Som svensk Europaparlamentariker står jag här, stolt, och representerar en stolt tradition och historia med den svenska arbetsmarknadsmodellen, där våra arbetsmarknadsparter har fått förtroendet av politikerna att få sköta den sociala dialogen. Där vi som politiker faktiskt tog ett steg tillbaka och lät de sociala parterna samarbeta och hitta lösningar.

Vi har turen att leva i en region av världen där vår ekonomi utvecklas, och det leder till ökat välbefinnande, ökad välfärd, men också där sociala parter gemensamt har kunnat hitta lösningar på en hela tiden förändrad arbetsmarknad. Det är bara genom dialogen mellan arbetstagar och arbetsgivare som lösningar på utmaningar har kunnat hittas. Det är genom den sociala dialogen mellan arbetstagar och arbetsgivare som både ekonomin och våra arbetstgares rättigheter har kunnat stärkas, och det är genom dialogen mellan arbetsgivare och arbetstagar som framtida utmaningar också kan lösas.

Det är därför vi som politiker måste också ta ett steg tillbaka och faktiskt låta sociala parter göra sitt jobb, nämligen att hitta de gemensamma lösningarna. Vi måste våga, som politiker, släppa taget ibland för att låta dem som kan, faktiskt, hitta de nödvändiga lösningarna.

Rosa D'Amato, *a nome del gruppo Verts/ALE*. – Signor Presidente, signor Commissario, onorevoli colleghi, si è appena concluso il Porto Social Forum, dove abbiamo discusso dello stato dei diritti sociali in Europa.

Governi come quello portoghese dimostrano volontà politica e leadership nel rispondere alla crisi sociale con misure concrete. Penso agli incentivi fiscali che hanno portato ad un aumento del tasso dei lavoratori coperti dalla contrattazione collettiva del 117 per cento. Ma questo non succede in tutti gli Stati membri.

Esattamente all'opposto di questo modello virtuoso, il governo di estrema destra italiano non è nemmeno venuto al Forum Sociale di Porto. Per fortuna, uno dei pochi governi assenti in questa grande occasione, in cui si discuteva dell'agenda sociale dell'Unione europea.

La risposta di questi governi, come quello italiano, alla crisi, è quella di tagliare misure di inclusione sociale, lasciare i lavoratori precari fuori dalla contrattazione collettiva. Sebbene un lavoratore su quattro guadagna meno del reddito di cittadinanza.

Le nostre democrazie non sono democrazie qualunque, nascono dall'inclusione dei cittadini nella gestione della cosa pubblica e dalla piena partecipazione dei più vulnerabili. Affamare la maggioranza, escludere i vulnerabili a vantaggio di pochi è un tradimento dei valori democratici.

Elżbieta Rafalska, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzy! Celem tej rezolucji jest dalsze wzmacnianie i upowszechnianie dialogu społecznego za pomocą konkretnych działań, zarówno na poziomie krajowym, jak i unijnym, poprzez konsultacje z partnerami społecznymi w sprawie opracowywania i wdrażania polityk gospodarczych, polityk zatrudnienia i społecznych.

Ma to zachęcić partnerów społecznych do przyjrzenia się nowym formom zatrudnienia i umożliwić zwiększenie potencjału organizacji pracowników i pracodawców. Dialog społeczny jest solą demokracji, ale wymaga też odwagi i odpowiedzialności wszystkich partnerów społecznych.

Negocjacje były dosyć burzliwe. Udało nam się uwzględnić szereg naszych propozycji, złagodzić niektóre brzmienia zapisów, np. celu wynoszącego 90% zasięgu rokowań zbiorowych. Na nasz wniosek w tekście uwzględniono zróżnicowane sytuacje partnerów społecznych w różnych państwach członkowskich oraz ich problemy. W tekście znajdują się kontrowersyjne zapisy, które zgłosiliśmy do odrębnego głosowania, i liczymy na poparcie propozycji ECR-u, naszych propozycji.

Jordan Bardella, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Monsieur le Président, nous voilà rassemblés pour évoquer une chimère, un fantasme qui n'existe que dans le cerveau des technocrates européens, une illusion de la Commission: l'Europe sociale. Depuis maintenant plusieurs décennies, l'Europe sociale est cet horizon que vous vendez aux peuples d'Europe et qui n'a cessé de s'éloigner à mesure des politiques que vous avez mis en œuvre. Cette Europe sociale que l'on devrait plutôt baptiser «l'Europe du saccage social», vous l'avez en fait rendue impossible, rendue impossible par des injonctions faites chaque année aux États où la course au moins-disant social l'emporte toujours.

C'est sur ces recommandations de la Commission, usant du chantage au versement des fonds du plan de relance, qu'Emmanuel Macron a imposé en France, brutalement, une réforme des retraites pourtant massivement rejetée par nos compatriotes. C'est sur ces recommandations de la Commission que nos États ont été contraints de réduire les dépenses et l'efficacité des services publics, à commencer par celle de l'hôpital et de la santé.

En vérité, l'Europe sociale n'existe pas. Elle n'existe pas puisque l'Union européenne a renoncé à protéger les peuples face à la mondialisation sauvage, aux ravages des délocalisations et aux pressions effectuées à la baisse sur les salaires. Pire encore, elle les a exposés au dumping social avec la directive «détachement des travailleurs», qui crée une concurrence insupportable entre les pays membres.

Face au mur de l'inflation, l'Union européenne a laissé seul les peuples d'Europe face aux prédateurs d'en haut en laissant la spéculation mondiale faire exploser les prix de l'énergie par le mécanisme tarifaire absurde du marché européen de l'électricité. Tant que l'Europe refusera d'être un bouclier qui protège les peuples européens face aux mauvais vents de la mondialisation, alors l'Europe sociale sera condamnée à n'être qu'une intenable promesse.

Eugenia Rodríguez Palop, *en nombre del Grupo The Left*. – Señor presidente, más allá de las buenas palabras, la eventual Recomendación que apruebe el Consejo tiene que servir para promover un diálogo social efectivo. Y eso solo se consigue incluyendo mecanismos de garantía, procedimientos de infracción, condena de conductas antisindicales y promoción de incentivos en la contratación pública. O promoviendo la negociación sectorial como ámbito de negociación prioritario para los trabajadores.

Hay que reconocer que, en su momento, fue un error apostar por la bajada de salarios y costes laborales. Un error que se sufrió en España con la reforma laboral del Partido Popular, alentada por la anterior Comisión. Por suerte, hoy sabemos que las cosas pueden ser de otra manera gracias a los numerosos acuerdos sociales que se han implementado en el marco de los ERTE, el trabajo de plataformas o la subida del salario mínimo. Y esta es la lección que no podemos olvidar.

El papel del diálogo social y la negociación colectiva está constitucionalizado en los Tratados. Pero, sin voluntad política y ambición en la Recomendación del Consejo, todo será papel mojado. Ya lo vimos en la sentencia Laval o en la reciente interpretación del artículo 155 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea. Así pues, estamos avisados.

Λευτέρης Νικολάου-Αλαβάνος (NI). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, πριν δύο μέρες ένα εργοδοτικό έγκλημα στέρησε τη ζωή σε έναν ακόμα εργατή στη ναυπηγοεπισκευαστική ζώνη του Περάματος. Μεγαλοξενοδόχοι απειλούν με ρήτρα 5.000 ευρώ αν υπάλληλός τους παραιτηθεί από το κάτεργό τους. Έτσι αποκαλύπτονται τα γκέτο της καπιταλιστικής ανάπτυξης, που κόμματα και κυβερνήσεις του κεφαλαίου, φιλελεύθερες και σοσιαλδημοκρατικές, προωθούν.

Η σταθερότητα, η ανταγωνιστικότητα, η βιωσιμότητα που ευαγγελίζεται η έκθεση σημαίνουν σε πάνω από το 50% των κρατών μελών κατάργηση συλλογικών συμβάσεων εργασίας, καθορισμό του μισθού με υπουργική απόφαση, περιορισμό συνδικαλιστικής δράσης και δικαιώματος στην απεργία, που σημαδεύουν τη στρατηγική της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Σημαίνουν αποψίλωση επιθεωρήσεων εργασίας από ουσιαστικές αρμοδιότητες ελέγχου και επιβολής κυρώσεων, υποστελέχωση και εγκατάλειψη, όπως συνέβη στην Ελλάδα κατά τα πρότυπα της Ευρωπαϊκής Αρχής.

Οι εργαζόμενοι κόντρα στα ευρωενωσιακά κηρύγματα ταξικής συνεργασίας να βαδίσουν στον δρόμο της σύγκρουσης με το σάπιο σύστημα που βάζει τη ζωή τους στο ζύγι της κερδοφορίας των ομίλων. Να ενισχύσουν το ΚΚΕ, το δοκιμασμένο και σταθερό στήριγμά τους, στην πάλη για τα σύγχρονα δικαιώματα, για την κατάργηση όλων των αντεργατικών νόμων.

Johannes Hahn, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, I want to thank all honourable Members for their interventions and I am pleased that we all agree on the importance of further strengthening social dialogue at national and European Union level. The Commission will continue to work closely with EU social partners to reinforce EU social dialogue and to better harness its full potential. I am looking forward to the conclusions of the new social partner agreement on telework and the right to disconnect currently negotiated by cross-industry social partners.

I also hope that the negotiations on the Commission's proposal for a Council recommendation will lead to a good and solid outcome. The Council recommendation should help to improve the quality and effectiveness of social dialogue and collective bargaining in those Member States where we see a clear room and need for improvement.

President. – That concludes the debate. I have received one motion for a resolution¹ to wind up this debate.

The vote will be held tomorrow.

Written statements (Rule 171)

¹ See minutes.

Dominique Bilde (ID), par écrit. – L'Europe qui protège est un mythe auquel ne croient plus les peuples qui subissent en réalité la destruction de l'État et la disparition de leurs acquis sociaux ! Comment peut-on croire cette UE qui fait croire qu'elle pousse les nations, dont la France, vers le progrès social alors que concrètement, elle met la pression sur les gouvernements nationaux pour faire passer de gré ou de force une réforme des retraites ! Ce texte sur le renforcement du dialogue social ne fait que contribuer à la mascarade et aux mensonges proférés par une Commission qui ose décidément tout: dire une chose et faire exactement son contraire dans le dos des Français ! En voulant s'immiscer dans nos conventions collectives et en voulant s'occuper du rôle des syndicats nationaux, Bruxelles est en train de franchir toutes les lignes rouges. En effet, en souhaitant ériger un «modèle social européen» à l'insu de tous, elle est en train de mettre en péril les équilibres nationaux et les traditions sociales qui sont le fruit de décennies de négociations. Fausses promesses pour les peuples, mais vraie menace pour notre souveraineté, ce rapport sur le renforcement du dialogue social doit être combattu de toutes nos forces !

Victor Negrescu (S&D), în scris. – Dialogul social trebuie să fie o prioritate-cheie a Uniunii Europene dacă ne dorim un climat social care să asigure reziliența Europei în anii care urmează. Din păcate, schimbările pieței muncii, creșterea individualismului, politicile antisociale și noile forme de muncă ne arată discrepanțele existente între statele membre și necesitatea creșterii nivelului de implicare din partea Uniunii pe această componentă. Astfel, în calitate de responsabil al grupului social-democrat pentru bugetul european din ultimii doi ani, am solicitat și obținut creșterea alocațiilor financiare pentru dialogul social, arătând încă o dată că familia noastră politică se luptă pentru cei mulți. Partenerii sociali trebuie, în opinia mea, implicați direct în fundamentarea deciziilor pe zonele bugetare, planurile de redresare fiind un exemplu care demonstrează că putem avea această abordare participativă. Totodată, pentru a putea genera rezultate pozitive și un impact real la nivel european, dialogul social trebuie să fie parte a procesului decizional. Astfel, trebuie creat un mecanism integrat pentru dialog social la nivel european prin care vom putea avea o abordare unitară, instrumente comune și un impact în toate statele membre generat de soluțiile adoptate împreună cu partenerii sociali.

Ádám Kósa (NI), írásban. – Támogatom a munkavállalók érdekképviseleti részvételét, de azok nevében, akik éltünk abban a korszakban, amikor kötelező volt a szakszervezeti tagság, biztosan állíthatom, hogy nem kívánjuk vissza azt az időt. Nem kérdés, hogy az uniós joggal, valamint a nemzeti jogszabályokkal és gyakorlattal összhangban a munkavállalóknak és a munkaadóknak joguk van arra, hogy kollektív tárgyalásokat folytassanak és kollektív szerződéseket kössenek.

Ne feledjük el azonban, hogy az Emberi Jogok Európai Bíróságának joggyakorlatával összhangban figyelembe kell venni, hogy nemcsak ahhoz van mindenkinek joga, hogy egy szervezetbe belépjen, de ahhoz is, hogy ne lépjen be, és ahogy a tagság, úgy a távolmaradás ténye miatt sem érhet senkit hátrányos megkülönböztetés. Visszautasítom tehát azt a baloldali lázálmot, amely kötelezővé tenné a szakszervezeti tagságot. Ezt a kommunizmus éveit Kelet-Európában már átéljük, és ebből nem kérünk újra akkor sem, ha ez az eszme most Brüsszelből érkezik.

Guido Reil (ID), schriftlich. – Eine Stärkung des sozialen Dialogs ist sicherlich notwendig. Sowohl in Deutschland als in der gesamten EU gibt es einen deutlichen Trend zum Rückgang von Tarifbindungen. Hauptursachen sind der Strukturwandel und die Mitglieder- und Organisationsschwäche der Gewerkschaften. In Deutschland hat auch das Tarifautonomiegesetz (2014) diesen schleichenden Erosionsprozess nicht zum Halten gebracht. Jetzt hat die Ampelkoalition einen neuen Gesetzentwurf zur „Tariftreue“ vorgeschlagen. Die Politik behauptet, sie möchte den sozialen Dialog und die Tarifautonomie fördern. In Wirklichkeit greift der Staat zunehmend in die Kompetenzbereiche der Tarifvertragsparteien ein. Obwohl die Erhöhung des Mindestlohns grundsätzlich zu begrüßen ist, war die Art, wie sie beschlossen wurde, nicht in Ordnung. Den Mindestlohn ohne Einbezug der zuständigen Mindestlohnkommission zu erhöhen, schadet der Tarifautonomie in Deutschland. Durch diesen politischen Eingriff wird das System der Tarifvereinbarungen in der Sozial-

partnerschaft massiv geschwächt. Auch in dieser Entschließung zur Stärkung des sozialen Dialogs ist diese politische Steuerung zu erkennen, mit u. a. einem Plädoyer für einen EU-Fonds zur Stärkung des sozialen Dialogs. In Wirklichkeit sehen wir, dass die Europäische Kommission einen richtig funktionierenden Sozialdialog auf EU-Ebene verhindert. Meiner Meinung nach soll die Stärkung der Tarifbindung „von unten“ geschehen. Statt auf Zwang einzusetzen und in die Kompetenzen der Tarifparteien einzugreifen, muss die Attraktivität der Mitgliedschaft in einer Gewerkschaft oder in einem Arbeitgeberverband erhöht werden.

Sandra Pereira (The Left), por escrito. – Este debate que aqui estamos a ter sobre o reforço do diálogo social faz tábua rasa das responsabilidades da UE e da sua ação declarada no ataque aos direitos dos trabalhadores e no enfraquecimento dos sistemas de negociação e contratação coletiva, que diz querer agora promover. Exemplo disso são as alterações à legislação laboral em Portugal, incentivadas pela própria UE, bem como os recorrentes ataques desta à subida de salários no nosso país. Não será, certamente, através do caminho defendido de promoção da contratação coletiva supranacional, fragilizando as organizações sindicais nacionais, que se vai promover a contratação coletiva ou que se irão conquistar mais direitos.

O que é necessário é acabar com as políticas antissociais promovidas pela UE e promover os direitos à organização, negociação e contratação coletivas. Importa igualmente repor o princípio do tratamento mais favorável ao trabalhar, revogar as normas da caducidade da contratação coletiva, eliminar as barreiras ao livre exercício da atividade sindical nas empresas e locais de trabalho.

20. One-minute speeches on matters of political importance

President. – The next item is the one-minute speeches under Rule 172.

Romana Tomc (PPE). – Hvala lepa. Spoštovani predsedujoči, 16. maja letos je slovenska vlada ukinila nacionalni dan spomina na žrtve komunizma. To je zavržno dejanje brez primere, je ponižanje nedolžnih žrtev ter zanikanje temeljnih civilizacijskih norm. Je v posmeh evropskim vrednotam in demokraciji. Slovenija nikoli ni sprejela resolucije Evropskega parlamenta o evropski zavesti in totalitarizmu. Komunisti in njihovi nasledniki so to preprečili. Oni še danes slavijo komunistične zločine, na drugi strani pa njihovim nedolžnim žrtvam, tudi otrokom, odrekajo pravico do groba in celo do spomina. Nevarno je, ko ima oblast politika, ki opeva komunistični režim in spodbuja ideološke boje. Danes v Sloveniji, jutri kje drugje. A kljub temu, da nas želijo utišati, nam grozijo s smrtjo, ne smemo biti tihi, saj je to velika nevarnost tudi za našo prihodnost v Evropski uniji. Pozivam zato Evropski parlament, da kot branik evropskih vrednot ostro obsodi obujanje komunizma in zanikanje grozot, ki jih je ta totalitarni režim povzročil. Hvala lepa.

Łukasz Kohut (S&D). – Panie Przewodniczący! Chciałbym tutaj, w świątyni europejskiej demokracji, zabrać głos w imieniu mieszkańców Palowic, Mikołowa i innych miejscowości na Śląsku. Budowa Centralnego Portu Komunikacyjnego w Baranowie to megalomańska kpina i próba napchania kieszeni swoim ludziom przez partię rządzącą. W Mikołowie w ostatnim zaproponowanym wariantcie trakcja kolejowa przecina miasto na pół. Łaziska Górne i Orzesze to szeroko zakrojone wywłaszczenie ludności. Palowice i Szczekowice to wsie na Pojezierzu Palowickim, zielone płuca Śląska.

Kolejny raz okazało się, że ze stolicy, z Warszawy, nie widać Śląska i jego problemów. Dlatego liczymy na Unię. To właśnie w województwie śląskim odsetek ludzi głosujących za przystąpieniem Polski do Wspólnoty był największy. To ostatni moment na reakcję. Wsparcie lokalnych społeczności i ochronę środowiska naturalnego na Śląsku.

Apeluję do Komisji Europejskiej o działanie w tej sprawie, póki nie jest za późno. Wysłałem szczegółowy list do przewodniczącej Komisji Ursuli von der Leyen i liczę na reakcję.

Katalin Cseh (Renew). – Mr President, Viktor Orban's oppressive regime has revealed its true colours yet another time: none of us can forget this image of a 17-year-old student in the suffocating ring of riot police being directly shot in the face with teargas. All he did was protest the unbearable crisis of public education.

Hungarians are taking to the streets because of the so-called revenge law designed to oppress and intimidate teachers – because teachers are fired for participating in strikes, their private communication can be monitored and they can be punished for criticising the government. They may even be ordered to work far away from their home, like members of the armed forces. Union leaders have called this slavery. Colleagues, Europe must stand in solidarity with them. And yes, public education is a national competence, but the deprivation of basic rights, access to education – these are democratic minimums.

Therefore, we plead to the Commission: compel the Orban Government to revoke this disgraceful law, stand with Hungarian teachers and Hungarian students. Take action, now.

Grace O’Sullivan (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, today I will talk about disabilities and travel. Last week, Carolyn Akintola travelled from Ireland to Brussels to campaign on behalf of people with disabilities. Despite pre-booking and notifying Ryanair of her needs, her wheelchair was taken from her. Carolyn was subjected to a degrading search, and when this caused a delay, the captain of the flight told over 100 passengers it was due to people in wheelchairs holding up the flight.

Ryanair CEO Michael O’Leary is here in Brussels today. He is asking the Commission for special treatment to circumvent striking workers. Well, first and foremost, the Commission must ensure the rights of people with disabilities. We must uphold the UN convention for their rights, and airlines must clean up their act in more ways than one.

Ангел Джамбазки (ECR). – Г-н Председател, в този момент, в този ден пропължават срещите на заместник министър-председател на държава, която дори нека не е кандидат за член на Европейския съюз, който обаче провежда лобистка политика, привиквайки европейски представители, снимайки се с тях, поставяйки ги, това е г-н Маричич от Република Северна Македония. И той се снима с хора от комисията по външни работи, наши колеги, публикува ги и им подсказва какво да направят в следващите няколко дни. Това страшно много прилича на скандали като Катар-гейт. Държава, която не е кандидат за член, използва европейски представители.

И затова Ви питам, господин Председател. Ще попитате ли колегите на снимките в какво качество те са били на тези срещи? Кой ги е изпратил там, каква отговорност носят? Защо те се снимат с човек, който представлява държава извън Европейския съюз? И има ли някакъв разговор, някаква договорка между тези хора. Защото много се говори за лобизъм и трябва да видим каква е цената на този лобизъм. Дължите ми отговори.

Virginie Joron (ID). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, la gauche, les Verts et les amis de Macron nous ont dit: «pourquoi vous voulez retirer les badges d’accès de Pfizer au Parlement», alors que le PDG de Pfizer refusait de nous accorder dix minutes pour répondre à nos questions sur le plus gros contrat de l’histoire européenne. Ces députés ont soutenu Pfizer.

Et depuis, c’est le festival Pfizer. D’un côté, Pfizer défend ses intérêts commerciaux: 2,4 milliards de doses à 19,50€ la dose, *business is business*. Et de l’autre côté de ce contrat, une Commission qui s’agenouille en déclarant que Pfizer perd de l’argent. Mais de qui se moque-t-on?

Moi, je suis choquée, comme des milliers d’Européens, choquée de voir que Pfizer demande aux députés de la commission Covid de justifier leurs questions sur la transparence et de laisser leur téléphone à l’extérieur de la salle. Je suis choquée de devoir signer un papier pour protéger les intérêts financiers de Pfizer, choquée que Pfizer nous empêche de nous exprimer. Et vous cautionnez tout cela. Ce mur du silence pour protéger le trésor de guerre de Pfizer est scandaleux. C’est votre bilan. Et pour rappel, sachez que nous ne sommes pas des employés de Pfizer.

Chris MacManus (The Left). – Mr President, according to new data compiled by the Newstalk radio station, there are substantially more short-term holiday lets available in Ireland than long-term lets. Galway has nearly 20 times more short-term lets than long-term, while Donegal, also my constituency, has 47 times more.

Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil governments are pushing our young people away from a future in Ireland. To paraphrase W.B. Yeats, ‘No country for young men ... women, or indeed any future generation!’

How can we turn the tide of our young people leaving our shores when we can't even provide them with a home of their own? When I see the abundance of holiday homes available, I ask myself, does our current government view the West of Ireland as anything other than a holiday destination for a weekend retreat, as an amenity for those with multiple homes whilst others go homeless?

It's time for action, not just words. Let's secure our youth's future!

Victor Negrescu (S&D). – Domnule președinte, în curând, Spania va prelua președinția Consiliului Uniunii Europene, într-un moment în care Europa are nevoie de soluții imediate de sprijin pentru populație și într-o situație complexă din punct de vedere electoral. Fac apel din plenul Parlamentului European la toate partidele politice din Spania să sprijine aderarea României la spațiul Schengen, mai ales că președinția sa la Consiliul UE reprezintă ultima posibilitate de a face acest lucru până la alegerile europene de anul viitor. Social-democrații din Spania au fost clar în susținerea României. Este timpul ca reprezentanții drepte și extremei drepte din Spania să facă la fel.

Solicit tuturor partidelor din România și colegilor mei eurodeputați să discute cu partenerii lor, așa cum am făcut-o noi, social-democrații. Fără jumătăți de măsură, fără declarații lipsite de conținut și fără surprize generate, așa cum s-a întâmplat cu dreapta în Austria. Avem obligația să luptăm pentru respectarea tratatelor europene, să nu renunțăm la acest obiectiv și să folosim activ relațiile politice externe în interesul României și al Uniunii Europene.

Илхан Кючюк (Renew). – Г-н Председател, „Пореден скандал в България: Урсула фон дер Лайен – можеше ли да го избегне?“ Това е заглавието от днес на авторитетното френско издание Льо Монд. Не, не можеше да го избегне, защото скандалът се случи между бившия министър-председател на България, Кирил Петков, настоящ лидер, един от лидерите на „Продължаваме промяната“, и Урсула фон дер Лайен. Нека само да ви зачета. Това не е някакъв сериал от Латинска Америка, а се случва в европейска България. Запис, който придоби популярност не само в България, за съжаление.

„Попитах я какви са шансовете ни да ни приемат“, казва Петков. Тя ми отговори: „За Шенген имате големи шансове. За еврозоната трябва да намерите начин как да заобиколите правилата, в смисъл да влезете в рамката.“ „Аз ѝ отговорих“, казва Петков, „Може ли да имаме инфлация, която да е минус ефекта на Украйна?“ Тя ми каза: „Не ме цитирайте. Ще се опитаме да ви помогнем.“

Това е разговор, който се води между Урсула фон дер Лайен и Кирил Петков в момент, в който трябва да се реши съдбата на България, след пет избора да имаме редовно правителство. А има и други неща, които със сигурност вече се знаят от повечето от вас. Как трябва да бъдат подслушвани хора? Как трябва да бъдат сменяни шефове на полицията, за да може да се осигури изборна победа? Но, както се казва, имам една минута.

Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE). – Senhor Presidente, votar para acabar com a extrema-direita foi o que fizemos na Galiza no passado domingo. O avanço da extrema-direita na Europa e no Estado espanhol é preocupante. Na Galiza tiveram apenas um representante. Que exemplo se o compararmos com o resto do Estado!

O Bloque, o meu partido, foi o antídoto no meu país para deter a direita e os seus amigos da extrema-direita, porque o Sr. Feijóo, que quer ser o presidente do Estado, tem amizades muito perigosas e quer conquistar com mentiras e notícias falsas. Nada é mais perigoso que branquear a extrema-direita, como faz o Sr. Feijóo, do Partido Popular.

Em julho temos que voltar a votar, votar novamente para dar o exemplo de como combater a extrema-direita e ter um grupo parlamentar no Congresso espanhol para combater o que é um dos maiores perigos para a democracia europeia.

Cristian Terheș (ECR). – Mr President, dear colleagues, if the boxer Mike Tyson starts pretending to be a woman, with or without wearing lipstick or a dress, can we call the society which would allow him to box in the female category a 'society'? I say no.

This simple example illustrates the absurdity of those who claim to defend the rights of women, but at the same time support the senseless claim that a man who pretends to be a woman should, in the eyes of the law, the social norms, be considered a woman.

There are increased threats and risks of violence against women and girls in female private spaces like restrooms or spas if a biological man who pretends to be a woman is allowed to enter such spaces, or even expose himself.

Such behaviour of male perverts against women and girls should be prosecuted at the fullest extent of the law, not promoted by the European institutions – even in schools, to children.

Society must not reward sexual predators for their illegal actions by sending them to serve time in female prisons just because they pretend to be women.

We have a natural and legal obligation to defend and protect women. The obligation starts by acknowledging the biological reality of sex.

André Rougé (ID). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, la multiplication des normes par l'Union européenne contraint les pêcheurs des RUP à la mise en conformité de leur flotte. Pour ce faire, ce sont 64 millions d'euros qui ont été octroyés par la Commission à cinq départements d'outre-mer. Nombreux sont les pêcheurs qui n'en ont pourtant pas vu la couleur. Impossible de savoir combien d'entre eux sont réellement concernés par la dotation de cette aide, faute de transparence du gouvernement français. Nouvelle preuve de l'incapacité du gouvernement Borne à répondre aux problématiques. Ce manque de transparence a amené la Commission à suspendre ses aides.

Une fois de plus, ce sont nos compatriotes d'outre-mer qui se voient abandonnés et marginalisés par la gestion hasardeuse du président Macron. Le Rassemblement National alertait déjà sur l'importance de cette subvention, et nous le faisons de nouveau dans cet hémicycle concernant l'absence de transparence de son usage. La Commission doit octroyer de nouveau cette aide et laisser à la France du temps pour construire son rapport. Quant au président Macron et à son gouvernement, ils se doivent de remplir leurs obligations pour favoriser la pérennisation de cette aide indispensable.

(Le président retire la parole à l'orateur)

Younous Omarjee (The Left). – Monsieur le Président, c'est toujours une souffrance que de pointer son propre pays devant notre Parlement européen. Mais le devoir m'oblige à vous dire la dérive autoritaire du pouvoir en France, l'affaiblissement de la séparation des pouvoirs entre le législatif et l'exécutif. Et cet après-midi, très gravement, à l'Assemblée nationale française, la mise en cause des droits constitutionnels de l'opposition parlementaire, parmi lesquels le droit premier d'amendement.

Aujourd'hui, en France, un danger nouveau guette la démocratie. De dérive en dérive, d'abus de pouvoir en abus de pouvoir, c'est tout un système illibéral qui se met en place en France. Nous sommes des parlementaires européens et cela doit nous inquiéter car quand l'état de droit recule en France, c'est toute l'Europe, c'est le modèle européen, qui est attaqué.

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Domnule președinte, sunt în Parlamentul European din 2014 și tot de atunci pledez pentru echitate, pentru aplicarea tratatelor și a regulamentelor în mod egal în cele 27 de state, pentru a nu crea inechități și, până la urmă, discriminare. Mă bucur, domnule comisar, că sunteți astăzi de serviciu, pentru că una din inechitățile și discriminările făcute pentru cetățenii din țara mea, care m-au trimis aici, este faptul că Austria, țara dumneavoastră, se opune intrării României în Schengen fără niciun argument. Sunt în Comisia pentru libertăți civile, cunosc regulamentul Schengen, nu încalcăm niciun articol de acolo.

A doua inechitate, domnule comisar, și poate o transmiteți și doamnei Președinte, tot pentru românii din țara mea, este că românii nu pot să meargă în Statele Unite fără viză. De ce nu aplicați reciprocitatea? Și v-aș ruga să mă ascultați, domnule comisar, pentru că pentru dumneavoastră vorbesc. Cred că trebuie să aveți puțin respect pentru membrii Parlamentului European. Trebuie să-mi dați în plus să repet acum, domnule președinte.

Deci era vorba de a doua inechitate, domnule comisar, legată de cetățenii din România cărora nu li se acceptă mersul în Statele Unite decât pe bază de viză. Aveți tratatul: aplicați reciprocitatea și rezolvați aceste inechități, pentru că în România este un euroscepticism... *(Președintele a întrerupt vorbitoarea)* Da, domnule președinte, nu m-a ascultat domnul comisar. Eu nu stau până la ora 22.00 să vorbesc aici, la o sală goală și comisarul să nu asculte. Este absolut nepotrivit acest lucru... *(Președintele a retras cuvântul vorbitoarei)*

Michiel Hoogeveen (ECR). – Voorzitter, binnenkort komt Brussel met nieuwe Europese belastingen. Waarom? Omdat NextGenerationEU, het zogenaamde coronaherstelfonds, betaald moet worden. Waarom was dit fonds ook alweer nodig? Omdat de EU moet groeien. En waarom moet de EU groeien? Omdat de enorme budgetten voor bureaucratie, klimaat en de fondsen voor Zuid-Europa niet omlaag mogen. En waarom niet? Omdat de EU anders moet inkrimpen. En waarom mag dat niet? Omdat de EU dan macht verliest.

Maar door de hoge rente is het nog duurder geworden voor de EU om te lenen. Dus moet er nog meer geld naar Brussel toe. En raad eens bij wie dat wordt opgehaald? Bij de mensen thuis uiteraard. En daarom worden er nieuwe belastingen geïntroduceerd.

De miljarden van het NextGenerationEU zijn nog niet eens opgehaald, laat staan uitgegeven. Tijd om met het fonds te stoppen voordat het helemaal te laat is.

Vlad-Marius Botoș (Renew). – Domnule președinte, Uniunea Europeană evoluează. Noi, aici, în Parlamentul European, facem tot ce ține de noi să ne adaptăm schimbărilor și provocărilor. Îmbunătățim modul de lucru când e nevoie, schimbăm liniile politice pentru a răspunde crizelor succesive de sănătate, inflaționiste, de securitate, iar Comisia Europeană încearcă alături de noi să găsească soluții. Această adaptare ne duce înainte, însă ne lovim de un zid populist în multe aspecte atunci când vine vorba despre colaborarea cu Consiliul Uniunii Europene. Acest zid încă stă în calea liberei circulații a cetățenilor europeni, încă stă în calea implementării drepturilor legale ale tuturor cetățenilor, indiferent de statul membru de origine.

Dragi colegi, domnule comisar, trebuie să găsim soluții pentru ca în Consiliul Uniunii Europene să nu se mai considere normal ca din interese naționale să fie încălcate drepturile cetățenilor europeni. Libera circulație a românilor în statele europene trebuie să devină cât mai curând o realitate, iar pentru aceasta România și românii trebuie să fie membri ai spațiului Schengen.

Gunnar Beck (ID). – Herr Präsident! Dem bulgarischen Ex-Ministerpräsidenten Kiril Petkow versprach Kommissionspräsidentin Ursula von der Leyen, Bulgarien bei der Umgehung der Regeln für den Eurobeitritt zu helfen. Nichts Neues, denn Mario Draghi, damals noch bei Goldman Sachs, bahnte gegen hohe Gebühren Griechenland mit Swapgeschäften den Weg in den Euro. Zehn Jahre später hatten wir die nimmer endende Eurokrise. Später wurde Draghi zum größten Rechtsbrecher seit dem Kriege.

Von der Leyen setzt sich genauso beliebig über Recht hinweg. Als Verteidigungsministerin vergab sie Beratungshonorare an US-Consultingfirmen, als Kommissionspräsidentin handelte sie Milliardenaufträge für COVID-Impfstoffe mit Pfizer per SMS aus. Auskunft über den Inhalt der Nachrichten und Gegenleistungen an ihre Familie verweigert sie. Doch nichts geschieht.

Die EU schiebt Rechtsstaatlichkeitsbedenken vor, um gegen unliebsame Mitgliedstaaten vorzugehen. Die EU bricht Recht, wenn und wie es ihr gefällt.

Sandra Pereira (The Left). – Senhor Presidente, a 1 de junho celebra-se o Dia Mundial da Criança, data em que em Portugal se assinala a defesa dos direitos das crianças. Nunca é demais renovar a força da quase secular proclamação que referia que todas as crianças têm direito a afeto, amor e compreensão, alimentação adequada, cuidados médicos, educação gratuita, proteção contra todas as formas de exploração e a crescer num clima de paz e fraternidade.

Compete aos Estados a formulação de políticas universais e estruturais que garantam esses princípios e assegurem o desenvolvimento integral das crianças, mobilizando os recursos e os instrumentos necessários à sua concretização. Reforçar os direitos das crianças significa reforçar os direitos dos seus pais, acabando com a precariedade laboral, a desregulação dos horários de trabalho, os baixos salários e os elevados custos de bens e serviços essenciais. Implica fazer cumprir e alargar os direitos de maternidade e paternidade.

As crianças têm direito a crescerem felizes e as suas famílias têm o direito de acompanhar o seu crescimento. As crianças precisam de brincar e de ser crianças. Essa ainda é uma luta de todos os dias.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Mr President, parity is supposed to be the most important right under Community law and an essential element of European citizenship. But for over 30 years, this right continues to be denied to *lettori*, foreign lecturers in Italian universities. This is the longest-running discrimination case on record, and it has to stop. It's happening in defiance of four clear court rulings by the European Court of Justice against Italy. Twice, rulings were won by the Commission in infringement and follow-on enforcement proceedings. But the injustice remains and the working and retired *lettori* continue to be robbed of their rightful earnings.

Now, the Commission told Italy to pay these workers in March. Yet, in May, the Italian Government brought in a decree-law to legislate for extra time. Extra time? Is 35 years not enough? This is a total sham. Everyone knows it's administratively very simple to right this wrong. So I echo the call of Italy's biggest trade unions for the Commission to immediately refer this matter to the Court of Justice. *Basta! Paga subito ai lettori.*

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Mr President, last June, the EU refused candidate status to Georgia, not because it didn't meet the criteria, but because they weren't anti-Russia enough. We've had MEPs calling for the release of Saakashvili as a condition of EU entry. This is a man who oversaw a reign of terror in Georgia. He was their Pinochet. Over 300 000 opponents were imprisoned. Many were tortured. Several were murdered.

Meanwhile, the West are funding NGOs that have sown division in Georgia. When the government tried to introduce a law to hold NGOs to account, the EU attacked them despite the fact that the US has had the same law for years, and the EU are about to bring in the same one themselves.

Georgia is not interested in war. Georgia wants peace. It wants to have good relationship with everyone, especially its neighbours. Must they abandon all sovereignty to gain entry to the EU? Do they have to promote war rather than peace? Give Georgia candidate status and let the people decide, without foreign interference, if they want to join the EU or not.

João Pimenta Lopes (The Left). – Senhor Presidente, quero expressar aqui no Parlamento Europeu a nossa total solidariedade com a justa luta dos trabalhadores da Easyjet em Portugal, que têm levado a cabo greves por estes dias. Uma justa luta por aumentos salariais e condições de trabalho idênticas a outros países europeus e contra a total desregulação de horários, sendo que, em comparação com trabalhadores de outros países da União Europeia, os portugueses são os que podem voar mais e descansar menos.

Importa assinalar que a diferença salarial chega a ser de 100 % entre Portugal e outros países europeus onde a companhia opera. Importa também recordar que a Comissão Europeia impôs a atribuição à Easyjet de 18 slots diários no aeroporto de Lisboa, retirados à TAP, contribuindo assim, objetivamente, para alargar o negócio e os lucros desta companhia e para prejudicar a TAP, caucionando as péssimas práticas laborais da Easyjet, sacudindo a água do capote, desresponsabilizando-se em lugar de as impedir, e favorecendo o seu crescimento neste setor.

President. – Thank you very much. I would like to thank all the interpreters for their great work today, the team assisting me here tonight and our ushers.

That concludes this item.

21. Agenda of the next sitting

President. – The next sitting will be tomorrow, Thursday 1 June starting at 9.00. The agenda has been published and is available on the European Parliament website.

22. Closure of the sitting

(The sitting closed at 22.40)

Key to symbols used

*	Consultation procedure
***	Consent procedure
***I	Ordinary legislative procedure: first reading
***II	Ordinary legislative procedure: second reading
***III	Ordinary legislative procedure: third reading

(The type of procedure is determined by the legal basis proposed in the draft act.)

Abbreviations used for Parliamentary Committees

AFET	Committee on Foreign Affairs
DEVE	Committee on Development
INTA	Committee on International Trade
BUDG	Committee on Budgets
CONT	Committee on Budgetary Control
ECON	Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs
EMPL	Committee on Employment and Social Affairs
ENVI	Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety
ITRE	Committee on Industry, Research and Energy
IMCO	Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection
TRAN	Committee on Transport and Tourism
REGI	Committee on Regional Development
AGRI	Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development
PECH	Committee on Fisheries
CULT	Committee on Culture and Education
JURI	Committee on Legal Affairs
LIBE	Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs
AFCO	Committee on Constitutional Affairs
FEMM	Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality
PETI	Committee on Petitions
DROI	Subcommittee on Human Rights
SEDE	Subcommittee on Security and Defence
FISC	Subcommittee on Tax Matters
SANT	Subcommittee on Public Health

Abbreviations used for Political Groups

PPE	Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats)
S&D	Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament
Renew	Renew Europe Group
Verts/ALE	Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance
ID	Identity and Democracy Group
ECR	European Conservatives and Reformists Group
The Left	The Left Group in the European Parliament – GUE/NGL
NI	Non-attached Members