

ESACTA LITERAL DE LOS DEBATES DE 15 DE MARZO DE 2023

(C/2023/1467)

PARLAMENTO EUROPEO

PERÍODO DE SESIONES 2023-2024

Sesiones del 14 al 16 de marzo de 2023

ESTRASBURGO

Sumario	Página
1. Apertura de la sesión	4
2. Composición nominal de la Subcomisión de Salud Pública	4
3. Conclusiones de la reunión extraordinaria del Consejo Europeo del 9 de febrero y preparación de la reunión del Consejo Europeo de los días 23 y 24 de marzo de 2023 (debate)	4
4. Negociaciones antes de la primera lectura del Parlamento (artículo 71 del Reglamento interno)(curso dado)	30
5. Día Internacional de la Mujer	31
6. Reanudación de la sesión	41
7. Turno de votaciones	41
7.1. Acuerdo UE-Estados Unidos: modificación de las concesiones en todos los contingentes arancelarios de la lista CLXXV de la UE (A9-0042/2023 - Bernd Lange) (votación)	41
7.2. Intercambio de información entre las autoridades policiales (A9-0247/2022 - Lena Düpont) (votación)	41
7.3. Nuevos actos de represión contra la población de Bielorrusia, en particular los casos de Andrzej Poczobut y Ales Bialiatski (B9-0163/2023, RC-B9-0164/2023, B9-0164/2023, B9-0165/2023, B9-0166/2023, B9-0167/2023, B9-0168/2023) (votación)	41
7.4. Una renta mínima adecuada que garantice una inclusión activa (B9-0099/2023, B9-0116/2023) (votación)	41
7.5. El funcionamiento del SEAE y una Unión Europea más fuerte en el mundo (A9-0045/2023 - Urmaz Paet) (votación)	41

Sumario	Página
7.6. Semestre Europeo para la coordinación de las políticas económicas 2023 (A9-0044/2023 - Irene Tinagli) (votación)	42
7.7. Semestre Europeo para la coordinación de las políticas económicas: prioridades sociales y en materia de empleo para 2023 (A9-0051/2023 - Estrella Durá Ferrandis) (votación)	42
7.8. Informe de ejecución sobre el Acuerdo sobre la retirada del Reino Unido de la Unión (A9-0052/2023 - Pedro Silva Pereira) (votación)	42
7.9. Relaciones UE-Armenia (A9-0036/2023 - Andrey Kovatchev) (votación)	42
7.10. Relaciones UE-Azerbaiyán (A9-0037/2023 - Željana Zovko) (votación)	42
8. Reanudación de la sesión	43
9. Composición de las comisiones y delegaciones	43
10. Aprobación del Acta de la sesión anterior	43
11. Más Europa, más empleos: construimos la economía competitiva del mañana en beneficio de todos (debate de actualidad)	43
12. Quiebra de Silicon Valley Bank y repercusiones en la estabilidad financiera de Europa (debate)	61
13. Refuerzo de la defensa de la Unión en el contexto de la guerra en Ucrania: aceleración de la producción y del suministro de armas y munición a Ucrania (debate)	70
14. Muertes en el mar: respuesta común de la Unión para salvar vidas y medidas para garantizar vías seguras y legales (debate)	77
15. Necesidad de reformar las normas internas de la Comisión con carácter inmediato para garantizar la transparencia y la rendición de cuentas a la luz de supuestos conflictos de intereses (debate)	97
16. Lucha contra la delincuencia organizada en la Unión (debate)	102
17. Activismo de las mujeres: defensoras de los derechos humanos relacionados con la salud sexual y reproductiva y derechos conexos (debate)	112
18. Directrices de la UE sobre Defensores de los Derechos Humanos (debate)	124
19. Adopciones transfronterizas desde terceros países (debate)	130
20. Lucha contra la discriminación en la Unión: la esperada Directiva horizontal contra la discriminación (debate)	137
21. Debates sobre casos de violaciones de los derechos humanos, de la democracia y del Estado de Derecho (debate)	146
21.1. Irán, en particular el envenenamiento de cientos de alumnas	146
21.2. Túnez: ataques recientes contra las libertades de expresión y de asociación y los sindicatos, en particular el caso del periodista Nuredín Butar	152

Sumario	Página
21.3. Camboya, en particular el caso del líder de la oposición Kem Sokha	156
22. Explicaciones de voto	159
22.1. Nuevos actos de represión contra la población de Bielorrusia, en particular los casos de Andrzej Poczobut y Ales Bialiatski (B9-0163/2023, RC-B9-0164/2023, B9-0164/2023, B9-0165/2023, B9-0166/2023, B9-0167/2023, B9-0168/2023)	159
22.2. Una renta mínima adecuada que garantice una inclusión activa (B9-0099/2023, B9-0116/2023)	160
22.3. Semestre Europeo para la coordinación de las políticas económicas 2023 (A9-0044/2023 - Irene Tinagli)	160
22.4. Semestre Europeo para la coordinación de las políticas económicas: prioridades sociales y en materia de empleo para 2023 (A9-0051/2023 - Estrella Durá Ferrandis)	161
22.5. Informe de ejecución sobre el Acuerdo sobre la retirada del Reino Unido de la Unión (A9-0052/2023 - Pedro Silva Pereira)	161
22.6. Relaciones UE-Armenia (A9-0036/2023 - Andrey Kovatchev)	161
22.7. Relaciones UE-Azerbaiján (A9-0037/2023 - Željana Zovko)	162
23. Orden del día de la próxima sesión	162
24. Aprobación del Acta de la presente sesión	162
25. Cierre de la sesión	162

ESACTA LITERAL DE LOS DEBATES DE 15 DE MARZO DE 2023

PRESIDENZA: ROBERTA METSOLA

President

1. Apertura de la sesión

(The sitting opened at 9.03.)

2. Composición nominal de la Subcomisión de Salud Pública

President. – The political groups and non-attached Members have notified me of the appointments to the new Subcommittee on Public Health. The list of the committee members will be published online and in the minutes.

3. Conclusiones de la reunión extraordinaria del Consejo Europeo del 9 de febrero y preparación de la reunión del Consejo Europeo de los días 23 y 24 de marzo de 2023 (debate)

President. – The next item is the debate on the European Council and Commission statements on the conclusions of the special European Council meeting of 9 February and preparation of the European Council meeting of 23-24 March 2023 (2023/2549(RSP)).

Charles Michel, *President of the European Council.* – Madam President, our last European Council was marked by the participation of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. He took part in a brief plenary session where we had the occasion to reaffirm our full support for Ukraine for as long as it takes – because defeat for Ukraine is not an option. President Zelenskyy then met in small formats with leaders about intensifying their direct operational assistance, especially for more weapons.

To win peace, we must strengthen our defence and our capabilities. Three days after the Russian attack, we took the decision to deliver arms and munitions to Ukraine, and this marked a paradigm shift. I believe this was the birth of our European defence. Strengthening our European defence means developing our industrial capacities and this is urgently needed to support Ukraine. Russian forces have fired between 20 000 and 50 000 artillery shells per day in recent months. Ukraine needs ammunition to defend itself and that is why we have worked on the proposal of Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas to organise bulk orders to support the pace of our deliveries to our Ukrainian friends, and High Representative Borrell has developed a concrete plan to implement this assistance to Ukraine.

Ladies and gentlemen, we would like to see an escalation. We would like to see an escalation towards peace. But Russia has not stopped escalating the war. It would only take one decision, just one decision, from the aggressor to engage in peace, to silence its weapons and to withdraw its troops behind the internationally recognised borders of Ukraine. Unfortunately, we do not see any signal from the Kremlin in this direction.

Despite this, we continue to fight a battle for peace, the diplomatic battle. We support the just peace formula proposed by President Zelenskyy. It is based on the UN Charter. It is based on respect for international law, and we are working hard to rally the international community behind peace efforts like we did in the run-up to the vote in the UN General Assembly calling for the withdrawal of Russian forces from Ukrainian territory. We also discussed, for instance, this with many contacts at the recent African Union summit in Addis Ababa, and the High Representative went to the United Nations in New York for the vote. The resolution was supported by an overwhelming majority of 141 countries. This vote is encouraging, but the work of convincing others remains extremely challenging.

Ladies and gentlemen, honourable Members, the economic consequences of the war in Ukraine have forced us to ask ourselves the right questions about the competitiveness of our economy, in both the short and the long term. Just one example to illustrate the challenge: the EU's energy trade deficit in 2022 represented some 4% of our GDP, compared with 1.7% in 2021, while the United States has seen its surplus increase threefold during the same period. Energy exports in United States have increased by 60% in 2022. Last December, the European Council asked the Commission to present ways of helping our industry drive forward our green and digital transition, especially in the context of more targeted state interventions, including by the United States.

We have decided on our short-term strength of action. First, relaxing the state aid regime in a targeted and time-limited way, coupled with greater flexibility in the use of all existing financial means. Second point: making life easier for our businesses by streamlining procedures and authorisation. And third, stepping up training and retraining to provide our future sectors with the professionals they desperately need.

But, ladies and gentlemen, we must also take action in the long term because we cannot allow the short-term measures to undermine our long-term strategy. This is precisely the debate we will have next week at our next European Council on the competitiveness of the European economy. We expect the proposals requested from the Commission tomorrow.

In the long term, I think we need to work on three areas: investment, innovation and trade. First, investment. European companies, particularly SMEs, are having difficulty finding the capital they need to invest in innovation. The gap between the EU and the United States in terms of productive investment represents 2% of GDP. Another example: the EU stock market capitalisation is less than half that of the US as a proportion of gross domestic product, and yet, Europeans save far more than Americans. We must close this gap and we know the solution. There is a solution. It is called the capital markets union, a project whose foundations were laid almost ten years ago, and it's now crucial that we speed up legislative work to bring this essential project to fruition – to finance our economy, to create jobs and to ensure the well-being of all Europeans for decades to come.

C'est aussi pour cette raison qu'avec la présidente de la Commission, la présidente de la Banque centrale européenne et avec le président de la Banque européenne d'investissement et le président de l'Eurogroupe, nous avons lancé publiquement cet appel à accélérer le travail en lien avec l'Union du marché des capitaux.

Mesdames et Messieurs, le deuxième point sur lequel nous devons travailler porte sur l'innovation. Nous nous souvenons tous qu'il y a quelques années déjà, la stratégie de Lisbonne avait défini un objectif ambitieux: 3 % du PIB devait être consacré à cette mobilisation de capacités vers l'innovation. Or, nous voyons bien que le résultat n'est pas à la hauteur de l'objectif qui a été fixé à l'époque. Nous devons faire plus. Nous devons faire mieux. Cela fera certainement partie du débat qui aura lieu au sein du Conseil cette semaine.

Nous voyons par exemple, si je prends les plateformes digitales, que pour celles-ci, 90 % de leur capitalisation pour les 70 entreprises les plus importantes dans le monde relève des États-Unis et de la Chine. C'est montrer la faible proportion de la capacité de l'Union européenne à se déployer sur des secteurs qui sont pourtant essentiels pour notre avenir commun.

Enfin, le troisième point que je souhaiterais mentionner à cette tribune, c'est l'enjeu du commerce. Quelques réflexions sur ce sujet avec vous. Le commerce a été pendant de très nombreuses années, j'ai envie de dire, un atout sacré pour l'Union européenne. Ce fut un moteur puissant de prospérité, de capacité à générer du développement et de l'amélioration des conditions de vie pour nos concitoyens.

Et nous voyons bien aujourd'hui, il faut le regarder avec lucidité, que si nous sommes dans la ligue des champions pour négocier des accords commerciaux, on a de plus en plus de difficultés à veiller à ce qu'ils soient mis en œuvre. Ainsi, depuis 2006, sur quatorze accords commerciaux qui ont été conclus, pour l'immense majorité ils sont soit entrés en vigueur de manière provisoire, et non pas de manière définitive, soit leur entrée en vigueur est restée au point mort. On aura dans les mois qui viennent, avec par exemple le Mercosur, le Chili ou la question du Mexique, un certain nombre de choix qui devront être faits. Il faudra regarder la vérité en face.

Pour vous dire le fond de ma pensée sur le sujet, je pense que nous avons deux enjeux en lien avec notre politique commerciale pour l'avenir. Le premier touche à notre méthode de décision, notre méthode de négociation. C'est la capacité à veiller à ce que nos sociétés, l'ensemble des acteurs directement concernés, puissent se sentir impliqués dans le processus, c'est-à-dire travailler pour plus de transparence, pour plus de confiance. Il y a un bon exemple, je crois, c'est le Brexit. Le Brexit a été l'occasion de mobiliser, sans agenda caché, en toute transparence, toutes les informations pour le Parlement européen, pour les parlements nationaux, pour les sociétés civiles, pour les acteurs économiques. Et il a été possible de travailler vite et, je crois, travailler bien sur ce sujet. Sans doute cet exemple-là doit nous inspirer pour l'avenir en termes de méthode.

Puis un deuxième sujet, c'est le fond, et je mesure bien qu'il y a une volonté généreuse, sincère, de vouloir régler beaucoup de problèmes dans le monde au travers de l'instrument des accords commerciaux. Mais peut-être faut-il considérer que des choix doivent être faits. Je crois, pour ce qui me concerne, qu'un accord commercial doit contribuer d'abord à améliorer, à renforcer les relations commerciales – on a parfois tendance à l'oublier, c'est un objectif d'un accord commercial – et que cela doit aussi conduire à encourager davantage de soutien dans le monde pour les standards exigeants que nous souhaitons, par exemple pour les conditions de travail, par exemple pour les conditions environnementales. Parfois, à vouloir trop embrasser, nous étreignons mal. Peut-être devons-nous avoir ce débat démocratique. Il est certain que le Parlement européen a, à cet égard, un rôle majeur à jouer.

Enfin, envisager notre avenir économique. La compétitivité de l'Union européenne, c'est aussi regarder la relation que nous avons avec d'autres grands acteurs dans le monde, les États-Unis bien sûr, la Chine également. Et dans ce cadre-là, il va de soi que, conformément aux traités, le Conseil a bien l'intention d'assumer pleinement sa responsabilité en lien avec la politique extérieure de l'Union européenne. C'est le sens des débats stratégiques qui ont eu lieu à plusieurs reprises au long des derniers mois au sein du Conseil européen.

Quelques réflexions aussi sur ce sujet. D'une part, il est certain qu'il n'y a pas d'équidistance entre États-Unis et Chine. Nous sommes un allié solide, loyal et fidèle des États-Unis. Nous développons avec ce pays des liens historiques, des liens qui portent sur les valeurs, des liens qui touchent aussi à la coopération économique et qui touchent très directement, on le voit bien, à l'enjeu de notre sécurité. Et dans le même temps, la Chine est une réalité. La Chine est un fait, un acteur majeur sur la scène internationale, et c'est la raison pour laquelle il me semble qu'il y a trois éléments clés dans notre relation à la Chine.

D'une part, rester debout les yeux dans les yeux s'agissant des valeurs fondamentales, défendre les droits de l'homme, les principes démocratiques qui nous tiennent à cœur, qui nous sont chevillés au cœur. Faire en sorte ensuite que l'on puisse s'engager pour tenter de réduire des dépendances qui peuvent coûter cher – on l'a vu avec la Russie s'agissant des questions énergétiques. Ça veut dire rééquilibrer les relations économiques avec la Chine, et singulièrement pour les enjeux stratégiques pour l'avenir de la prospérité sur le plan de l'Union européenne.

Et puis, troisièmement, il va de soi – personne n'en doute, je crois, ici –, qu'il n'y a pas d'autre option que d'engager un dialogue avec la Chine sur des sujets globaux, ceux qui touchent au changement climatique, ceux qui touchent par exemple à la santé globale également. Et c'est dans cette perspective-là que nous allons continuer, au départ du Conseil, à assumer notre responsabilité dans la politique extérieure de l'Union européenne, en nouant le dialogue avec les différents pays avec lesquels nous devons envisager un certain nombre de sujets de discussion.

Enfin, et je conclus par ce thème, qui n'est pas un thème mineur, le Conseil européen a été l'occasion d'aborder en détail la question des migrations. Nous savons que ce sujet migratoire est un sujet qui donne lieu à des tensions politiques, idéologiques, qui parfois est aussi instrumentalisé pour susciter de la polarisation au sein de nos sociétés. Et nous pensons qu'il faut faire preuve de sang-froid, de rationalité dans l'analyse de cet enjeu.

D'une part, nous faisons confiance au travail qui est mené par le Parlement européen en lien avec la présidence tournante, afin de faire entrer en vigueur le pacte migratoire. C'est la dimension interne de la migration et nous veillerons à ce qu'au départ du Conseil, il y ait aussi cette capacité de nous engager pour progresser sur ce sujet dans les prochains mois.

D'autre part, sans attendre l'entrée en vigueur de ce pacte migratoire, il est certain que l'on doit faire mieux et plus en termes de coopération avec les pays tiers, avec les pays d'origine, avec les pays de transit. Plus de coopération pour lutter ensemble contre les trafiquants et les criminels qui spéculent sur la misère et sur la pauvreté. Plus de mobilisation aussi pour ouvrir des canaux légaux de migrations, ne pas laisser des trafiquants et des criminels décider qui a la capacité de venir vers l'Union européenne, mais décider en conscience, dans le respect de l'état de droit, de la façon dont on gère de manière régulière, humaine, avec la fermeté nécessaire cette question migratoire. Nous aurons l'occasion la semaine prochaine de faire aussi un point d'étape à la suite de cette discussion approfondie qui a eu lieu sur ce sujet-là lors du dernier Conseil européen.

Nous aurons aussi l'occasion, et je termine par cela, d'évoquer la situation dans le cadre de la zone euro, puisque nous aurons un sommet de la zone euro avec la participation de Paschal Donohoe et de Christine Lagarde. Ce sera l'occasion de regarder l'avenir de cette zone euro dans les circonstances que nous connaissons.

Enfin, Mesdames et Messieurs, chers collègues, nous mesurons chacune et chacun que nous sommes confrontés depuis quelques années à des moments qui nous bousculent, à des moments qui nous ébranlent. Nos repères sont mis en doute, nos repères sont mis en question. Mais les fondamentaux du projet européen, les valeurs de dignité personnelle, cette promesse de prospérité, cette garantie de sécurité, plus que jamais ces fondamentaux doivent être notre boussole pour l'avenir, pour donner un élan qui, de mon point de vue, touche à cette autonomie stratégique de l'Union européenne, cette souveraineté qui est nécessaire. Plus de résilience, plus d'influence dans le monde, moins de dépendance. C'est la boussole qui doit, je l'espère, dans l'unité, nous animer pour porter ce projet qui nous tient tellement à cœur.

Ursula von der Leyen, *President of the Commission*. – Madam President, dear Roberta, President Michel, *cher Charles*, honourable Members, last Friday, I met with President Biden in Washington. We had a very good discussion on the Inflation Reduction Act.

There is a striking symmetry between the Inflation Reduction Act and the European Green Deal. Both of them are simultaneously a climate strategy and a strategy for investment and growth. Both of them include funding for just transition. And both include regulatory standards. Only on carbon pricing – a very important instrument – the United States system is still much more limited than ours. In other words, the two biggest and most advanced economies in the world are now moving in the same direction. Therefore, I welcome the Inflation Reduction Act for its massive investment in clean tech. But, you might perhaps recall that, as we discussed already in November, some aspects of the Inflation Reduction Act were of concern to us and needed solutions.

Now, I am happy to report that we have found solutions. On Friday, President Biden and I confirmed the understanding on electric vehicles that allows European carmakers to get access to the US market and thus to US tax breaks. Second, we launched discussions on a critical raw materials agreement. The aim is to ensure that critical raw materials for electric vehicle batteries, whether they are extracted or processed in the European Union, are treated in the same way as if they came from the United States. Thus, this will secure strong supply chains for batteries in Europe and ensure access to the US market. And, my third point, we started a transparency dialogue on incentives for the clean tech industry.

That's good news overall. But let me be clear: negotiations can only solve some of the most concerning issues. The big bulk of work still lies with us in Europe. We Europeans need to get better at nurturing our own clean tech industry. We need to speed up. We need to simplify procedures. We need to grant better access to public and private finances.

If there's any doubt, let me give you three figures that underscore why this is so important. The global investment in the clean transition topped USD 1 trillion last year, and that's 30% more than the year before. If you look at the global market for net-zero technologies, it is set to triple by 2030.

In other words, the race is on: the race on who is going to be dominant in this market in the future. We must get our act together if we want to stay frontrunners. We must nurture our own clean tech industrial base, both to create good, well-paying jobs here in Europe and, of course, to ensure access to the clean solutions we need so urgently.

That's what the European Green Deal Industrial Plan is all about. The centrepiece of the Green Deal Industrial Plan are two legal acts. One is the Net-Zero Industry Act and the other one is the Critical Raw Materials Act. The Commission is proposing those two legal acts this week, actually tomorrow. Let me reflect on both.

With the Net-Zero Industry Act, we are setting the ambition. By 2030, we want to be able to produce at least 40% of the clean tech that we need here to fulfil our green transition. Therefore, the Net-Zero Industry Act is all about speed, speed and facilitation. We are facilitating permitting. We are working with regulatory sandboxes. We are creating simpler State aid schemes. And we are allowing for tax breaks and the flexible use of EU funds. In short, the Net-Zero Industry Act provides speed, simplification, and it provides funding.

The second centrepiece is the Critical Raw Materials Act, which the College will also adopt tomorrow. This is about securing the supply for critical materials, which are badly needed for the digital and green transition. These minerals, as you know, power phones and electric vehicles, the batteries, the chips, the windmills, the solar panels, you just name it. In other words, we cannot function without critical raw materials. And the demand for critical raw materials will dramatically rise over the next several years and decades.

But – and we've discussed that here in the Hemicycle before – as you all know, today, the European Union depends heavily on a few third countries for these strategic raw materials. Just a few examples, and you know plenty of them, we get 98% of our rare earth supply from China, 93% of our magnesium from China, 97% of our lithium from China. And you can continue this list over and over again.

Honourable Members, we know that the pandemic and the war have taught us a bitter lesson about overdependence. So, if we want to be independent, we urgently need to strengthen and diversify our supply chains with like-minded partners.

I was last week also in Canada, and this is a like-minded partner. You can see exemplary European companies there doing just that: diversifying and strengthening our supply chains, for instance, sourcing low-carbon nickel to produce batteries here in the European Union. And Canada is not only a reliable partner, it also shares our values. It guarantees that raw materials are mined with the highest standards for the environment and for workers.

Our critical Raw Materials Act will support these efforts by European companies. We want to extract more ores and minerals here in the European Union. We want to boost our processing capacity to at least 40% of annual consumption. And, of course, we need to recycle more. Again, if I may jump back to Canada, I visited a company that is able to recycle, from old batteries, 95% of the lithium, the cobalt and the nickel. 95%. It's amazing to see that from old batteries. That's the future. That's what we have to have in the European Union.

So weit, meine Damen und Herren Abgeordnete, zu unserer Unterstützung für *Clean-Tech*-Unternehmen. Doch das Thema der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit ist natürlich viel, viel breiter. Es betrifft unseren Binnenmarkt, und genau damit beschäftigen wir uns mit zwei Mitteilungen, die wir auch morgen veröffentlichen werden. Wir alle wissen, dass der Binnenmarkt die Grundlage unseres Wohlstands und unserer Wettbewerbsfähigkeit ist. Er wird in diesem Jahr 30 Jahre alt, aber das Potenzial, das in diesem Binnenmarkt steckt, ist noch längst nicht ausgeschöpft. Wenn man sich die verschiedenen Studien anschaut, die sich mit dem Binnenmarkt beschäftigen, dann zeigen sie, dass wir mehr als 700 - Milliarden freisetzen könnten, wenn wir das gesamte Potenzial des Binnenmarktes ausschöpfen würden.

Das beginnt – Sie kennen die Themen – bei den Kapitalmärkten oder bei Forschung und Entwicklung. Wir wissen, dass wir so stark sind, weil wir stark sind bei Grundlagenforschung, Entwicklung und dann die Marktfähigkeit herstellen. Sie kennen die Beispiele: Die mRNA-Impfstoffe sind hier in Europa entwickelt worden. Mit ihrer Hilfe konnten wir die Pandemie überwinden. Es gibt einen guten Grund, warum diese zukunftsweisende Innovation hier entwickelt worden ist. Oder ein anderes Beispiel aus der Wasserstoffforschung. Es gibt keinen anderen Ort auf der Welt, wo zwischen 2011 und 2020, also in der letzten Dekade, mehr Patente für grünen Wasserstoff angemeldet worden sind als hier bei uns in Europa. Das sind nur zwei Beispiele von ganz vielen. Genau hier müssen wir ansetzen.

In der Tat, wir Europäer haben uns das Ziel gesteckt, bis zum Jahr 2030 3 % unseres Bruttoinlandsproduktes für Forschung und Entwicklung auszugeben. Aber dieses Ziel haben wir schon lange. Das haben wir uns zum ersten Mal 2002 gesteckt. Wenn man sich mal die Geschwindigkeit anschaut, mit der wir uns auf dieses Ziel zubewegen – ja, dann kommen wir näher, aber sehr, sehr langsam. Das reicht auf keinen Fall, und vor allen Dingen sind andere schneller, und andere schlafen auch nicht. Während unsere Ausgaben für Forschung und Entwicklung, wie gesagt, langsam steigen, sehen wir, dass unser Anteil in der Welt an Forschungs- und Entwicklungsausgaben in den letzten 20 Jahren von 41 % auf 31 % gesunken ist.

Ich möchte daher mit dem schwedischen Ratsvorsitz den Staats- und Regierungschefs vorschlagen, dieses gemeinsame europäische Ziel für Forschungsausgaben zu erhöhen und uns hinzusetzen und genau zu schauen, warum die Investition in Innovation, in Forschung und Entwicklung bei uns so langsam geht und wie wir besser werden können. Das ist nicht nur notwendig für Europas Forscherinnen und Forscher, Wissenschaftlerinnen und Wissenschaftler und Unternehmen, sondern es wäre auch ein ganz, ganz starkes Signal, dass wir es wirklich ernst nehmen mit der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit unseres europäischen Binnenmarktes.

(Beifall)

Mein zweiter Punkt betrifft ein Thema, das Sie immer wieder hören: Bürokratie. Es sind Europas Unternehmen und Beschäftigte, die den Binnenmarkt zu einer der attraktivsten Wirtschaftsregionen der Welt machen. Und zwar ganz egal, ob wir von Industrieriesen sprechen, Weltmarktführern, Mittelständlern oder Familienbetrieben – ihr Erfolg ist Europas Erfolg. Daher setzen wir alles daran, ihre Arbeit zu erleichtern. Wir wissen, dass die Qualität der öffentlichen Verwaltung und des Rechtsrahmens entscheidend ist für die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit. Deshalb achten wir auch gemeinsam darauf, mit umfassenden Folgenabschätzungen sicherzustellen, dass Europas Gesetze Europas Unternehmen nicht belasten, sondern unterstützen.

Doch oft ist es, und das wissen wir alle, nicht die einzelne Nachweispflicht. Oft ist es nicht die einzelne Auflage, die ihnen das Leben schwermacht, sondern es ist die Riesensumme des Ganzen. Deshalb werden wir über die Ressortgrenzen hinaus prüfen, was Europas Wettbewerbsfähigkeit wirklich voranbringt und worauf wir verzichten können. Wir werden bis zum Herbst konkrete Vorschläge vorlegen, um Berichtspflichten zu vereinfachen, und zwar um 25 % zu reduzieren. Das ist nicht einfach, aber dieser Anstrengung müssen wir uns unterziehen.

Unsere politischen Prioritäten bleiben bestehen, weil sie richtig sind. Das ist der europäische Grüne Deal, das ist die Digitalisierung, und das ist die geopolitische Resilienz. Wir haben sie gemeinsam vor dreieinhalb Jahren gesetzt, sie haben sich als richtig erwiesen, gerade und auch während dieser Krisenzeiten. Aber wir wollen dafür sorgen, dass ihre Umsetzung mit weniger Kosten verbunden ist, vor allem für unsere Mittelständler. Wir haben ja – wir können es beweisen, denn wir haben ja beim Ausbau der erneuerbaren Energien gezeigt, welche Dynamik wir mit einer gezielten Gesetzgebung für schnellere, flexiblere Genehmigungsverfahren tatsächlich auslösen können. Das sollte also künftig die Regel sein, und es sollte nicht die Ausnahme sein.

Noch ein letzter Punkt: Europas Binnenmarkt ist stark. Wir können stolz darauf sein. Wir müssen alles daransetzen, seine Stärke zu bewahren und auszubauen. Daher sollten uns künftig eine Reihe wichtiger Leistungskennzahlen leiten: die wesentlichen Leistungsindikatoren. Sie können darüber Auskunft geben, ob Europas Wirtschaft tatsächlich wettbewerbsfähiger wird und ob unsere Diskussionen sich in die richtige Richtung entwickeln. Wie entwickelt sich der Anteil privater Investitionen? Wächst die Zahl der Unternehmen mit schnellem Internet? Wie steht es um die Beteiligung Erwachsener an beruflicher Weiterbildung – und so weiter und so fort. Alle diese Daten liegen vor. Wir müssen dazu nichts neu erheben, aber wir machen nichts mit diesen Daten. Anhand dieser Daten und anhand dieser wesentlichen Leistungsindikatoren können wir objektivieren, ob und wie wir uns weiterentwickeln. Das heißt, es sind nicht Vermutungen, sondern man hat konkrete Zahlen, nachweisgestützt. Daher wird die Kommission dem Parlament künftig einmal im Jahr Bericht darüber erstatten, wie sich diese Schlüsselzahlen, diese wesentlichen Leistungsindikatoren weiterentwickeln.

Honourable Members, with the war on our doorstep, with volatile energy prices and massive clean-tech investments worldwide, Europe has to up its game. I am looking forward to develop the proposals we have put on the table today. This is our answer. Long live Europe.

Manfred Weber, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President of the European Parliament, Commission, Council, dear colleagues, good politics starts, first of all, with a reality check. Eight out of ten global champions are from the US. Apple's market value alone is bigger than Germany's entire stock market. The 10 leading companies investing in quantum computing are in the US or in China, not one single company in Europe. And in artificial intelligence, American firms invest six times more than European firms.

Europe, dear friends, let's see: the reality is not competitive enough. And that's why the EPP is happy that competitiveness is now top of the agenda in the European Union, thanks, first of all, to the Swedish Presidency, but also to the engagement from the European Commission this week with the proposals.

The EPP was always advocating for a jobs, jobs, jobs agenda in the European Union. And competitiveness is not an abstract word, it is about securing our European way of life, it's about our welfare, about jobs. Europe will never be sovereign if it is not competitive. And no doubt our strength is the single market, the largest market in the world. That is what we should use.

And there we must still invest to enable more growth. We at the EPP, we don't believe that spending money will solve our problems, first of all. For us a competitive Europe, what counts is trading with the world: best ideas, access to resources, efficient administration and a social approach.

Let me go to these concrete points. Speaking about trade, the whole problem with the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) started, let's be honest, when parts of this House rejected the TTIP negotiations. If we had TTIP, we wouldn't have to deal with IRA now because our Canadian and Mexican friends have full access to America.

A competitive Europe needs trade, and in this legislature, Europe is lacking fresh, ambitious approach when it comes to new free-trade agreements. We see no progress, for example, on Mercosur: 800 million consumers, or if I may say friends because they are closely linked to Europe. The friends from Mercosur area are waiting for us. We need new free trade agreement with the United States and we need a free trade union with the democracies in the world.

A second point: the competitive Europe should also not limit innovation and forbid technologies. In our last session here in February in the in the European Parliament, a majority decided to ban the combustion engine. I ask myself, who is now producing cars for areas, for regions like South America? I don't think that they will have in 2035 enough electric charging infrastructure in South America that they can buy all-electric cars. The combustion engine is still necessary.

We hear some different voices, Stéphane from the Liberals and others are telling us that combustion engine is necessary and Bruno Le Maire is telling us that it is not any more the case. So we need a clear idea. We think that innovation and allowing technologies is the right answer, and not forbidding them.

I want to underline that a third point for us is the strategy to raw materials. China is more and more dominating global resources, and that's why we welcome very much the Commission proposal for raw material strategy for Europe.

The fourth point is that we need competitiveness also with tackling cutting red tape, and I think with more ambition. In the short term, we should stop additional burdens for our economy in war times – they are struggling, they are having enough problems – they don't need additional burdens. And in the mid and long run, I agree with Ursula von der Leyen that we set limits to bureaucracy by the European Commission and put all vice-presidents in charge to realise it.

I welcome the Commission proposals now for a competitiveness check on all new EU regulation and to reduce the reporting obligations for our economies and make our single market more competitive with less bureaucracy. So a competitive Europe, European regulation and cutting red tape have to go hand-in-hand. And, above all, we need a competitive Europe that must guarantee a social Europe. Being social means providing people with a job and with a decent income, especially our young generation. Our youth needs quality jobs.

We need jobs, jobs, jobs. Dear friends, Europe invented the cars because it was competitive. Let us invent now the next step of a digital age, like, for example, a digital Airbus project. Let's make Europe the competitive powerhouse of this world.

Iratxe García Pérez, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señora presidenta, las ruinas, trincheras y cadáveres apilados en Bajmut ya son el símbolo de la guerra de desgaste que persigue Putin un año después del fracaso de su primer intento de conquista. Putin ya ha perdido la guerra. Ahora nuestra responsabilidad es continuar ayudando para que Ucrania la gane.

Con su ejército mermado, su economía golpeada por las mayores sanciones de la historia y su posición internacional cada vez más aislada, Putin solo tiene como salida perpetuar la guerra hasta conseguir el cansancio de los aliados. No podemos permitir que la larga guerra de desgaste atene a los europeos y a nuestras economías. Los elevados precios de la energía, la subida de la cesta de la compra, con un IPC alimentario que ya supera el 18 %, y el inaccesible precio de las viviendas sacuden el futuro de los europeos.

Proteger a los más vulnerables es nuestra responsabilidad colectiva. Las decisiones que tomemos hoy marcarán el futuro. No hay mejor solución que acelerar la transición ecológica y la autonomía energética. Y lo más urgente es la reforma del mercado eléctrico para limitar de forma permanente el impacto del gas en las facturas y no depender de terceros países para calentar nuestros hogares. El modelo actual no está en condiciones de aguantar una situación de estrés como la de ahora.

Las energías renovables representaban el 10 % en 1998; hoy, el 50 %, y las previsiones apuntan a un 74 % en 2023. La creación de industrias de cero emisiones, el impulso de la competitividad tecnológica y la diversificación de las cadenas de suministro son factores clave para que la prosperidad y la estrategia de la Unión Europea sean una realidad en las próximas décadas. Las necesidades de financiación del Plan Industrial del Pacto Verde son enormes. La flexibilización de los requisitos para que los Estados miembros ayuden a las empresas de la transición verde y digital y no pierdan competitividad frente a la Ley de Reducción de la Inflación (IRA) y la Administración Biden es necesaria, pero también las empresas tienen la obligación de proteger el pulmón que mantiene con vida a la industria, que es la clase trabajadora.

Ahora la Comisión Europea y el Banco Central Europeo reconocen lo que siempre hemos defendido los socialdemócratas. Las empresas tienen margen para subir los salarios, para asumir subidas salariales. No permitiremos que los salarios de los trabajadores pierdan poder adquisitivo mientras los beneficios de las empresas aumentan. En las próximas décadas seremos testigos de la mayor modernización económica de nuestro tiempo. Ante el cambio necesario tenemos que poner en marcha la reforma del Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento, que debe incorporar los objetivos del pilar europeo de derechos sociales y un instrumento permanente financiero similar a NextGenerationEU o a SURE para garantizar las inversiones públicas necesarias.

Señorías, en un contexto en el que la guerra ha regresado a Europa, debemos redoblar nuestros esfuerzos y nuestras ambiciones. Toda persona en su sano juicio quiere la paz, pero el Kremlin no renuncia a las armas. La diplomacia no debe renunciar a su misión. Pero lo que no podemos consentir es las democracias bajo ningún concepto abandonar Ucrania a su suerte. Y la forma de lograrlo es seguir manteniendo nuestra unidad.

Señor Weber, le veo muy preocupado por la posición de los Gobiernos socialdemócratas con respecto a Ucrania. Y le voy a decir una cosa muy clara. Puede estar tranquilo. El compromiso de los Gobiernos socialdemócratas en la defensa de Ucrania es claro, es firme y es contundente. Quizá debería preocuparse de lo que tiene dentro de sus propias filas y de las alianzas de su grupo político con la extrema derecha amiga de Putin.

Stéphane Séjourné, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, cette semaine a encore montré l'urgence industrielle européenne et cette urgence est apparue au grand jour. Vous l'avez tous lu, les hésitations, notamment de Volkswagen, un de nos fleurons économiques, sur l'opportunité d'ouvrir une méga-usine de batteries en Europe ou aux États-Unis. C'est la question. Vous avez également tous vu, tous lu que ce sont bien d'ailleurs les annonces européennes qui détermineront le choix de Volkswagen.

Je pense, Monsieur Weber, que vous faites une erreur à penser qu'uniquement les accords commerciaux régleront les questions de compétitivité. Il n'y a pas que les accords commerciaux dans nos politiques européennes. Et d'ailleurs, quelle est notre situation? Nous nous sommes mis en difficulté dans une guerre économique mondiale. Notre industrie est d'ailleurs en attente d'une intervention européenne, je l'ai dit. Mon groupe appelle depuis des mois à une action sur tous les leviers. Sur certains, je vois que nous avons avancé et j'en félicite la Commission européenne. Sur d'autres, nous pouvons faire plus et probablement faire mieux.

Alors, comment rendre notre industrie plus compétitive? Je vois trois points. D'abord, les prix plus bas dans l'approvisionnement sur des matières premières en énergie. Là-dessus, nous avons fait un bon pas dans la bonne direction, je pense. Nous avons soutenu les contrats de long terme pour les énergies décarbonées. Oui, il faut diversifier les ressources d'approvisionnement et accélérer le recyclage des matières premières. C'est la condition sine qua non, d'ailleurs, pour que les technologies propres se développent en Europe.

Ensuite, je vois les financements privés et publics qui ne sont aujourd'hui pas assez élevés. Nous sommes en retard sur le financement. Il faut être à la hauteur de nos compétiteurs américains et chinois. Comment expliquons-nous à nos PME qu'après nos discours, des centaines de discours, certaines attendent encore les fonds de relance que nous avons décidés maintenant depuis quelques mois. Cela fait dix ans qu'on parle de l'Union du marché des capitaux, cinq ans qu'on parle de la révision du pacte de stabilité et de croissance, deux ans que mon groupe demande une réflexion sur un fonds de souveraineté européen. Et on attend encore sur ce volet du financement. L'investissement est, je pense, le nerf de la guerre dans cette guerre économique. Un cadre clair et propice est exactement ce que nous demandent aujourd'hui les industriels européens.

Enfin, des relations équitables avec nos partenaires. Madame la Présidente, je ne vois toujours pas d'exemption pour les entreprises européennes sur le marché américain. Je vois une concurrence toujours plus déloyale partout, par ailleurs, et notamment en Asie.

En conclusion, chers collègues, quelles sont nos options? La course aux subventions, je crois que nous n'en voulons pas. Un accès réciproque et régulé à notre marché, nous n'avons pas trop le choix d'aller vers cette option. Nous avons assez attendu. Le Conseil européen a trop attendu les propositions de la Commission et l'exécutif européen a trop attendu que les gouvernements nationaux se mettent d'accord dans un consensus qui n'est jamais arrivé. Alors maintenant, les propositions sont sur la table.

Vous trouverez toujours mon groupe Renew aux côtés de l'ambition européenne et des propositions. Nous voterons avant l'été et j'espère que c'est une ambition que l'ensemble des groupes portera sur la vitesse et l'urgence dans ce domaine-là. C'est notre industrie qui nous le demande.

Philippe Lamberts, *au nom du groupe Verts/ALE*. – Madame la Présidente, je vais peut-être vous entretenir d'un sujet qui va vous étonner de la part d'un Vert, mais c'est le sujet dont Manfred Weber nous a entretenu et dont Stéphane Séjourné vient de nous entretenir. La compétitivité. Un Vert qui parle de compétitivité. Qu'est-ce qui se passe? Est-ce que c'est parce qu'il a 60 ans qu'il commence à parler de ce genre de sujet? Non, absolument pas.

Mais je voudrais qu'on revienne aux fondamentaux. Qu'est-ce que c'est la compétitivité? C'est la capacité d'offrir des biens ou des services de haute valeur à un prix aussi bas que possible. Donc c'est un rapport entre un numérateur et un dénominateur. Vous allez dire que je fais la leçon, mais il faut se rappeler des fondamentaux. Le coût est le dénominateur. Est-ce que vous pensez sérieusement que l'Europe peut ou veut être le champion du *low cost*? Non. Nous avons une structure sociale dont nous nous enorgueillons. Oui, nous voulons payer correctement les travailleurs. Nous voulons que les biens et les services soient produits en respectant l'environnement. Et tout cela entraîne en effet des surcoûts. Donc, nous ne serons jamais le champion du *low cost*.

Donc, la seule possibilité pour l'Union européenne d'être compétitive, c'est d'être la championne de la haute valeur. Et là, la question que nous devons nous poser est qu'est-ce que c'est des biens et des services à haute valeur au XXI^e siècle? On peut dire, dans un certain sens, que l'Union européenne a raté jusqu'à maintenant la révolution numérique. Mais c'est quoi le *big game* du XXI^e siècle? C'est rendre nos sociétés et nos économies compatibles avec les limites biophysiques de la planète. C'est là que va se jouer la compétitivité au XXI^e siècle. Et donc pour l'Union européenne, ce n'est pas juste un enjeu parmi d'autres. C'est l'enjeu qui va déterminer si nos économies seront des champions du monde ou pas au XXI^e siècle.

Et là, je dois dire que je m'inquiète. Et je m'inquiète particulièrement en écoutant Manfred Weber. Pas en vous écoutant, Madame la Présidente, pas en vous écoutant, Monsieur le Président Michel, mais bien en écoutant, en sentant une résistance de plus en plus forte dans cette enceinte, mais aussi au sein du Conseil, par rapport à l'ambition du pacte vert européen. Parce que le pacte vert européen, on peut dire que c'est un projet climatique, oui, bien sûr, parce que l'enjeu climatique est un enjeu de survie. Mais c'est en fait une stratégie de compétitivité. C'est exactement ce que c'est.

Donc, relâcher l'effort maintenant, comme on le sent pour ce qui est des voitures ou de la performance énergétique des bâtiments, eh bien, abandonner l'effort, c'est en fait saborder notre économie. Vous savez, aujourd'hui, l'industrie automobile européenne dit qu'on ne va quand même pas faire le jeu des champions américains ou chinois de la voiture électrique. Mais cette situation n'est pas le résultat d'une surréglementation en Europe. C'est le résultat d'un choix délibéré de nos industries automobiles en Europe, de choisir le passé plutôt que l'avenir.

Et c'est cela, Madame la Présidente, la raison du manque d'investissement en Europe, c'est que nous avons en Europe un capitalisme de rentiers. Ce n'est plus un capitalisme d'investisseurs ou d'entrepreneurs. On préfère – et, en particulier, le cas de l'automobile le montre – des profits à court terme plutôt que d'investir pour assurer des profits à long terme.

Nous devons retrouver cette ambition d'entreprendre et d'innover. Et cela suppose de sortir du confort à court terme du capitalisme de rentier. C'est à ça que les Verts appellent. Et donc, contrairement à ce qu'on pourrait croire, les Verts ne sont pas arriérés en matière économique. Je pense que mieux que d'autres, nous comprenons les enjeux de ce siècle.

Nicola Procaccini, *a nome del gruppo ECR*. – Signora Presidente, Presidente von der Leyen, Presidente Michel, onorevoli colleghi, nel prossimo Consiglio europeo dovrete affrontare temi di grande portata. A nome del gruppo ECR voglio ribadire, innanzitutto, il nostro sostegno al popolo ucraino, chiamato a resistere all'invasione russa in mezzo ad atroci sofferenze quotidiane. E se è una buona notizia l'indipendenza raggiunta in poco tempo dal gas e dal petrolio russo, non pensiamo, invece, che sia una buona notizia spostare la nostra dipendenza energetica verso la Cina per gli anni a venire.

Non dobbiamo ripetere gli errori del passato, né si può auspicare, in un momento così delicato, di incappare in un conflitto industriale tra Europa e Stati Uniti. Ma torniamo un passo indietro al Consiglio europeo scorso quando, per volontà del governo italiano, si è tornati a discutere della situazione migratoria. I leader europei hanno individuato delle iniziative che vanno nella giusta direzione: aumentare l'azione esterna dell'Unione europea, promuovere la cooperazione sui rimpatri, potenziare il controllo delle frontiere esterne per fronteggiare la tratta di esseri umani nel Mediterraneo.

Purtroppo, la realtà non ha atteso i bizantinismi di Bruxelles e negli stessi giorni in cui le autorità militari italiane salvavano migliaia di migranti in mezzo al mare, purtroppo si è verificata la tragedia di Cutro. Non la prima di questo genere, forse neanche l'ultima. C'è un'amara constatazione dalla quale non possiamo sfuggire: più persone affidano la propria vita agli scafisti, pagandoli lautamente, più morti in mare dovremo piangere insieme. Voltandoci indietro, non possiamo che constatare il fallimento della politica europea in materia di immigrazione, da qualunque punto di vista la si osservi.

Per i colleghi socialisti e della sinistra, i fatti recenti sono stati l'ennesimo pretesto per attaccare un governo di colore politico opposto. Ora non starò a rinfacciarvi i tanti migranti morti in Italia come in Spagna, in Grecia, in Francia, ogni volta che la sinistra si è trovata alla guida di queste nazioni. Né starò ad elencare le conseguenze dell'immigrazione senza freni nelle città europee, in balia di quella folle ideologia chiamata «no borders».

Cari colleghi, mi limito ad osservare con oggettività che su questi argomenti la vostra ipocrisia è paragonabile soltanto alla vostra incapacità di trovare delle soluzioni. Quand'è che potremo finalmente condividere il principio che, al di là dei nostri colori politici, l'immigrazione deve essere governata e non subita? Che non possiamo lasciare agli scafisti o alle milizie di mercenari il compito di stabilire chi ha diritto e chi non ha diritto di entrare in Europa?

Nessuno ha mai pensato che il governo italiano potesse risolvere tutto in quattro mesi. L'immigrazione è un problema complesso: per fortuna, il governo ha le idee ben chiare. Di sicuro sappiamo che l'immigrazione è un problema europeo e come tale ha bisogno di una risposta europea.

Per questo valuteremo con attenzione la «Comunicazione sulla gestione integrata delle frontiere europee», lanciata ieri dalla Commissione. C'è bisogno di azioni urgenti, concrete ed efficaci. Serve il coraggio delle scelte giuste: non serve la strumentalizzazione politica del sangue, che è tipica di chi non dà valore alla vita.

Marco Zanni, a nome del gruppo ID. – Signora Presidente, Presidente von der Leyen, Presidente Michel, onorevoli colleghi, ho ascoltato con interesse le parole della Presidente von der Leyen, che ci ha dato una visione del suo viaggio negli Stati Uniti e ci ha dato un'anticipazione di quanto i provvedimenti che tanto attendiamo dalla Commissione avranno al loro interno.

Mi permetto, però, di essere un po' scettico, perché in quello che lei ci ha delineato ci sono elementi sicuramente di interesse. Ma sono promesse che sentiamo da tanto tempo e aspettiamo fatti concreti. E poi, a mio avviso, sul tema di quello che a livello industriale e produttivo l'Europa vuole essere nei prossimi anni, c'è un errore di base nella strategia che le istituzioni europee stanno portando avanti e l'ho ripetuto più volte.

A mio avviso, è un grande errore ricopiare gli Stati Uniti o pensare che oggi l'Unione europea possa fare o inseguire gli Stati Uniti in un campo di battaglia per il quale non abbiamo armi adeguate. E davvero, la strategia giusta non è replicare ciò che fanno gli Stati Uniti, ma capire, cercare di comprendere le ragioni per cui sulla transizione industriale gli Stati Uniti possono essere dirigisti e protezionisti e l'Unione europea, oggi, non può esserlo perché ci mancano tanti strumenti. Alcuni ne ha delineati.

Io ne indico tre, che secondo me sono fondamentali e su cui si dovrebbe basare l'impostazione della transizione industriale. Uno – lo ha accennato lei, Presidente, ne parliamo da tanto tempo – è la complessità amministrativa e burocratica. Oggi gli investitori privati non investono in Europa, prima di tutto perché ci sono troppe regole, perché sono troppo complicate e perché non c'è un ambiente legislativo che è adatto a questo tipo di investimenti.

Il secondo punto si collega, anche questo, l'ha toccato nella sua presentazione iniziale, ed è il mercato dei capitali. Gli Stati Uniti hanno un mercato dei capitali molto sviluppato; l'Europa è molto indietro su questo punto. Ne parliamo da tanti anni, ma i progressi sono veramente insignificanti e c'è un ammontare di liquidità abbondante in questi mercati che aspetta un segnale per poter investire anche nelle nuove tecnologie.

E l'ultimo punto riguarda le risorse naturali. Gli Stati Uniti sono un Paese che dispone di grandi risorse naturali, non solo nel suo territorio, ma dispone anche di vicini e alleati che hanno altrettante risorse, Lei menzionava il Canada. La nostra transizione sarà basata su tecnologie e su risorse che dipendono da un grande Paese con cui oggi abbiamo uno scontro in atto, che è la Cina, che non è democrazia, che non è un Paese a cui possiamo legarci mani e piedi.

E c'è un altro tema: quello della neutralità tecnologica. Oggi la Commissione sta abbandonando nel suo progetto questo principio che è sacrosanto: abbandonare il concetto della neutralità tecnologica in questa transizione vuol dire ammazzare innovazione e ricerca.

L'ultimo punto, sul tema immigrazione. Condivido quanto detto dal collega Procaccini. Ho apprezzato le parole del presidente Michel, perché significa che oggi c'è un cambio di rotta, oggi non c'è più la narrativa delle frontiere aperte o della redistribuzione, che non è possibile, ma il focus è sulla riduzione di un'attività che è illegale. Perché, diciamo forte e chiaro, l'immigrazione clandestina è un'attività illegale. E mi fa specie aver sentito in questi giorni attacchi di alcuni colleghi a un governo che in questi mesi ha salvato più di 30.000 persone nei mari, anche in zone che non erano di sua competenza. Quindi ci vuole un po' più di rispetto, soprattutto da chi qui si riempie la bocca di rispetto dello Stato di diritto, ma poi quando si parla di immigrazione, strizza l'occhio ai trafficanti di vite umane.

Martin Schirdewan, *im Namen der Fraktion The Left*. – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissionspräsidentin von der Leyen! Ich würde gerne ein Thema ansprechen, das Sie in Ihrer Rede leider bislang nicht berührt haben. Schauen wir uns doch mal gemeinsam die jüngsten Zahlen zur Armut an: Über 20 Millionen Kinder in der Europäischen Union sind von Armut betroffen.

Vor den Essensausgabestellen bilden sich Rekordschlangen überall in Europa, während die großen Energie- und Nahrungsmittelunternehmen Rekorddividenden an ihre Großaktionäre ausschütten. 323 Milliarden EUR haben diese Unternehmen allein im letzten Jahr an Übergewinnen erwirtschaftet und davon direkt 238 Milliarden EUR auf die gut gefüllten Bankkonten ihrer Großaktionäre überwiesen. Mit diesem Geld könnte man die Armut der betroffenen Kinder und ihrer Familien locker in der gesamten Europäischen Union bekämpfen und ihnen bessere Lebenschancen einräumen. Es braucht endlich eine europäische Zeitenwende für Gerechtigkeit.

Es ist noch nicht lange her – ein Jahr ungefähr –, dass der Energiemarkt völlig durchgedreht ist und die Verbraucherinnen und Verbraucher seitdem für dieses Marktversagen in Form von immer extremer werdenden hohen Preisen für Strom und Gas zahlen müssen. Vielleicht erinnern Sie sich noch, Frau von der Leyen, Sie haben vor ungefähr einem halben Jahr, das war, glaube ich, im August 2022, angekündigt, dass die Kommission einen Vorschlag zur Energiemarktreform vorlegen wird, in dem das dysfunktionale *Merit-Order*-Prinzip zumindest überdacht wird, also das Prinzip, das dazu führt, dass die teuersten Gaskraftwerke den Strompreis bestimmen.

In dem gestern vorgestellten Vorschlag der Kommission wird diese Ankündigung leider aber nicht umgesetzt, und ich kann Ihnen noch genau sagen, warum. Die zuständige Kommissarin Kadri Simson hat angegeben, dass sie sich, seitdem Sie die Ankündigungen vorgenommen haben, Frau Kommissionspräsidentin, mit 57 Vertretern von Energieunternehmen getroffen hat und nur einmal mit einem Vertreter einer Verbraucherorganisation. Da hat die Lobbyarbeit von *big energy* bei der Kommission ja mal wieder voll funktioniert, damit zukünftig auch weiterhin die Bankkonten der Großaktionäre klingeln, während das Geld von den klammen Konten der Verbraucherinnen und Verbraucher abgebucht wird.

Anstatt das Marktversagen zu bekämpfen und die Energiewende und die Energieversorgung endlich vom Kopf auf die Füße zu stellen, wird ein bisschen an den Symptomen herumgedoktert, ohne die Ursachen wirklich anzugehen. Energiearmut könnte besser bekämpft werden, dann stiege man nämlich aus dem *Merit-Order*-Prinzip aus, dann würde der Strompreis sofort nachhaltig günstiger werden.

30 Millionen Menschen haben in der Europäischen Union schon vor dem Ausbruch der Lebenshaltungskostenkrise und der Explosion der Energiepreise in Energiearmut gelebt. Wenn die Kommission endlich anfangen würde, ihren Ankündigungen auch Taten folgen zu lassen, anstatt sich zum Spielball der Lobbyisten zu machen, müssten diese 30 Millionen Menschen am Ende des Monats sich vielleicht nicht mehr fragen, ob sie das Licht oder den Fernseher anstellen oder sich etwas zu essen kaufen können.

Öffentliche Kontrolle über die Energieversorgung, massiver Ausbau der erneuerbaren Energien sind weitere Bausteine, um die vielen in Europa vor der Gier der Wenigen zu schützen. Krisenbewältigung heißt eben auch Armutsbekämpfung und nicht, dass man die Leute einfach im Regen stehen lässt.

Tiziana Beghin (NI). – Signora Presidente, Presidente von der Leyen, Presidente Michel, onorevoli colleghi, l'Unione europea è già in ritardo rispetto ai grandi competitor Stati Uniti e Cina nella sfida della transizione. Nonostante sia sceso negli ultimi mesi, il prezzo del gas rimane troppo alto e i costi per le imprese e le famiglie europee sono fino a 7 volte superiori a quelli degli Stati Uniti.

Ed è evidente, quindi, che non solo non possiamo più dipendere dall'estero ma dobbiamo tenere bassi i costi energetici, pena l'indebolimento della nostra competitività. In questo il Consiglio prossimo sarà decisivo per recuperare il tempo perso ma non bastano le misure energetiche. L'Europa ha bisogno di un nuovo programma industriale di ampia scala per cogliere appieno le sfide della transizione, quindi, saluto con favore il discorso anticipato, oggi, dalla Presidente von der Leyen, che condivido, ovviamente, attendendo di conoscerne meglio i dettagli.

Bisogna, però, puntare su investimenti certi e con fondi dedicati a questa nuova era industriale basata su energia pulita e sostenibile. Ma su questo vedo ancora troppe reticenze. Purtroppo, troppi Paesi, tra cui anche il mio, oggi non sembrano capire che non possiamo perdere il treno di un futuro che è già qui e cercano inutilmente di restare ancorati a modelli ormai superati. Il mondo va avanti anche senza di noi e oggi è il momento di mostrarci uniti qui a Bruxelles per un *Energy Recovery Fund* che sarebbe vitale per l'Italia e per l'Unione.

Esther de Lange (PPE). – Voorzitter, staat u mij toe op deze verkiezingsdag voor de Provinciale Staten in Nederland het belang van iets als de wetgeving voor een nettonulindustrie heel concreet te vertalen – en in het Nederlands, in tegenstelling tot wat u misschien gewend bent.

Neem de provincie Groningen. Ik denk dat het een provincie is die de Commissievoorzitter goed kent omdat het haar buurregio is, een regio waar de aardgasproductie gestopt is vanwege de aardbevingen die deze veroorzaakte, met alle gevolgen van dien. De kennis in de regio op het gebied van energie willen ze nu gebruiken voor de productie van groene waterstof. Dat vraagt natuurlijk om meer windmolens op zee en de benodigde infrastructuur, pijplijnen op land, ook in of bij Natura 2000-gebieden of andere beschermde gebieden.

Snellere vergunningsprocedures met meer flexibiliteit, indien dit nodig is voor het realiseren van de energietransitie, is iets waar wij als EVP al heel lang voor hebben gepleit. En dit is ook iets dat we morgen in het wetsvoorstel van de Europese Commissie hopen te zien, zodat de Green Deal niet alleen *green* wordt, maar ook een aantrekkelijke *deal* die ervoor zorgt dat bedrijven en banen in Europa blijven. Dat is iets waar wij ons als EVP vanaf het begin voor hebben willen inzetten en dat zullen wij ook blijven doen.

Marek Belka (S&D). – Madam President, to say anything meaningful within 60 seconds looks like a high-tech achievement. But we are discussing this, so let me try. Without a strong, resilient and modern economy, Europe will be losing its significance as a global player. But what's more important, our standards of living will gradually deteriorate. This is what we all know. We need Europe's economy to be more competitive. We need to mobilize resources both public and private, to realise our ambitious objectives. However, we should not forget about internal cohesion of the EU, especially that most of it is a common currency area. Without solving or at least alleviating internal European structural problems, we shall always stutter rather than move forward. So the task is double –stimulate global competitiveness and simultaneously strengthen the internal cohesion of our economy. Reform of the macroeconomic management within the EU is as vital as the number of patents that Europeans register.

Nicola Danti (Renew). – Signora Presidente, Presidente della Commissione, Vicepresidente della Commissione, Presidente del Consiglio, onorevoli colleghi, l'Agenda del prossimo Consiglio mette sul tavolo i punti sui quali si gioca il futuro della nostra Unione: il sostegno all'Ucraina in primis, dopo oltre un anno dall'invasione, che deve ancora essere più solido perché a fianco di Kiev stiamo difendendo, costi quel che costi, quei valori che 2000 anni di storia ci hanno consegnato.

E poi l'autonomia strategica su cui dobbiamo vigilare per evitare interpretazioni protezionistiche, ma che finalmente mette al centro un nuovo rinascimento industriale europeo, in controtendenza rispetto agli anni precedenti. Una sfida che riusciremo a vincere solo mettendo al centro tre fattori essenziali: un investimento fortissimo sul capitale umano, energia pulita e a basso costo e infine una nuova strategia commerciale che continui a renderci protagonisti nel mondo. E mi rammarico, signor Vicepresidente, che quest'ultimo punto non sia stato una delle priorità della Commissione.

Infine, non credo che sia più il tempo di mettere la testa sotto la sabbia: o si affronta in modo serio il tema dell'immigrazione o le morti nel Mediterraneo continueranno a tormentare le nostre coscienze e, con esse, il futuro della nostra Unione.

Jordi Solé (Verts/ALE). – Señora presidenta, en tiempos de turbulencias geopolíticas como las actuales, es más importante que nunca que la Unión Europea sepa encontrar su lugar en el mundo en términos políticos y de seguridad, pero también en términos económicos, comerciales o industriales. Esto requiere consensos amplios y ambiciones compartidas. En este sentido, por ejemplo, es positivo que la Comisión haya presentado el Plan Industrial del Pacto Verde y, especialmente, la Ley sobre Industrias con cero emisiones netas. Se trata de la primera propuesta legislativa de la Unión dedicada a la política industrial y con una perspectiva de soberanía estratégica.

Sin embargo, estos días vemos cómo en el Consejo se reabren debates y acuerdos políticos ya cerrados alrededor de medidas muy importantes para luchar contra el cambio climático, como el fin de los motores de combustión en 2035. Y hay otros muchos ejemplos de cómo algunos Gobiernos y algunos grupos, en esta Cámara, intentan rebajar sistemáticamente la ambición en el despliegue de las medidas del Pacto Verde.

Pero ahora no es tiempo de mostrarnos divididos, ahora es tiempo de mantener la unidad política y la ambición que nos permitan avanzar en la transformación ecológica y ser líderes en industrias más competitivas, es decir, industrias sostenibles.

Beata Szydło (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Szanowny Panie Przewodniczący! Szanowni Państwo! Pytanie jest proste: czy przyspieszenie zielonej transformacji, Europejskiego Zielonego Ładu poprawi sytuację i los Europejczyków? Bo o tym wszyscy tutaj rozmawiamy i nad tym się zastanawiamy.

Ja śmiem wątpić, dlatego że w tej chwili kryzys wywołany wojną w Ukrainie przede wszystkim powinien dać nam do myślenia, aby zacząć zastanawiać się, co możemy zrobić z jednej strony, żeby zabezpieczyć pomoc Ukrainie, ale z drugiej strony, żeby nie pozwolić, aby Europa właśnie przestała być konkurencyjna i żeby Europejczycy mieli, mówiąc kolokwialnie, za co żyć – bo to coraz większy problem przy galopującej również inflacji.

I tutaj bardzo często pojawiają się pytania: no jak to, dlaczego nam nie będzie wolno jeździć samochodami spalinowymi? Kogo będzie stać na samochody elektryczne? A jednocześnie będą produkowane przecież nowoczesne panele, nowoczesne wiatraki, które będą produkowały energię. I ludzie pytają, czy one będą bezemisyjnie produkowane? No nie.

W związku z tym, dlaczego kosztem naszych budżetów ma się odbywać w tej chwili ta przyspieszona transformacja? To jest jedna kwestia. Druga kwestia, Szanowni Państwo – bardziej istotna, wydaje mi się, w tym momencie – musimy przede wszystkim jasno jeszcze raz podkreślać, że Ukraina potrzebuje naszego wsparcia i to wsparcie przede wszystkim musi być militarne – oni potrzebują sprzętu wojskowego.

A jeżeli tak, poszczególne państwa muszą się również dozbrajać, muszą produkować i kupować sprzęt wojskowy. Polski rząd złożył propozycję, żeby wyłączyć te wydatki na obronność poza deficyt, żeby nie wchodziły one w reguły budżetowe w Unii Europejskiej. Bo dla wielu państw to będzie niezwykła pomoc, żeby z jednej strony wspierać Ukrainę, ale z drugiej strony, żeby pomagać obywatelom, mieszkańcom, którzy borykają się w tej chwili z galopującą inflacją.

Jordan Bardella (ID). – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Présidente von der Leyen, Monsieur le Président Charles Michel, alors que l'état d'urgence énergétique est déclaré dans toute l'Europe, la liberté première de nos compatriotes, celle de se déplacer, est plus que jamais remise en cause. Mais que vous ont donc fait les automobilistes pour mériter autant de haine?

Après les taxes carbone qui ont déclenché en France la colère des gilets jaunes, après les malus en tout genre, après la privatisation des autoroutes qui a entraîné la hausse massive des prix des péages, l'Europe et les ayatollahs de l'écologie punitive ont inventé à leur égard une nouvelle persécution: les zones à faible émission qui interdisent les grandes agglomérations à une majorité de véhicules.

Avec ces zones à faible émission, vous légitimez derrière le beau principe de l'écologie l'exclusion assumée des gens ordinaires, de ceux qui n'ont d'autre choix que d'utiliser leur voiture diesel pour vivre et travailler. Mais l'enfer est pavé de bonnes intentions. Ces zones à faible émission sont des zones à grande exclusion qui vont reléguer hors des grands centres urbains les plus modestes, dont la voiture est souvent le seul moyen de transport. Avec ces zones à faible émission, mieux vaut être le propriétaire d'une Porsche hybride dernier cri qui habite dans un quartier huppé que celui d'une petite Clio avec 75 000 kilomètres au compteur qui vit dans une commune rurale.

Vous érigez autour des grandes villes d'Europe une citadelle invisible et pourtant infranchissable, celle de l'argent. En définitive, ces zones à faible émission érigent des péages contre les plus modestes. Avec l'interdiction démagogique de la vente de véhicules thermiques à horizon 2035, avec l'instauration de ces ZFE, vous confirmez que pour l'Union européenne, l'écologie se résume à surveiller, punir, exclure, taxer, affaiblir et traquer.

Nous, Français, sommes parmi les plus propres, les plus vertueux au monde. Ayez le courage de dresser votre écologie punitive contre la Chine, contre les États-Unis, contre les puissances émergentes qui ne respectent aucune des normes que vous imposez aux entreprises, aux agriculteurs et aux industriels européens. Celui qui pollue, ce n'est pas l'automobiliste français, mais le supertanker venu du bout du monde. Alors que l'Europe se pose la question de son avenir ce matin, nos concitoyens, eux, se demandent si se déplacer n'est pas en train de devenir un produit de luxe qui leur sera demain inaccessible.

Sira Rego (The Left). – Señora presidenta, señor presidente del Consejo, la verdad es que hay que reconocer que han convertido a la Comisión y al Consejo en agencias de propaganda excelentes, en agencias de publicidad de alto nivel. Anuncian muchas cosas, todo el tiempo, todo el rato. Pero detrás, lamentablemente, hay solo humo.

Ustedes saben que las familias en Europa lo están pasando mal por el encarecimiento de la vida, por el aumento de los tipos de interés. Y saben que la ciudadanía tiene claro que una parte importante de la responsabilidad recae en las reglas del juego; unas leyes que permiten que los parásitos de la banca y las multinacionales nos estén exprimiendo.

Nos prometen que van a tomar decisiones para cambiar estas reglas. Cada quince días hay una reunión del Consejo o de la Comisión, pero, en realidad, seguimos igual. Llevan un año diciendo «mañana, mañana, mañana», cuando es algo que necesitábamos ayer.

La señora Von der Leyen ayer anunciaba contentísima una propuesta de modificación del mercado eléctrico que no modifica nada porque no cambia el sistema de fijación de precios marginalista, ya que el gas va a seguir marcando el precio de la energía en Europa.

Mañana tenemos a los iluminados del Banco Central Europeo amenazando con volver a subir los tipos de interés. Aunque, igual ahora que ha vuelto a quebrar un banco en Estados Unidos, tienen un poco más de empatía que con la quiebra de las familias y deciden contener la escalada del euríbor.

En definitiva, lo que necesitamos es que ustedes tomen decisiones para aliviar la presión de la gente, aunque esto signifique, en este caso, recortar un poquito a los que siempre salen ganando.

Tamás Deutsch (NI). – Tisztelt Elnök Asszony! Eltéljük Oroszország katonai agresszióját Ukrajnával szemben. Ez a nemzetközi jog megsértése, és morálisan is igazolhatatlan. Együttérzünk az Ukrajnában dúló háború áldozataival. A háború elejétől támogatjuk Ukrajnát. Magyarország történetének legnagyobb humanitárius segítségét nyújtja Ukrajnának. Több mint egymillió menekültet fogadott már be. Nem vezetett azonban eddig semmilyen eredményre, hogy a diplomácia eszközeinek alkalmazása helyett, az Európai Unió kizárólag az európai gazdaságokat romba döntő szankciók és a világháborús eskalációt kockáztató fegyverszállítások politikáját folytatta.

Új megközelítésre van szükség. Európának más szempontok kiszolgálása helyett saját érdekeit kell megfogalmaznia és képviselnie, nehogy belesodorják a háborúba. A fegyverszállítások és a további szankciók helyett a fegyverszünet, a béketárgyalások és a háború lezárására reményt adó európai békejavaslat kidolgozásának ügyét kell képviselnünk.

Angelika Niebler (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, verehrter Herr Vizepräsident der Kommission, verehrter Herr Ratspräsident, liebe Kolleginnen, liebe Kollegen! Endlich, endlich ist die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit unserer Unternehmen in der Europäischen Union eine Priorität für die Kommission und auch für die Mitgliedstaaten.

Wir, Europäische Volkspartei, fordern dies seit Jahren. Unsere ambitionierten Klimaschutzziele, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, können wir nur dann erreichen, wenn wir technologische Fortschritte machen. Wir müssen Anreize schaffen, dass in neue, saubere Technologien investiert wird.

Verbote bringen uns nicht weiter, führen nur zu Verlagerungen von Betrieben, zu Verlagerungen von Produktion ins Ausland. Das stellen wir ja heute schon fest, und deshalb sind die Vorschläge, die jetzt von der Kommission auch zur Unterstützung von mehr Wettbewerbsfähigkeit unserer Betriebe vorgelegt wurden, eine gute Sache.

Wir müssen Bürokratie abbauen, wir müssen Regulatorik zurückfahren, wir müssen Prozesse beschleunigen und vereinfachen. Und noch einmal: Ich finde die Vorschläge gut, aber wir müssen auch die bestehenden Regeln auf den Prüfstand stellen. Taxonomie beispielsweise, liebe Kolleginnen, liebe Kollegen, uferst aus. Medizinprodukteverordnung – da ist etwas modifiziert worden; diesbezüglich haben wir aber auch noch Hausaufgaben zu machen. Auch wir hier im Hause, glaube ich, sind gefordert bei den Gesetzgebungsvorhaben – ich nenne nur das Lieferkettensorgfaltspflichtengesetz, dass wir hier mit Augenmaß vorgehen.

Zuletzt: Wir müssen in Wertschöpfungsketten denken. Das Gesetz zu kritischen Rohstoffen ist gut, aber wir brauchen beispielsweise hier bei uns in Europa auch chemische Industrie. Wir brauchen auch Pharmaindustrie, wir brauchen starke Handwerksbetriebe. Gerade wenn wir die chemische Industrie, liebe Kolleginnen, liebe Kollegen, aus dem Land vertreiben, dann können wir alles, was wir in Sachen Klimaschutz machen, einfach nicht umsetzen. Für Oberschichten von Windrädern, für Rotorblätter, für Chips, für all das, was wir wollen, brauchen wir chemische Industrie. Deshalb plädiere ich dafür, auch endlich mal die chemische Industrie in den Blick zu nehmen und nicht nur *clean technology*.

Gabriele Bischoff (S&D). – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissionspräsidentin, Herr Vizepräsident! In der Tat, man sieht hier ja wieder: Der amerikanische *Inflation Reduction Act* war ein Weckruf für Europa. Ich habe sehr aufmerksam zugehört, was Frau von der Leyen gesagt hat. Sie hat auf die Ähnlichkeiten zwischen dem, was die USA machen und was Europa macht, hingewiesen. Aber sie hat einen Kernpunkt vergessen. Denn den USA ist es gelungen, in ihrem Gesetz tatsächlich auch so etwas wie das *Justice40*-Prinzip zu etablieren, nämlich eine starke soziale Komponente in einer Zeit großer Unsicherheit.

Wenn wir jetzt beide Ansätze vergleichen, dann sehen wir, dass auch die Frage guter Arbeit von Tarifverträgen in den amerikanischen Vorgaben für Unterstützungsleistungen enthalten ist und bei uns nichts – *niente*. Diese Dimension kommt gar nicht vor. Stattdessen kommen alte Rezepte, die Leier, als würde hier nur Bürokratieabbau weiterführen und Wettbewerbsfähigkeit sichern; man benötigt aber auch tatsächlich nachhaltige soziale Konzepte. Hier muss wirklich nachgearbeitet werden.

Dita Charanzová (Renew). – Madam President, dear colleagues, while the US Congress adopted the Inflation Reduction Act months ago, we are still discussing how to answer this challenge.

In the meantime, Europe is losing business opportunities and potential jobs. Volkswagen just postponed plans to build a mega factory in the Czech Republic while signing up for a new plant in the US. This is just one story. There are other companies in other countries that are moving their businesses from Europe also. The reason? The Inflation Reduction Act provides companies with better conditions.

We need to see concrete results from the talks between President Biden and President von der Leyen. We need to come up with new European incentives as a way to strengthen our competitiveness. And we need a quick solution. But, more importantly, we need a united European solution.

Marie Toussaint (Verts/ALE). – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Président, vous venez nous parler ici des discussions qui se tiennent actuellement entre les États membres. Seulement, vous ne dites pas un mot sur les femmes afghanes, pas un mot sur les femmes iraniennes qui ne cessent d'être harcelées. Pas un mot non plus sur les femmes polonaises et hongroises qui se battent pour leurs droits, alors que nous célébrons tout à l'heure l'anniversaire de la Journée internationale des droits des femmes.

Vous ne nous dites pas non plus un mot de vos regrets sur la soixantaine de morts que nous avons décomptés dans la Méditerranée, assassinés par notre égoïsme, pas un mot sur les victimes que nous pourrions accueillir du séisme le plus important de l'histoire, aux frontières de l'Europe. Madame la présidente de la commission nous a parlé, de l'IRA, de sa rencontre avec Joe Biden sans évoquer le projet *Willow* approuvé par Joe Biden en Alaska, alors qu'il y a urgence à protéger le climat et l'Arctique.

Je vous pose la question: les souffrances des êtres humains et l'effondrement du vivant vous indiffèrent-ils à ce point? Êtes-vous à ce point possédé par le démon du libéralisme? Dans quel monde vivez-vous? Dans quel monde vivons-nous? À la place, vous nous parlez de libre-échange, de compétitivité. Une compétitivité dont Philippe Lamberts a rappelé qu'elle s'inscrivait dans un monde fini. Il faut absolument ouvrir les yeux. Nous n'avons plus le temps d'attendre.

Robert Roos (ECR). – Voorzitter, in de echte wereld kunnen steeds meer mensen de rekening niet betalen. De torenhoge inflatie jaagt mensen de armoede in. Mensen zijn bezig met overleven. Maar de denkwereld van de EU – ik noem het Planeet Straatsburg – ziet er heel anders uit. De Commissie drukt de ene na de andere dwangwet door.

Neem de Natuurherstelwet, die de Nederlandse industrie en werkgelegenheid bedreigt. Of neem de nieuwe bouwvoorschriften, waarmee huiseigenaren verplicht op kosten worden gejaagd om hun huizen “*Timmermans-proof*” te maken. En neem het verbod op de verbrandingsmotor, dat hopelijk geblokkeerd wordt, maar autorijden anders voor miljoenen mensen onbetaalbaar maakt. Allemaal wetten waar niemand om heeft gevraagd. Sterker nog, het maakt de mensen arm, ontnemt hun de vrijheid en het creëert bureaucratie. Het wordt te veel. Het helpt de mensen niet.

Stop met deze klimaatdwang. Stop met het creëren van problemen. Start met het oplossen van problemen. En het belangrijkste: start met het denken vanuit het belang van de mensen. Kortom, collega's, kom van Planeet Straatsburg af en keer terug op Aarde.

Harald Vilimsky (ID). – Frau Präsidentin, meine sehr geehrten Damen und Herren! Es ist nett, es ist lieb, es ist putzig, wenn Sie hier die segensreichen Wirkungen der EU-Maßnahmen auf den *Inflation Reduction Act* bejubeln. Faktum ist: Im realen Leben läuft die Inflation völlig aus dem Ruder. In meiner Heimat Österreich beträgt sie offiziell um die 11 %, real, wenn man sie auf Basis eines tatsächlichen Warenkorb berechnet hätte, wahrscheinlich Richtung 20 %.

Die Menschen können sich das Leben in vielen Bereichen nicht mehr leisten. Das ist natürlich eine direkte Wirkung einer völlig verfehlten Sanktionenpolitik, die nicht den Aggressor Russland, sondern die Europäer, die federführend diese Sanktionen gegenüber Russland verhängen, trifft.

Aus meiner Sicht ist es schon ein bisschen eine Erinnerung an den Film „Und ewig grüßt das Murmeltier“, wie Sie da immer und immer wieder eine völlig verfehlte Haltung in der Frage Russland und Ukraine beschwören. Aus meiner Sicht kann es jetzt nur der richtige Weg sein, hier all das zu sondieren, was zu einer Waffenniederlegung führen kann. Das bin nicht ich, und das sind nicht die bösen rechten Parteien, die Sie hier immer wieder kritisieren. Es sind ganz gewichtige Stimmen, vom Papst beginnend bis hin in die Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika, wo dieser Krieg hier infrage gestellt wird und wo die Menschen versuchen, nach einer Lösung Ausschau zu halten, die Frieden beschert.

Daher kann ich nur einmal erneut an Sie appellieren, mit dem Ruf nach schweren und immer schwereren Waffen, nach immer mehr Geld, auch in die Ukraine aufzuhören. Dieser Krieg ist ein Krieg, wo Menschen sterben, wo hier in Europa sehr viele darunter zu leiden haben und wo jetzt Ausschau zu halten wäre in eine Richtung, dass Frieden so rasch wie möglich hergestellt werden kann.

Κώστας Παπαδάκης (NI). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, η Σύνοδος Κορυφής προωθεί την κλιμάκωση εξοπλισμών, παρατείνοντας τον ιμπεριαλιστικό πόλεμο στην Ουκρανία μεταξύ NATO και Ρωσίας. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, η κυβέρνηση της Νέας Δημοκρατίας στην Ελλάδα, με τη στήριξη των άλλων κομμάτων, πλειοδοτούν στην εμπλοκή στο μακελειό με βάσεις, όπλα και τον λαό να πληρώνει βαρύ λογαριασμό για τα κέρδη των ομίλων: πανάκριβη ενέργεια, καύσιμα, τρόφιμα, αλληπάλληλες αυξήσεις επιτοκίων της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας και των δόσεων δανείων, στο σφυρί η λαϊκή κατοικία. Η ευρωενωσιακή κοινή στρατηγική των αστικών κομμάτων απελευθέρωσε, τεμάχισε και παρέδωσε στους ομίλους κάθε στρατηγικής σημασίας κλάδο. Από την ενέργεια, τώρα το νερό, τον σιδηρόδρομο, παντού οι όμιλοι βγάζουν αμύθητα, πράσινα και ψηφιακά κέρδη, με βάση το κόστος-όφελος, και ο λαός μετρά βاریές απώλειες, όπως των 57 ψυχών στο προδιαγεγραμμένο έγκλημα σύγκρουσης τρένων στην Ελλάδα, που δεν πρέπει να συγκαλυφθεί και για το οποίο δεν ειπώθηκε κουβέντα εδώ μέσα. Ένοχος το εκμεταλλευτικό σύστημα, η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, οι κυβερνήσεις του κεφαλαίου και διεξοδος ο οργανωμένος λαϊκός αγώνας για την ανατροπή αυτής της κατάστασης. Στον δρόμο αυτό παλεύει το Κομμουνιστικό Κόμμα της Ελλάδας.

Andrzej Halicki (PPE). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Panie Przewodniczący! Nie było w historii Unii Europejskiej okresu tak trudnego, tak złożonego gospodarczo, społecznie, tak dramatycznego, bo przecież u naszych granic mamy wojnę. I te wyzwania i decyzje, które podejmujemy dzisiaj, są naprawdę wagi historycznej. Trzeba mieć szacunek dla tych decyzji, które świadczą o skali pomocy Ukrainie, pomocy także militarnej. Integracja energetyczna i te wyzwania, o których mówimy dzisiaj, to są rzeczywiste wyzwania na lata. Ale Rada Europejska, my w Europie mamy jeszcze jedną broń w ręku, bardzo silną broń polityczną. Bo Putin boi się silnych i zdeterminowanych.

To najwyższy czas na to, by dać perspektywę tym społeczeństwom, które chcą żyć w pokoju i rozwijać się tak jak my. Dlatego proces akcesyjny powinien się rozpocząć formalnie w tym roku i Rada Europejska powinna potwierdzić i profesjonalnie przygotować ten proces. To sygnał dla Putina, że Europa jest zdeterminowana, silna. I słowo „enlargement” – „rozszerzenie” – to nie jest słowo, którego się obawiamy. To jest cel.

Europa musi być większa, silniejsza, bardziej zintegrowana, bo tylko wtedy wygramy także konkurencyjność, kiedy będziemy razem zjednoczeni i będziemy silnie potwierdzali ten właśnie kierunek rozwoju Europy. I o to apeluję dzisiaj z tej mównicy.

Pedro Marques (S&D). – Senhora Presidente, Senhor Presidente do Conselho, Senhor Vice-Presidente da Comissão, a extrema-direita trouxe para aqui o debate das migrações, a propósito do próximo Conselho.

Queria discutir, aqui, com os colegas deputados, a necessidade de um fundo europeu de ajuda à indústria verde que chegue realmente a todos na Europa e não apenas à Alemanha e à França. Mas não posso deixar de reagir ao gelo com que a extrema-direita e o PPE encaram o desespero e as mortes no mar.

O que se passa no Mediterrâneo – Senhores da extrema-direita, que, aliás, já abandonaram este debate – nada tem a ver com fronteiras abertas, tem a ver com o mar aberto, isso sim, onde milhares perdem a vida para fugir à fome, à guerra, à perseguição religiosa e de outras ordens. Homens, mulheres e crianças indefesas perdem a vida nas mãos dos traficantes e nas ondas de um mar inclemente a que só se atiram por desespero, enquanto que os que querem ajudar são barrados pela insensibilidade de regras que nunca mais se reformam e pelo coração gelado de um governo, que já quis recusar a ajuda nos seus portos, que quis criminalizar o trabalho solidário dos que querem salvar vidas.

Senhora Meloni e senhor Berlusconi, não passarão! E, senhor Weber, acabem com esta aliança desgraçada do vosso partido com a extrema-direita, antes que vos gelem definitivamente os corações.

Nicola Beer (Renew). – Frau Präsidentin, Herr Präsident! Wir wollen wettbewerbsfähig sein und bleiben? Aber wenn wir weitermachen wie bisher, wird das schwierig. Chip-Gesetz, Gesetz zu kritischen Rohstoffen, Datengesetz – ja, das geht in die richtige Richtung zur Stärkung unserer Souveränität und Wettbewerbsfähigkeit, aber wenn unser Mittelstand abgewürgt wird, wenn er nicht mehr atmen kann, bringen die besten legislativen Vorschläge nichts.

Der Mittelstand ist unser Rückgrat unserer Wirtschaft. Damit das so bleibt, müssen wir Finanz- und Innovationshürden abbauen. Es geht also um Innovation und Planungssicherheit und nicht darum, immer mehr Subventionen und immer mehr Verbote hervorzukramen. Die Bürokratie muss massiv abgebaut werden.

Ich bin dankbar, wenn jetzt gesagt wird, die Kommission will 25 % abschaffen. Allein der Pegel der neuen Bürokratie steigt mit jedem Tag. Schaffen Sie doch einfach doppelt so viel ab, wie Sie selber neu schaffen, dann kommen wir vielleicht bei 50 % heraus. Denn die Bürokratie kostet Zeit und Geld, Zeit und Geld, die nicht in Innovation investiert werden können. Beflügeln statt belasten – das ist angesagt.

Ich bin dankbar, Charles Michel, für diesen Dreiklang: Investment, Innovation, Handel. Bitte, setz noch drauf: Mittelstand und Bürokratieabbau – das muss der Europäische Fünfkampf sein. So generieren wir Wettbewerbsfähigkeit, aber vor allem Wohlstand für Menschen in diesem Land.

Sergey Lagodinsky (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin! Im Mittelpunkt der Ratssitzung stand, wie seit Monaten schon, die Krise, der Krieg, der menschenverachtende Angriff Russlands auf die Ukraine. Wir haben in Deutschland vor einigen Wochen Demonstrationen erlebt, wir haben das auch hier in diesem Saal erlebt: Menschen, die teils fahrlässig, teils absichtlich Empathielosigkeit gegenüber der Ukraine und Sympathiebereitschaft für Putin demonstrieren.

Viele von diesen Menschen, auch hier im Saal, werfen uns vor, Friedensbemühungen boykottieren zu wollen. Denen empfehle ich, die Schlussfolgerungen des Rates zu lesen. Darin steht doch ausdrücklich, dass wir als EU Friedensbemühungen unterstützen, dass wir den Friedensplan von Selenskyj unterstützen. Da steht sogar, dass wir zu einem Friedensgipfel bereit sind.

Was ihnen nicht passt, ist etwas anderes. Klar ist für uns alle, dass wir Frieden nicht auf Kosten des Angriffsoffers, sondern für Angriffsoffer erreichen wollen. Das ist das, was uns wichtig ist. Der Wille, in diesem Haus die Ukraine zu unterstützen, bleibt ungebrochen. Neben Friedensbemühungen stehen unterstützende Bemühungen und Unterstützungsbereitschaft für uns außer Frage. Das ist das Wichtigste an diesem Gipfel.

Mislav Kolakušić (NI). – Poštovana predsjednice, u ratu u Ukrajini ubijene su stotine tisuća ljudi, ne desetine tisuća, nego stotine tisuća ljudi. Slanje zastarjelog oružja i vojnog otpada Ukrajini vodi kraju rata jednako kao i dvanaesti krug sankcija Rusiji.

Fanatična usmjerenost vodstva Europske unije ratu i vojnoj pobjedi Ukrajine bez ijednog prijedloga ili bilo kakvog plana koji bi vodio k miru dovest će do stotina tisuća ubijenih i u sljedećim godinama.

Moj prijedlog je da vodstvo Europske unije zamijenimo umjetnom inteligencijom jer gore od ovoga ne može biti.

Ioan-Rareș Bogdan (PPE). – Doamna președintă, excelențele voastre, nu faceți din drama fermierilor români un al doilea Schengen refuzat pe nedrept pentru România!

Consiliul din 23-24 martie este obligat să decidă plata unor compensații pentru fermierii care au pierdut enorm după declanșarea invaziei Rusiei în Ucraina. Producătorii români au calculat o pierdere de peste 200 de milioane de euro, dar mai sunt și Polonia, Slovacia, Ungaria, Cehia și Bulgaria.

Ajutorul acordat de Uniune Ucrainei de la începutul războiului trebuie să continue. Trebuie să sprijinim în continuare și mai mult lupta ucrainenilor de a-și scoate țara de sub amenințarea unui tiran. Ei mor să ne apere și pe noi, iar dacă Ucraina cade, nu suntem în siguranță.

Dar Uniunea nu-i poate lăsa pe niciunii din cetățenii ei în abandon, adică nici pe fermierii români! Trebuie să găsiți o soluție! Fermierii români o așteaptă și au dreptul la ea. Și, până la urmă, competitivitatea nu înseamnă și cereale de calitate în Europa?

Sunt aceiași români jigniți cumplit atunci când li s-a refuzat accesul deplin în Schengen. Am atras atenția că dacă instituțiile europene alimentează prin decizii greșite nemulțumirile populației, valul de euroscepticism va crește, iar extremiștii vor exulta.

Acum 8 ani, români erau cei mai euro-optimiști, adică 68% la sută, când media europeană era de 54. Acum, post decizie complet nedreaptă cu extinderea Schengen în decembrie, au devenit cei mai euro-pesimiști, 46%, față de media europeană, care este de 62%.

Este o tendință care a început în timpul pandemiei, când România a fost teren de joacă al dezinformării rusești și a explodat post decizie Schengen din luna decembrie. Excelențele voastre, nu abandonați România! Suntem un stat-cheie pentru apărarea frontierei NATO și UE!

Dan Nica (S&D). – Doamna președintă, domnule prim-vicepreședintele Șefcovič, dragă Maroš, domnule președinte Charles Michel, salutăm concluziile Consiliului din 9 februarie, dar atrag atenția că dacă nu vom veni cu surse de bani cash, *fresh money*, resursele existente, instrumentele financiare existente sunt insuficiente pentru ceea ce avem de făcut, inclusiv pentru domeniul semiconductorilor.

În domeniul energiei, securitatea energetică a Uniunii Europene înseamnă oprirea manipulării pieței – acesta este elementul cheie -, utilizarea energiei regenerabile din resurse proprii și creșterea eficienței energetice – un alt punct la care ținem foarte mult – și scăderea facturilor pentru industrie și cetățeni.

Ținând cont de instabilitatea sistemului financiar, și mă refer la falimentul lui Silicon Valley Bank, încă o dată, arată de ce trebuie să avem grijă de un sistem energetic care să aibă o stabilitate, pentru a nu crea o presiune suplimentară pe companii sau pe cetățeni, pentru că situațiile vor putea să fie numai foarte grele sau foarte complicate. Și, mai ales, trebuie să-i protejăm pe cei care au venituri mici, familii tinere, cu mulți copii, sau pensionari, și care nu își pot permite să suporte această presiune a facturilor.

Din păcate, propunerea Comisiei privind introducerea unui nou model al pieței de energie electrică este insuficientă, nu adresează niciuna dintre aceste lucruri pe care le-am menționat, nici manipularea pieței în mod corespunzător, nici un sistem predictibil al facturilor și al prețurilor la energie, și acest lucru trebuie să îl corectăm și îl vom face în Parlamentul European.

Hilde Vautmans (Renew). – Voorzitter, mijnheer de voorzitter van de Raad, mijnheer de vicevoorzitter van de Commissie, voor mij is het heel duidelijk. Er zijn drie prioriteiten voor deze Europese Raad: Oekraïne, Oekraïne en Oekraïne.

Ten eerste, Oekraïne. Lever nu eens die wapens. Ik denk dat president Zelensky heel erg duidelijk was. Lever munitie, lever vliegtuigen, lever langeafstandsraketten. Ik denk dat als we willen dat Oekraïne deze oorlog wint, we echt moeten inzetten op die wapens, en we gaan daar Europees gezamenlijk voor moeten aankopen. We moeten de defensieproductie opvoeren, de defensiesector versterken. En voor mij, mijnheer Michel – ik zie u knikken –, is dat ook het begin van een Europees leger. Koop die wapens gemeenschappelijk aan en heb de politieke moed om te beslissen tot de oprichting van een Europees leger. Dat is voor mij een heel duidelijke doelstelling.

Ten tweede, Oekraïne. Tweede prioriteit: Oekraïne en de sancties. Wij zullen in dit huis blijven morren tot die 6 000 namen op die sanctielijst staan. We hebben Guy Verhofstadt met Navalny. We gaan daarvoor blijven ijveren.

De derde prioriteit: Oekraïne en de toekomst. Wat is de toekomst van Oekraïne? Ik denk, collega's, dat alleen Oekraïne dat gaat bepalen. Rusland gaat dat niet bepalen. China gaat dat niet bepalen. Wij moeten helpen aan die Europese toekomst van Oekraïne te bouwen. Want het is belangrijk – denk ik – dat Oekraïne die oorlog wint. Niet alleen voor de toekomst van Oekraïne, maar ook voor ons als Europese Unie.

En collega's, Europa mag niet het speelveld zijn van de andere grootmachten. Europa moet als grootmacht meespelen en dat vereist eenheid. En mijnheer Michel, ik was een beetje ongerust gisteren toen ik de geruchten las dat er een verschil in visie was rond het China-beleid. Ik denk dat we echt niet de fout mogen maken dat we verdeeld naar China toe kijken. Mevrouw Von der Leyen is er niet meer, maar geef die boodschap door. Ik hoop alleszins dat u toch wat China betreft op één lijn gaat zitten, en dat we niet de fout maken die we met Rusland hebben gemaakt. Die wetgeving inzake kritieke materialen is echt noodzakelijk. We moeten daarop inzetten.

En tot slot, we moeten ons eigen lot in handen nemen. Dus ik doe echt een oproep, mijnheer Michel, zorg dat de Raad met eensgezindheid en felle beslissingen komt. Renew Europe steunt u hierin.

Anna Cavazzini (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, the global net-zero race is on, and for the EU to lead it, we need to speed up the Green Deal. Clear and predictable rules as well as adequate financing are key to boost the transition of our industry. And two things I find crucial in this debate: we also need to create a market for our green products. And that is why I very much welcome the Commission's proposal on green procurement in the Net-Zero Industry Act. Public procurement is 14% of our GDP, and we must use this huge leverage to support our companies who want to embark on the green transition. And secondly, as a lot of people mentioned today, we need to protect our main asset, the single market. And flexibilities on national subsidies require more European money, fresh money to prevent a subsidy race within the EU, to allow a truly common European approach. So I urge, especially also the Member States, the Council, to embrace Parliament's proposal on a sovereignty fund.

Milan Uhrík (NI). – Vážená pani predsedajúca, pán predseda Michel, pán eurokomisár Šefčovič. Mnohí tu rozprávate o našej nekonečnej podpore pre Ukrajinu. Zaznievajú tu slová o tom, ako Európska únia bude podporovať Ukrajinu tak dlho a tak veľmi, ako to bude potrebné. Ja sa vás však chcem všetkých spýtať, kam až ste ochotní zájsť. Nedávno ma na Slovensku zastavil jeden chlap, muž, ktorý sa ma spýtal, či sa má s rodinou pripraviť na vojnu. Že či je pravda, že európske štáty začnú prezidentovi Zelenskému posilať aj našich mužov, ak na Ukrajinu nebude mať kto bojovať. Ja sa vás pýtam, čo mám tomuto chlapovi a jeho rodine odpovedať. Ľudia sa boja. Ľudia sa naozaj boja, že tá vojna z Ukrajiny sa rozšíri až sem do Európy, že sa rozšíri až k nim domov. A títo ľudia nechcú vojnu. Tú vojnu chcú len politici. Preto vás všetkých vyzývam, aby ste ubezpečili ľudí, že Európska únia nikdy nedovolí vyslanie európskych vojakov do konfliktu na Ukrajinu.

Dolors Montserrat (PPE). – Señora presidenta, el éxito o el fracaso de la Unión Europea dependerá de la fortaleza de sus Estados miembros. Si queremos una Europa firme ante Putin; si queremos una Europa que proteja a sus ciudadanos y tenga una economía competitiva; si queremos una Europa que defienda la ejemplaridad política, debemos empezar por los países.

Mientras aquí hablamos de unidad en el apoyo a Ucrania, en España una parte del Gobierno se enfrenta a la otra por el envío de armas a Ucrania. Mientras aquí pedimos proteger a las mujeres, en España el Gobierno aprueba una ley que excarcela a violadores. Mientras en Bruselas pedimos luchar contra la corrupción y que no se desvíe ni un solo euro público europeo, el Gobierno de España abarata el delito contra la corrupción. Mientras en Bruselas pedimos ejecutar los fondos Next Generation EU, el Gobierno de España es incapaz de hacer que dichos fondos lleguen a la economía real. Y mientras aquí se pide volver al Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento, el Gobierno de España dispara la deuda y derrocha en estructura de gobierno.

Europa no puede permitirse Gobiernos débiles, enfrentados e incompetentes. España es un gran país, pero con un mal Gobierno que no está a la altura. Exijan unidad, pero también responsabilidad.

Christel Schaldemose (S&D). – Fru formand! Konkurrencen om de grønne arbejdspladser er spidset til. Inflation deduction act i USA, solceller og bilbatteriproduktion af Kina, er blot nogle få eksempler. EU's grønne førertrøje er udfordret både fra øst og fra vest. Både fordi flere lande har fået øjnene op for de klimamæssige udfordringer, vi står i. Det er godt, men også fordi det faktisk er blevet en god business case, og derfor er EU selvfølgelig tvunget til at reagere, når USA hiver checkhæftet frem og tilskynder europæiske virksomheder til at flytte deres produktion til USA. Alt andet ville være virkelighedsfjernt. Men vi skal gøre det på en måde, hvor vi ikke lukker os om os selv, og hvor de investeringer, vi foretager, både er midlertidige og målrettede. Ingen har gavn af et statsstøtteræs, heller ikke EU. Og verden er forandret. Det bliver vi nødt til at se i øjnene, inden det er for sent. Så kære Tyskland og kære EPP: Det gælder også i forhold til udfasning af forbrændingsmotorer i biler. Fremtiden er grøn, også når det kommer til vores biler.

Valérie Hayer (Renew). – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le président, Monsieur le Commissaire, les États-Unis, à l'heure où nous nous parlons, continuant d'aspirer nos grandes industries européennes, Northvolt, Volkswagen, BASF, Solvay. C'est la désindustrialisation qui nous guette.

Et si on veut répondre à ce défi, il va falloir plus qu'une simple visite diplomatique pour assurer la seule vente de nos véhicules électriques outre-Atlantique. Il faut une exemption généralisée et surtout, il va falloir des investissements tangibles chez nous, en Europe. Et ça, tout le monde l'a compris ici, excepté peut être le PPE, le propre groupe politique de la présidente von der Leyen, qui a tout fait pour bloquer le Parlement européen sur sa réponse à l'IRA.

Mais le vrai enjeu, au fond, c'est la place de l'Europe dans le monde, dans ce monde si bouleversé. C'est comment l'Europe sort de toutes ces dépendances stratégiques qui nous rendent plus faibles, énergie, médicaments, engrais ou encore panneaux photovoltaïques. C'est pourquoi, Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, l'Union européenne, si elle veut devenir vraiment puissance, doit arrêter de subir les décisions des autres. Elle doit devenir prospective et pour cela, les chefs d'État et la Commission doivent arrêter de tergiverser. C'est aujourd'hui que ce jour notre avenir.

François-Xavier Bellamy (PPE). – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Commissaire, Monsieur le Président du Conseil, c'est avec beaucoup de soulagement que nous avons découvert hier le projet de réforme du marché européen de l'électricité. Enfin, le long terme retrouve sa place dans les stratégies énergétiques dont nous avons besoin pour pouvoir investir dans notre avenir.

Maintenant, ce n'est pas seulement une question de marché. La crise que nous traversons sur l'énergie n'est pas seulement une question commerciale, c'est d'abord une question industrielle. Et si nous voulons la surmonter, il faut produire, produire plus, produire mieux, produire une électricité décarbonée et pour cela, utiliser toutes les sources d'énergie décarbonée et en particulier, bien sûr, le nucléaire.

Et quel malheur de voir qu'au sein de la Commission européenne, une bataille d'un autre âge continue pour disqualifier le nucléaire. Nous espérons que, dans le *Net-Zero Industry Act* qui sera publié bientôt, le nucléaire aura sa place, pas seulement sous la forme, Monsieur le Commissaire, des SMR, mais aussi à travers une production de grande échelle, car c'est de cela que nous avons besoin.

Ceux qui aujourd'hui luttent contre cette énergie, que ce soit au sein de la Commission ou au sein du Parlement, comme les collègues qui hier ont voté contre l'inclusion du nucléaire dans la transition énergétique des bâtiments, luttent aussi contre l'environnement, contre notre souveraineté, contre notre indépendance, contre nos démocraties. Et je crois qu'aujourd'hui, nous avons besoin d'être sérieux et cohérents dans ces combats essentiels.

Brando Benifei (S&D). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, lo scorso luglio Matteo Salvini, attuale ministro del Governo italiano, affermava che per la sinistra sarebbe Putin a spingere i barconi. Oggi, invece, sono proprio i ministri della destra al governo ad additare la Wagner, le milizie mercenarie di Putin, protagoniste di orribili crimini in Ucraina, come responsabili dei recenti arrivi. Siamo alle comiche, diceva Salvini. Forse prevedeva il futuro.

Esseri umani, nel frattempo muoiono sulle nostre coste, colpevolizzati dalle parole indegne del ministro Piantedosi, che definisce genitori irresponsabili chi fugge dalla disperazione. Che dire? Mi vergogno io per lui.

Ma ora serve la politica, quella buona, quella che cambia le cose. Serve che il Consiglio europeo agisca, cambiando il patto sulla migrazione con canali legali e sicuri, con un nuovo sistema europeo di soccorso e ricerca in mare. Restiamo umani.

Luděk Niedermayer (PPE). – Madam President, I am grateful that we are talking about the economy after some time because it is a very important topic, so let me make two takes.

The first, I don't believe that the economy should be run by subsidies or by state aid. This should be used very carefully and we are in stage that we are considering we should not forget that the driving force should be competition and competitiveness, together with transparent and simple rules. The second, we should not forget when comparing with the US that we pay a high cost for our policy being fragmented. Where the US is taking one policy that is valid across the EU, we have very often 20 different fragmented policies.

The second points I want to remind us that we are struggling with very high inflation, and high inflation is boosted by expansionary fiscal policy. We should more discuss about correction of the fiscal policy and about introduction of much more better fiscal rules across the EU.

Javier Moreno Sánchez (S&D). – Señora presidenta, querido vicepresidente, señor presidente del Consejo Europeo, señora Monserrat, ya sé que hace mucho frío en la oposición, pero no creo que las mentiras aporten mucho al debate de hoy. Dicho esto, señorías, aunque estemos llegando al final del invierno, muchas familias y empresas, y especialmente las pymes, siguen padeciendo las consecuencias de la crisis provocada por la guerra de Putin.

Pese a que hemos podido evitar la carencia energética este invierno, la pobreza y la precariedad energética siguen siendo una realidad que tenemos que superar. Para ello necesitamos, ya, una política energética europea a medio y largo plazo que apueste por la diversificación geopolítica del suministro de energías limpias y asequibles. Una de las claves para ello reside en la reforma del mercado eléctrico europeo. Por eso, espero que las propuestas de la vicepresidenta española Teresa Ribera lleguen a buen puerto bajo Presidencia española, y cuento con el apoyo del Partido Popular Europeo.

Por otra parte, es necesario el despliegue de las renovables y del hidrógeno verde, elementos clave para conseguir una transición ecológica justa que necesitamos tanto la humanidad como el planeta.

Señorías, vienen buenos tiempos. Aprovechemos para consolidar una verdadera política energética común.

(Catch-the-eye procedure).

Seán Kelly (PPE). – Madam President, this mandate thus far has been marked by our commitment to climate change, which is good. So we have net zero emissions, we have Fit for 55 with the Green Deal, etc. But that also has led to headlines across Europe saying the EU is forcing us to do this and forcing us to do that. Now, I would like to see the rest of this mandate being dedicated to highlighting the supports we can give to Member states and businesses in dealing with this challenge so that the headlines would be the EU is helping us to reach our climate goals and at the same time maintaining or improving our competitiveness. That is absolutely vital from now on to change the narrative. And also, of course, I am wondering what has happened to InvestEU. In the last mandate known as the Juncker Fund, it was hugely successful in generating finance and jobs, etc. We hear nothing about it now. We need to hear more about these instruments so people can see that the EU is supporting them in reaching the Climate change goals.

Margarida Marques (S&D). – Senhora Presidente, Senhor Presidente Michel, Senhor Vice-Presidente Šefčovič, nós dispomos, hoje, a União Europeia dispõe, hoje, de um instrumento orçamental temporário, o NextGenerationEU, para apoiar reformas e investimentos dos Estados-Membros.

O Fundo Monetário Internacional, o Banco Central Europeu, o Banco Europeu de Investimento, o Banco Mundial e o *European Fiscal Board* pedem à Comissão Europeia, sugerem a criação de uma capacidade orçamental permanente. A minha pergunta à Comissão é a seguinte: Até que ponto a Comissão Europeia, na sequência do debate de ontem no ECOFIN e do debate no Conselho Europeu da próxima semana, está disposta, nas suas propostas legislativas de revisão das regras orçamentais da governação económica, a propor a criação de uma capacidade orçamental permanente na União Europeia?

Emma Wiesner (Renew). – Madam President, it's been very interesting. I've been listening to the discussion and I have several questions. I would have wanted to ask the EPP about the new trade agreement with the US. I would have wanted to ask the Council about the potential ICE ban. I want to talk about the Greens with their naive view on mining activities and to The Left on the electricity market reform. But we had no blue card, so there is no possibility to have a debate. And the result is we have more visitors here than MEPs and we have become completely irrelevant. We're going and moving towards elections. We need to have more lively debate and discussions. Come on, we can do better in this House. So, in the future, I hope we can have more lively debates and make us more relevant because we earn that, the citizens earn that and we can do better than this, colleagues.

President. – Ms Wiesner, this is precisely why you had the one minute: to use the catch-the-eye in order to ask a question to the Commission or the Council Presidents.

Malte Gallée (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin, Herr Šefčovič, Herr Michel und auch Frau Dalli! Ich freue mich natürlich darüber, wenn es jetzt heißt, dass beim *Inflation Reduction Act* auch europäisch verarbeitete Rohstoffe mit berücksichtigt werden. Ich habe aber wirklich die Sorge, dass wir unsere Partnerschaften im globalen Süden so verlieren. Wir stehen vor der riesigen Aufgabe, die Lieferketten zu diversifizieren. Das heißt, dass wir uns in erster Linie von China unabhängig machen müssen.

Die Partnerländer in Ostafrika – ob es der Kongo ist, ob es Uganda ist, ob es Tansania ist –, die wollen doch selber die verarbeitende Industrie. Lassen Sie uns doch dort investieren. Lassen Sie uns diesen Ländern die Chance auf Wachstum geben, die Chance dazu, wirklich selber zum Wohlstand der eigenen Bevölkerung beizutragen! Das ist meine ganz große Bitte an Sie. Beachten Sie das bei den ganzen Gesetzesprojekten, die jetzt gerade auf dem Tisch liegen, damit wir auch keine naive Rohstoffpolitik machen.

Geert Bourgeois (ECR). – Voorzitter, ik heb heel veel goede voornemens gehoord, maar we horen die al sinds 2000. Met de Lissabonstrategie zouden we in 2010 de grootste competitieve kenniseconomie ter wereld zijn, vervolgens met Barroso uitgesteld naar 2020. Hetzelfde met de Commissie-Juncker. En nu opnieuw een nieuw begin.

Wij vragen al jaren: neem de juiste maatregelen. Voltooi de interne markt, sluit meer handelsverdragen, versnel de vergunningen, verminder de regeldruk, zet veel meer in op onderzoek en ontwikkeling.

En mijnheer de commissaris en mijnheer de voorzitter, ik wil vragen: probeer niet China te kopiëren, zet in op technologie van de volgende generatie voor batterijen, voor zonnepanelen, voor windmolens. Dan gaan we wereldwijd de leiding nemen.

Δημήτριος Παπαδημούλης (The Left). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, κύριε Michel, για να αντιμετωπίσουμε τις προκλήσεις των καιρών, όπως και εσείς κύριοι της Επιτροπής, χρειαζόμαστε ένα πιο ισχυρό κοινοτικό προϋπολογισμό. Οι στόχοι που θέτετε και οι υποσχέσεις που δίνετε δεν μπορούν να υλοποιηθούν με έναν προϋπολογισμό της τάξης του 1% του ευρωπαϊκού ΑΕΠ. Και, κύριε Michel, χρειαζόμαστε και ένα Συμβούλιο που να μην παραλύει διαρκώς, αναζητώντας την ομοφωνία, όταν το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο ζητά να αυξηθούν τα θέματα που αποφασίζονται με αυξημένη πλειοψηφία. Χρειαζόμαστε περισσότερα χρήματα και για την τεχνολογία και για ισχυρότερη βιομηχανία στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, αλλά και για τη μείωση των κοινών κοινωνικών ανισοτήτων, που έχουν αυξηθεί επικίνδυνα, και για την υλοποίηση της πράσινης συμφωνίας, που πρέπει να εφαρμοστεί και να μην υπονομευθεί. Και, επειδή η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση είναι ένα πρότζεκτ δημοκρατίας και ειρήνης, χρειαζόμαστε και περισσότερες πρωτοβουλίες για τον σεβασμό του κράτους δικαίου και για να τερματιστεί επιτέλους ο πόλεμος στην Ουκρανία.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure).

Maroš Šefčovič, *Vice-President of the Commission*. – Madam President, President of the European Council, honourable Members, I think that this debate has very clearly proven that the race for global leadership in net-zero clean tech industry is very much on.

I agree with Mr Lamberts that the European economy is, and will always be, based on 'high value added'. Therefore, we have developed the concept of competitive sustainability, and I really would like to thank this House for the support for the Battery Regulation, where we place this concept for the first time into full practice. Each battery placed on the EU market will have a QR code telling us exactly what is the carbon footprint, where the critical raw materials came from, whether they have been ethically sourced and, of course, what the warranty is for their recycling.

I think that thanks to this approach we have over the last five years got more than EUR 180 billion of investment into this sector with 160 industrial projects and more than 30 gigafactories, which are being built in Europe despite all global competition.

Of course, I totally agree with all of you that these investments must continue. So I would like to also reassure Ms Charanzová that we are in close contact with the industry, and the proposals you heard this morning from the President of the European Commission on fast permitting, on granting better access to public and private finance, and to have a forward-looking, critical raw materials act, as Mr Gallée was suggesting, to make sure that we will use the new approach to state aid and work with green procurement, as Ms Cavazzini was referring to, and to develop the concept of how to use tax breaks and simplify our procedures, are exactly the responses the industry was expecting from us.

So what I want to say is that this is what was proposed by our industrial leaders and this is what we are going to deliver. I believe that this is a powerful signal that we want European industry not only to stay in Europe, but to expand and prosper here as well.

Ms García Pérez, Mr Moreno Sánchez and Mr Schirdewan have been making very important remarks, together with several honourable Members, on how the high energy prices are affecting our households and our industry. Yesterday's reform, presented by my colleague Kadri Simson on the EU electricity market, should not only accelerate the deployment of renewables, but also protect our households and our industry from unreliable suppliers, from hikes in electricity pricing, and help us to overcome the dependencies which have been proven to be so dangerous for our security of supply.

As you know, our leaders in the European Council have decided that we should, for the first time in the history of the European Union, do our utmost and to purchase gas in a common way. Because we know that gas will play the role of a necessary transitional fuel for some time.

We have talked to major gas consumers, to steelers, to fertiliser producers, to aluminium smelters and operators, to SMEs in the textile, glass and ceramic industry, and they've been very obliged to us that we are actually aggregating their demands and that we will enter into the negotiations with the global suppliers, because otherwise they will simply not be able to reach that level of the negotiation.

So what we are looking for here is to get the best prices and the best conditions from global markets for economy in the European Union. Yesterday, we opened the process of registration for all those who want to purchase gas together, and in May, as I said, for the first time in history, we will start joint procurement of gas for EU consumers.

We believe that the common political and economic weight of the European economy will bring us not only better security of supply, but also lower energy prices, which are so crucial for addressing the cost of living of our families, but also the competitiveness of our industry.

To conclude, I really would like to thank this House for the strong and continued support for Ukraine, which is as needed now as it was a year ago.

Charles Michel, *Conseil européen*. – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, merci pour les messages qui ont été adressés. Je souhaiterais réagir sur quelques-uns des points qui ont été mentionnés.

Premier point, et beaucoup l'ont évoqué, nous faisons face à une épreuve d'envergure. Après le tumulte causé par le Brexit, par le COVID, après la prise de conscience de la nécessité d'être engagés sur le terrain climatique, sur le terrain numérique, nous faisons face à une guerre sur le continent européen. Depuis un an, l'unité des États membres dans les décisions a été sans faille pour soutenir l'Ukraine qui se bat pour son avenir, qui se bat aussi pour nos valeurs, qui se bat pour nos principes démocratiques.

Nous avons eu l'occasion de faire des pas supplémentaires, opérationnels, parce que cette réunion, il y a quelques semaines, avec le président Zelensky, en petit format, a été l'occasion, de façon opérationnelle, d'envisager des soutiens additionnels de capacité militaire pour réellement aider et supporter l'Ukraine. Et cette guerre contre l'Ukraine est aussi une occasion d'ouvrir les yeux sur la nécessité de faire des pas en avant pour l'Europe de la défense.

Deuxième point, nous sommes aussi unis pour sanctionner la Russie, pour tenter de l'isoler sur le plan international. C'est la bataille diplomatique qui est menée et nous mesurons bien que cela n'est pas simple. Il faut être engagé dans un corps à corps diplomatique, parler à toute la communauté internationale, argumenter et défendre ces principes qui touchent directement à un ordre international fondé sur des règles.

Et puis plusieurs, chacun à sa manière, chacun avec ses sensibilités politiques, l'ont mis en évidence: on mesure bien que notre génération, quels que soient les bancs sur lesquels nous nous situons, est confrontée à un défi de taille. Après la mise en place de ce projet politique sur les cendres de deux guerres tragiques, notre génération doit prendre aujourd'hui des décisions qui vont avoir un impact sur la manière dont sera façonnée dans les prochaines décennies l'Union européenne pour nos enfants et pour nos petits-enfants. Il s'agit de renforcer la résistance, la résilience, la solidité, la robustesse de ce projet européen.

Je vois quatre éléments clés, et plusieurs les ont mentionnés de manière directe ou de manière indirecte. Le premier, c'est travailler encore et encore pour soutenir une base économique solide et robuste qui est la condition pour n'abandonner personne en cours de route, pour veiller à ce qu'il y ait des transitions qui soient équitables, justes. Mais la condition de base, c'est la capacité de se tourner, ce qui a été dit, vers l'innovation, vers les investissements, de lutter contre la bureaucratie, contre le *red tape*, faire en sorte qu'il y ait une capacité de libérer les intelligences, de libérer les énergies entrepreneuriales pour bâtir et façonner une Europe qui regarde l'avenir avec plus de confiance et plus de solidité.

Le deuxième point, et nous sommes depuis ces derniers mois au cœur de cette bataille politique et économique, c'est l'énergie. Et nous ne le découvrons pas avec la guerre en Ukraine, on le savait bien avant. Et bien avant, on était très divisés, entre Européens, sur la manière d'aborder cette question de notre avenir énergétique. Il y avait des débats politiques parfois vifs entre nous sur le sujet. Cela me frappe de constater en quelques mois le bond en avant de la convergence politique pour aller vers davantage d'européanisation de la question énergétique.

C'est exactement le travail qui est mené avec le Conseil européen et avec la Commission. Le Parlement européen a toute sa place sur le sujet. Qui imaginait, il y a deux ou trois ans, qu'on parlerait aujourd'hui de plateforme d'achat commun sur le plan énergétique? Qui imaginait qu'on serait dans un moment où on accélérerait à ce point cette ambition de développer le renouvelable pour plus d'indépendance, pour plus de souveraineté, et qu'on aurait ces débats sur les différentes technologies qui sont nécessaires afin, demain, de disposer des capacités qui sont utiles pour protéger la compétitivité, pour protéger la prospérité et notre capacité de soutenir les familles partout en Europe?

Premier point, base économique. Deuxième point, question énergétique. Et troisième point, la sécurité. La sécurité et la défense. Et là aussi, je le dis encore, mais ce projet qui est maintenant en train de devenir opérationnel et réel – mobiliser l'industrie européenne afin de mettre en place des achats conjoints de munitions –, c'est un pas extrêmement important. Nous allons y travailler beaucoup avec le Haut représentant Josep Borrell, avec les États membres. Le point sera à nouveau sur la table du Conseil européen la semaine prochaine. On a besoin effectivement de prendre davantage en main notre sécurité et notre stabilité.

Le quatrième point, *last but not least*, est au cœur de notre ADN. Il est au cœur de qui nous sommes comme Européens, parce que notre réalité a été forgée au cours d'une histoire qui a été tragique, qui a été brutale au siècle passé. C'est la dignité de chaque être humain, ce sont les libertés fondamentales. C'est cette idée selon laquelle nous avons une responsabilité particulière pour porter partout dans le monde cette conviction qui touche à la dignité sincère.

Je suis très fier, comme représentant européen, avec l'ensemble des États membres, que l'Union européenne soit de loin le premier sponsor du multilatéralisme, le premier sponsor des efforts dans le cadre des Nations unies, par exemple, pour faire reculer les discriminations, les injustices, les appauvrissements. Et je suis très fier que cette question de l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes soit au cœur de notre projet. Il y aura dans quelques instants une cérémonie extrêmement importante. Le Conseil est résolument du côté des femmes en Iran et en Afghanistan qui se lèvent courageusement pour leur dignité.

Enfin, il y a un point qui est essentiel, c'est la question de la place de l'Europe dans le monde. Cela a été dit très justement par quelques-uns d'entre vous. Il y a une question qui se pose à nous pour les prochaines décennies: voulons-nous nous contenter d'une Union européenne terrain de jeu des décisions des autres ou voulons-nous bâtir une Europe puissante dans le cadre de laquelle nous sommes maîtres de notre destin et de notre avenir? C'est ça la question qui est posée dans le débat géopolitique auquel nous sommes confrontés aujourd'hui.

Vous avez compris le choix que je fais. Je pense que notre responsabilité, au travers du renforcement de la base économique et du travail pour notre sécurité, c'est de faire en sorte que l'on ne délègue pas à d'autres les conditions de notre avenir, mais plutôt que l'on décide en Européens, dans le débat démocratique entre nous, comment on crée la légitimité pour prendre aujourd'hui les décisions qui vont façonner le projet dans lequel nos enfants et nos petits-enfants vivront demain. Un projet de paix, de prospérité, de stabilité basé sur ces valeurs fondamentales auxquelles nous sommes tellement attachés.

President. — The debate is closed.

Written statements (Rule 171)

Joachim Stanisław Brudziński (ECR), na piśmie. – Pan Przewodniczący Charles Michel na początku tej debaty zapewnił o naszym pełnym poparciu dla walczącej z najeźdźcą Ukrainy, tak długo, jak to będzie potrzebne. Czy jednak są to deklaracje, mające również pokrycie w czynach? Ukraińcy potrzebują realnej pomocy, a nie zapewnień i deklaracji. By skutecznie się bronić, potrzebują amunicji, czołgów, samolotów, a nie zapewnień że je otrzymają. Polska daje przykład jak w wymierny sposób udzielać pomocy militarnej krajowi, który broni się przed agresorem i walczy o swoje przetrwanie. W świetle tych właśnie wydarzeń coraz bardziej zastanawia bezkrytyczne forsowanie polityki energetyczno-klimatycznej UE. To nie jest czas i miejsce, by ślepo wdrażać nierealistyczny cel redukcji o 100% do 2035 r. emisji CO₂ dla nowych samochodów. Co charakterystyczne, z tych celów derogowane są samochody luksusowe (de facto: uprzywilejowanie bardzo bogatych konsumentów względem pozostałych użytkowników samochodów pod względem wkładu w osiągnięcie celów klimatycznych). Dlatego rząd RP sprzeciwił się przyjęciu takiego rozporządzenia, zakładającego wzmocnienie norm emisji CO₂ dla nowych samochodów osobowych i dla nowych lekkich pojazdów użytkowych. Zarówno społeczeństwo, jak i rynek, nie jest na to gotowy. Dopóki nie będziemy mieli na rynku aut przystępnych cenowo, społeczeństwo nie zaakceptuje takich pomysłów.

Czas wojny to nie czas na takie eksperymenty, a wojna trwa tuż bok nas.

João Pimenta Lopes (The Left), *por escrito*. – Enquanto Estados e povos se confrontam com dificuldades económicas e sociais, longe de serem inevitáveis, a Comissão e o Conselho concorrem para aprofundar um quadro de constrangimentos, que pretendem quase absoluto, à ação dos Estados e que limita as necessárias medidas de investimento público e progresso social que contrariem as consequências das políticas que os senhores põem em marcha. Refiro-me em particular à reposição integral das regras do Pacto de Estabilidade e à dita reforma da governação macroeconómica. Sem que no essencial se alterem as absurdas regras do défice e da dívida, avançam com a criação de novos e mais céleres mecanismos de chantagem, vigilância, controlo e sancionamento de Estados, procurando garantir que, como dizia Merkel, mudem os governos, mas não as políticas. Conhecemos os objetivos e consequências, que afetam sobretudo países como Portugal: contenção de salários e pensões, desinvestimento nos serviços públicos, desregulação laboral, liberalização de sectores estratégicos... O caminho que se impõe é a revogação do quadro de governação macroeconómica e dos constrangimentos a ele associados.

Ivan Štefanec (PPE), *písomne*. – Ruský teroristický režim už viac ako rok vedome pácha vojenské zločiny, Európska únia preto nesmie poľaviť pri pomoci ukrajinskému ľudu, či už sa jedná o humanitárnu, ekonomickú alebo vojenskú pomoc. Práve naopak, musíme pomoc zvýšiť.

Zdôrazňujem, že Ukrajinci nebojujú len za svoju slobodu, ale aj za slobodu celej demokratickej Európy, preto im musíme zabezpečiť všetko, čo na túto obranu potrebujú. Preto apelujem na spoločný európsky postup pri obstarávaní streliva a na spoločný nákup a dodávku delostreleckej munície na Ukrajinu. Ak sa uvedené podarí schváliť a realizovať, bude sa jednáť o ďalší pozitívny krok v rámci pomoci pre Ukrajinu a v budovaní spoločnej a efektívnejšej európskej obrany.

Carlos Zorrinho (S&D), *por escrito*. – O Conselho Europeu extraordinário de 9 de fevereiro, que incluiu uma troca de pontos de vista com o Presidente Zelensky, reafirmou o empenho da União no apoio sistémico à Ucrânia, reconhecendo o seu direito à independência, soberania e integridade territorial.

Foi igualmente decidido avançar com as medidas estruturantes do Plano Industrial para a Era do Impacto Zero, designadamente no que diz respeito à flexibilização dos auxílios estatais, do financiamento, do quadro regulamentar, do reforço de competências, dos mercados de capitais e dos acordos multilaterais de comércio e de cooperação.

O Conselho aprovou um pacote de orientações capazes de regular de forma transparente, inclusiva e humanista os fluxos migratórios. As conclusões enumeradas são prometedoras, mas necessitam de execução rápida e eficaz.

O Conselho Europeu de 23 e 24 de março deve dar-lhe sequência e adotar os princípios da reforma no mercado da energia. Num momento crítico de reposta à disrupção das cadeias de valor e de aumento dos preços, com quebras do poder de compra de largos estratos da população europeia, a União Europeia não pode voltar a cair na armadilha das políticas de austeridade cuja ineficácia económica e financeira e custo social ficaram demonstrados na crise do «sub-prime».

4. Negociaciones antes de la primera lectura del Parlamento (artículo 71 del Reglamento interno)(curso dado)

President. – In relation to the decision by several committees to enter into interinstitutional negotiations, pursuant to Rule 71(1), announced at the opening of the sitting on Monday 13 March, I have received requests for a vote in Parliament pursuant to Rule 71(2) from Members reaching at least the medium threshold on the decision to enter into negotiations on the European Digital Identity framework. The vote will be held tomorrow, 16 March 2023.

Regarding the other decisions, I have received no request for a vote and, therefore, the committees may start the negotiations.

(The sitting was suspended to celebrate International Women's Day.)

5. Día Internacional de la Mujer

President. – We move to the next item of this morning, an important one.

I am very pleased, dear members and dear colleagues, to welcome you at this year's celebration of International Women's Day.

We have a packed and very well prepared programme and I would like to ask you dear colleagues to welcome a number of special guests that we have brought together. Before that we will start with a round of political group speakers.

Frances Fitzgerald, on behalf of the PPE Group. – Madam President, thanks to you and President Ursula von der Leyen for holding this important event today. Women with ambition change the world. They are the change-makers, the innovators, the pioneers, the trailblazers. Yet ambition and drive can only take a woman so far if she does not have access to the tools she needs to succeed. The tools to make that change. Our green and digital future must be inclusive of women. If these transitions are not inclusive of women, not only will the benefits miss half the population, but the population will miss out on half of all potential innovation.

We have so much to do on inequality, but let me focus on digital. To quote Professor Karen Spärck Jones, with respect, 'Computing is too important to be left to men'. Yet we know that the gender divide exists and is in fact growing, while technology races ahead. I've just returned from the UN conference which looked at tech, AI and the future of these industries and how 78% of jobs that will be created in our future will be in these areas. We have to make sure that young girls and women benefit from this technologically extraordinary time of change. It is critical. We have a small window of opportunity to prevent systemic inequalities being replicated in the digital world. How dreadful to think that actually the inequalities we have now will be replicated once again. Surely it's time to make sure they are not replicated and that we correct these inequalities now, that we take away those stereotypes that young girls, young women, still face with the lower numbers in STEM at present.

If we are to foster the Marie Curies, the Ada Lovelaces, the Margaret Hamiltons, the Samantha Cristoforettis and Shirin Ebadi of tomorrow, we must work to close the digital gender divide both in Europe and across the world today. It is about dealing with all of those inequalities we speak about here endlessly – whether we are talking about representation (the only 26.6% of women in parliaments worldwide), the extraordinary violence destroying women's lives – all of these inequalities need to be dealt with now. If we are to face the future with confidence, let us make sure we are supporting and empowering those who will build our world of tomorrow.

Iratxe García Pérez, presidenta del Grupo de la Alianza Progresista de Socialistas y Demócratas. – Señora presidenta, la verdad es que para todas nosotras y nosotros es un honor contar hoy con la presencia de dos mujeres que son referentes en sus respectivos ámbitos.

Necesitamos mujeres que inspiren a nuevas generaciones de niñas y adolescentes que vean reflejadas sus posibilidades en los logros de mujeres como Shirin Ebadi, la primera mujer de religión islámica en conseguir el Premio Nobel de la Paz. La señora Ebadi fue la primera mujer iraní en acceder a la presidencia de un tribunal en 1975 y, pese a los muchos problemas y trabas que se le pusieron, nunca se ha rendido y ha seguido luchando. Consiguió ejercer como abogada y se centró en defender a los más débiles, los presos políticos y, en especial, mujeres y niños.

Mujeres como Samantha Cristoforetti, la tercera mujer astronauta europea en llegar al espacio y la segunda mujer del mundo con más días de permanencia en el espacio. Ha habido muy pocas mujeres astronautas, pero, gracias al ejemplo de la señora Cristoforetti, muchas niñas se darán cuenta de que es posible abrirse camino en un mundo de hombres y romper el techo de cristal.

Pero hoy me van a permitir que termine con un homenaje a las millones de mujeres anónimas que han hecho historia. A las madres que después de largas jornadas de trabajo vuelven a sus casas y se ponen a hacer los deberes con sus hijos y a atender las tareas domésticas. A las mujeres del medio rural que se levantan todas las mañanas a atender a la ganadería, trabajar horas y horas y nunca son reconocidas. A las mujeres que han sido víctimas de violencia de género, muchas de las cuales pierden su vida mientras que otras tienen que rehacerla. Y a las mujeres que escapan de la guerra, del hambre y de las injusticias. A las mujeres refugiadas.

He tenido la oportunidad de estar la pasada semana en Grecia, en un centro de mujeres refugiadas: valientes; con mucho sufrimiento, pero también valientes y decididas a seguir trabajando por un mejor futuro. Somos afortunadas las mujeres europeas de vivir en un espacio donde tenemos reconocidos nuestros derechos, a pesar de tener que seguir trabajando y luchando por no dar marcha atrás. Pero no olvidemos a todas aquellas que están fuera de Europa y que siguen necesitando nuestra solidaridad y nuestro apoyo.

(Aplausos)

María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, *en nombre del Grupo Renew*. – Señora presidenta, decía Simone de Beauvoir que bastaba una crisis política, económica o religiosa para que los derechos de las mujeres volviesen a ser cuestionados y que estos no podían darse por adquiridos nunca. Desgraciadamente, tenía razón. Hoy nos damos cuenta: en tantos sitios, en Irán, Afganistán, los Estados Unidos, y aquí, dentro de nuestras fronteras, en Polonia, donde ayer una mujer activista fue condenada precisamente por ayudar a otras a ejercer su derecho al aborto.

Es un honor contar con personas como Shirin Ebadi, que hoy nos hace recordar de nuevo en esta Cámara el grito de mujer, vida y libertad. El grito que gritan millones de mujeres ante un régimen que ha asesinado a miles de mujeres y ha envenenado a 7 000 estudiantes y es el primer país en el mundo en ejecución de mujeres. Hay que recordar a las mujeres afganas que viven en un verdadero *apartheid* de género y tenemos que hacer mucho por ellas. Sobre todo, no reconocer los regímenes criminales que las oprimen.

También es un honor poder estar con mujeres como Samantha, porque la educación es el motor más potente para la igualdad. En un sector donde el 90 % de los astronautas son hombres, ella cambia la narrativa de los estereotipos, de los sesgos de género, y lanza un mensaje a las niñas: pueden ser todo lo que quieran, pueden cumplir todos sus sueños. Pero también es un recordatorio para nosotros, para saber que tenemos que seguir trabajando todos los días para que todas las mujeres tengan acceso a todos los derechos. No se puede pedir menos a una democracia porque las mujeres no pueden esperar menos.

Por eso, hay que seguir trabajando en la Directiva sobre la lucha contra la violencia de género, que llega tarde, cuando cincuenta mujeres son asesinadas, víctimas de violencia en la Unión Europea, y en la igualdad salarial, la igualdad de representación. Hoy es un día para recordar que ningún derecho por la igualdad puede darse por adquirido.

Terry Reintke, *Co-President of the Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance*. – Madam President, dear colleagues, today we are celebrating women. We are celebrating women in the fight for their rights. We are celebrating women in their fight against patriarchy.

But let me say this: women are for long already not only carrying the fight for women's rights. They are carrying across the globe the fight for democracy and freedom – values that the European Union is founded on. If we look at Iran, if we look at Afghanistan, if we look at Argentina, there are brave women who are fighting for what we hold dear and they are a source of inspiration to all of us.

One of the women that we should be celebrating today, and for International Women's Day, is Justyna Wydrzyńska, not only because she has shown bravery and commitment, but because she has helped others. She has helped people in need. She supported women who needed access to abortion in a country like Poland, where the right and the access to abortion has been heavily restricted over the past years.

This form of compassion and solidarity is what makes our society strong. She has stood up for our values and very concretely provided support. But instead of celebrating her, she is being criminalised. She was convicted to eight months of community service yesterday for caring for others, for defending our rights.

Colleagues, we cannot stay silent on this – full solidarity to Justyna and all the women in Poland and elsewhere in the world who are standing up for their rights, who are standing up for care and solidarity. I do not want to live in a Europe where women who are helping other women are being criminalised. So let us take this day and let us take action together. Let us put the right to abortion into the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights. Women in Europe deserve it. Let us be a beacon of hope and inspiration for all women across the globe.

Assita Kanko, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – Madam President, 'I am very grateful to be a woman. I must have done something great in another life.' That's what Dr Maya Angelou said, and I totally agree with her. In particular, being a Western woman is really good. I can say that because I know what other kind of lives are. We all know what is happening in Iran. We all know what is happening in so many countries where women and girls are blocked, are mistreated, barred from school, prevented from achieving their full potential. In Kenya, for example, girls have to give their body, they have to have sex in exchange for clean water. When you think of these girls and you know that they have to fetch water every day for their families, doesn't it make you shiver?

Yes, we have a good life in Europe. We have a better life here. But is it good enough? Like most of you, I am mostly satisfied. But sometimes we are confronted with fact and we wonder, is this real? Yesterday I went to buy a pair of jogging bottoms, because I thought I have to lose ten pounds, so that I don't need to buy new dresses. But the salespeople could offer some pepper spray. How can you need that to go outside in Europe to enjoy fresh air? Another example, I have a teenage daughter. She cries and lays down on the ground because of menstruation pain. We were able to go to the moon; why haven't we solved such a problem with science? And she says, 'God must be sexist. Why do I have menstruation and boys don't?' Well, how do you answer that as a mother when all you have to give is a hug?

We have science. God has nothing to do with this. We have the power to change the lives of women so that they can go out in the street to run without needing pepper spray and can enjoy education without exchanging their body for sex.

Isabella Tovaglieri, *a nome del gruppo ID*. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, in questo dibattito dedicato alle donne – e saluto le due ospiti che sono un esempio tangibile di successo, coraggio ed *empowerment* femminile – ho deciso però di richiamare l'attenzione su un tema importante: il tema dei disturbi alimentari.

Un fenomeno drammatico e soprattutto in preoccupante aumento, che riguarda prevalentemente l'universo femminile e del quale ancora non si parla abbastanza. Proprio oggi in Italia si celebra la Giornata per la prevenzione e la cura di questi disturbi, dall'anoressia alla bulimia, che colpiscono le donne nel 90% dei casi, con un esordio ahimè, sempre più precoce.

I cambiamenti marcati del corpo dell'adolescenza, uniti all'azione sempre più pervasiva, incontrollata dei *social media*, che propongono modelli di magrezza e di successo sempre più estremi, possono disorientare le nostre ragazze più fragili. Quella di oggi è dunque una ricorrenza istituita non per iniziativa di una donna, bensì di un uomo, a dimostrazione che questo è un tema che riguarda tutti: genitori, educatori, medici, psicologi, associazioni, ma anche il mondo della politica e delle istituzioni.

Quest'uomo coraggioso è Stefano Tavilla, il padre di Giulia, affetta da bulimia nervosa e strappata alla vita proprio a 17 anni, il 15 marzo del 2011. Da quel giorno questo padre, insieme a 60 associazioni, porta questo fiocchetto lilla in tutta Italia, non solo per fare opera di informazione, ma anche per combattere i pregiudizi, chiedere cure accessibili, creare una rete di supporto a tutte quelle persone e famiglie che condividono questo dramma. E noi siamo al suo fianco, idealmente e concretamente.

Per questo, oggi, sollecitiamo quest'Aula a che mantenga alta la guardia su questo fenomeno e, in previsione della Giornata internazionale contro i disturbi alimentari, che cadrà il prossimo 2 giugno, chiediamo che sia organizzata una settimana di iniziative su questo tema, perché quello che è successo a Giulia – e accade oggi, mentre vi sto parlando, ora, a moltissime ragazze in Europa – non accada più.

Manon Aubry, *coprésidente du groupe The Left*. – Quand arrêterez-vous de nous considérer, nous les femmes, comme les variables d'ajustement de vos politiques?

Les femmes assument les métiers sous-payés et sous-considérés – les femmes de ménage, les aides-soignantes, les caissières, les aides à domicile, les assistantes maternelles, les secrétaires. Les femmes pâtissent déjà des temps partiels subis et des carrières hachées. Mais c'est à elles qu'on demande encore et toujours plus d'efforts.

Le débat sur la réforme des retraites en France montre à quel point nous ne sommes que des variables d'ajustement. D'un côté, on a Emmanuel Macron qui veut faire 60 % des économies sur le dos des femmes, malgré des niveaux de pensions déjà 40 % inférieurs. De l'autre côté, on a l'extrême droite qui nous considère, nous les femmes, comme des machines à faire des enfants. Alors je vous le dis, à vous l'extrême droite, laissez nos utérus tranquilles! Serions-nous tellement devenues des variables d'ajustement que nos droits fondamentaux ne comptent plus?

Je fais partie de cette génération qui a cru que l'avortement était un acquis. Mais Simone de Beauvoir avait raison de nous avertir. Il suffira d'une crise pour que les droits des femmes soient remis en cause, disait-elle. Je sais aujourd'hui que l'IVG doit être ardemment défendue et protégée partout dans nos constitutions. Hier, une militante polonaise a été condamnée à huit mois de travaux d'intérêts généraux pour avoir aidé une femme à avorter, en Europe, en 2023. Dans ce pays, mais aussi en Hongrie, à Malte et bientôt en Italie, le droit à l'IVG est gravement entravé, voire supprimé. Pendant ce temps, toutes les neuf minutes, une femme meurt des suites d'un avortement clandestin dans le monde.

Alors, je voudrais demander aux députés de l'extrême droite de cet hémicycle qui n'ont de cesse de combattre l'avortement: combien de femmes supplémentaires allez-vous laisser mourir en utilisant cela: un cintre? Entendez-le une fois pour toute: nous ne sommes pas des variables d'ajustement. Nos corps ne sont pas à vous. Ils nous appartiennent. Nous n'avons pas peur de vous et nous nous battons sans relâche pour nos droits jusqu'à l'égalité.

President. – I will now welcome our guests.

(Applause)

Dr Shirin Ebadi, Commander Samantha Cristoforetti, President Michel, President von der Leyen, Commissioners, Madam Ombudswoman, dear Members, thank you for being with us here in the House of European democracy.

Before we hear the speeches of today, I would like to invite all of you to turn your attention to the screens to watch a short video in celebration of International Women's Day.

(A video was shown in the Chamber)

Dear colleagues, International Women's Day is marked in our annual calendar not only to recognise the achievements of women and girls across the world but also as a call to action, a rallying point to strengthen gender equality across all spheres of our society.

I am so proud to be here as the third woman President of this institution, and I am so grateful for those who came before me, who made the path easier for my generation, for all of us. I am here – we are here – because of the battles that they fought for us. We stand on their shoulders and we reiterate our promise to make it easier for those who come after us. Women have changed the world. And we don't say this enough.

We have with us today Commander Samantha Cristoforetti, the first European woman ...

(Applause)

Samantha is the first European woman to command the International Space Station. Thank you, Samantha, for showing every young girl in Europe that they can reach for the stars. You beat the odds and you thrived; your hard work and determination are an example to us all.

On International Women's Day, it is important to recognise the achievements of women and girls around the world and beyond as a source of empowerment and inspiration for every young girl. And yet, even as we heard in the speeches we've just seen, the reality is that progress towards true equality remains painfully slow, and that can no longer be an acceptable benchmark.

So today I want to honour all those women who are fighting for their freedom and inclusion: women who are killed, beaten, and abused all over the world just for being women. All those women still fighting for their rights. All those women who have to face higher standards and have to prove every day that they are capable of doing the job. All the women facing new digital hurdles online. All those mothers, daughters, sisters who face obstacles every day that we do not talk about. All those women who face all this and yet remain unbowed and unbroken.

Ukrainian women fighting against an illegal Russian invasion – who, to quote the first woman President of the European Commission: ‘smashed a glass ceiling over the head of the Russian invaders.’

The Chibok Girls kidnapped nine years ago by Boko Haram in Nigeria, many of whom remain in captivity. They have not been forgotten and our commitment to bring back our girls remains as strong today. Afghan women who are silenced, repressed, mistreated, robbed of their education and who continue to suffer at the hands of the Taliban.

Iranian women who are standing up for life and liberty and paying the ultimate price.

(Applause)

Dr Shirin Ebadi is with us today – a Nobel Prize laureate and one of Iran’s first female judges. Dr Ebadi, we appreciate the immense effort you have made to be with us today. You embody the fight of Iranian women, the fight for what is fair, and for what is right. Your presence is a reminder that the fight will not cease and that freedom requires courage and sacrifice. It is also a warning to those who hope it might. Women will not go silently into the night, they will not give up. And The European Parliament will continue to stand with the women of Iran.

(Applause)

Dear colleagues, my hope is for International Women’s Day to be seen as an invitation for societies to do better. Even within our Union, gender equality will remain unfinished business for as long as we have not achieved equal pay for equal work. Today still, every second woman around us has experienced sexual harassment. The time is now for the European Union to lead by example – to set standards in criminalising violence against women, to improve access to justice, and to ratify the Istanbul Convention before the end of this term.

When women are free, when rights are respected, when education is recognised, when pay is equal, when women are protected, when opportunities are fair and where playing fields are level, when we realise that when we are all equal then we all benefit – that is when we can say we have achieved the milestones our generation has inherited. That is when we can say we have left this place, this Union better than we found it, and we will keep working every day to see that happen.

Ursula von der Leyen, *President of the Commission*. – Madam President, dear Roberta, Dr Ebadi, Captain Cristoforetti, honourable Members, what an honour to be here with you today among women who have blazed the trail for so many other women.

Dr Ebadi, for decades, you have fought for women’s rights in Iran. They tried to silence you. They put you in jail. They forced you into exile. But you kept fighting with bravery, day in, day out. You are amazing and we thank you for your leadership. It is outstanding what you have done.

Today, countless women have joined in your fight, and the whole world stands in awe of the women of Iran. More and more women are choosing to defy the prohibitions of a regime that does not see them as equal. They take off their headscarves, and for this they get beaten up, put in jail, even killed. They too are blazing a trail for their sisters, their mothers, their daughters. For all the people of Iran. They are claiming not only the freedom to show their hair or to cover it, but also the freedom from fear, from violence. Freedom to study, to work, to love without asking anybody’s permission. As it should be. It’s women, life, liberty. That’s what you stand for.

The fight and the courage of Iranian women move and inspire women all across the world. Because the challenges we face may be different, but the rights we strive for are the same. First and foremost, the most basic of all rights: the right to be free from violence. This is still a global curse, including here in Europe. And how can you be equal if you’re constantly under threat? There’s massive work to do to change everyone’s mindset to ensure that it’s never justified to beat a woman, that it’s never justified to mutilate a girl’s body, that no always means no. And this is why we’re pushing hard to ensure equal protection to all women in all European countries. And I know, honourable Members, you share my aspiration. So let us join forces. Let us bring to life the first-ever EU law on combating violence against women and domestic violence. It’s time to deliver.

Honourable members and distinguished guests, gender equality does not just happen, even in countries where there is no morality police. Progress is hard won, easily lost. It requires day-to-day attention and commitment to ensure that women and girls are free from violence; that women as well as men can have both a family and a career; that women earn the same as their male colleagues because they deserve it; that women do reach the very top levels because they are qualified. We have a duty to set an example to society and the economy of what a world of fair chances looks like. And this duty counts every day, not just on International Women's Day.

Beyond laws, women and girls also need role models. Women who blaze a trail for everyone else. And that's why I'm glad to meet you, Captain Cristoforetti. You once said, 'As a child, I didn't dream to be the first Italian woman astronaut. I just dreamt to be an astronaut.' You just wanted to follow your dreams. And, with passion and hard work, you made it. And now girls look up to you as a role model. Thanks to you, they know that they too can aim high. And, just like you, they can reach for the stars.

Captain Cristoforetti, Dr Ebadi, your examples inspire us. You strive for a world where young girls and boys can be whatever they want to be in life, where there are no jobs that are simply for men or simply for women, where not even the sky is the limit. This is our goal, and again, not because women are better, but because we are different. And also very simply because it is right. This is time for a world of equal rights and fair chances not just for women, but for all of us. Long live Europe.

Samantha Cristoforetti, *European Space Agency Astronaut and Commander of the International Space Station*. – Madam President, dear President Michel, President von der Leyen, dear Dr Ebadi, dear Members of the European Parliament, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, it is an immense honour for me to be here today.

I'm very grateful for the invitation to participate in the Parliament celebration of International Women's Day, and I am truly humbled by the opportunity of speaking here today at the centre of our European democracy and decision-making.

I am humbled by the opportunity of taking the floor just before Dr Ebadi, a woman who has been a true champion of women's rights in the face of brutal discrimination and who has suffered terrible personal consequences for her willingness to fight. For that, I thank you, Dr Ebadi.

As an astronaut of ESA, the European Space Agency, I would like to take this opportunity to talk to you about what I know best, which is the European space activities, the role of ESA and the synergies with the European Union.

Space is... out there, but it is also here among us every day. It is an essential element of everyday life. We take it for granted. Sometimes we even don't notice it. And yet, space is woven into the fabric of every modern society.

It is well known that we rely on space assets to provide important services like Earth observation, communication, navigation, services that we need, for example, for environmental monitoring to mitigate the consequences of climate change, for weather forecast, disaster response, internet access, TV broadcasting, even smart traffic. Space assets are even crucial for energy provision or financial transactions and many other vital economic functions.

ESA works constantly to ensure that these essential services are secured and that all relevant assets are managed efficiently and remain available to support the policies that you, the political decision-makers, set for us for the benefit of European citizens, be it about climate change, the green transition, the digital transformation, sustainable development or inclusiveness.

Let us not forget security. I think that the green political context that we are facing these days has highlighted the importance of security-related space activities. As you know, last Friday, the Commission and the High Representative presented for the first time a joint communication on a European strategy for security and defence, a European space strategy for security and defence. The European Parliament will play a crucial role and ESA will provide its contribution.

But space is also a powerful engine of prosperity and economic growth. Today, the global space market is already worth about USD 340 billion, and by the late 2030s, by some estimates, space could generate a revenue of USD 1 trillion. Such tremendous growth potential can be in part ascribed to a profound transformation of our industry, often referred to as the new space revolution.

New players are getting involved, often from outside of the traditional space sector. Old and new companies pursue profit and growth through novel business models, risk sharing with public institutions through public-private partnerships and early financing through venture capital. The reduction in the cost of access to space brought about, for example, by the reusability of launchers has made mega constellations a reality. The miniaturisation of electronics has made satellite platforms smaller and cheaper, and yet more capable and versatile.

Let me add, however, in all honesty, that many of these 'new space' developments are far more advanced in North America than they are here in Europe. Still, the opportunities are there for Europe to take, if we choose to be ambitious in our goals and pursuits.

ESA's Member States have already raised the level of ambition. Our ministerial meeting last November in Paris secured a record budget of EUR 16.9 billion for the coming three years. That is a 17% increase with respect to the preceding Ministerial Meeting back in 2019, a clear sign that our Member States understand space as a strategic component of our industrial and technological sovereignty.

ESA brings world-class expertise, unique knowhow in the area of space science, technology and applications, along with its rich experience in space project management. But an ambitious European approach needs partnerships with national institutions, academia, industry and with the European Union. ESA and the European Union each bring their specific mandates, competencies and strengths to the table.

ESA's Agenda 2025, which was published on the very first day in office of ESA's Director General Josef Aschbacher, lists a renewed and enforced partnership between ESA and the EU as a top priority.

ESA and the EU have embarked on major common success stories: Copernicus – the world's largest and most successful Earth observation program, providing decision-makers, researchers, entrepreneurs and the public with information on the state of our planet.

Galileo – Europe's own global navigation satellite system, providing a highly accurate, guaranteed global positioning service under civilian control, featuring the world's most accurate navigation system.

The new Secure Connectivity/IRIS2 programme – which will provide a new sovereign and secure, space-based communication infrastructure in Europe to improve strategic autonomy, digital resilience, security, technological non-dependence and commercial competitiveness.

Many in the European Parliament may not know, but ESA was at the origin of both flagship programs, Copernicus and Galileo. ESA is grateful that the EU and the European Parliament stepped up to the challenge and enable what have become two of the world's most successful space programmes. We can all be proud of these achievements and ESA is particularly grateful to implement these programmes together with the EU.

At ESA, we have a full agenda this year. Among other things, we are tackling the critical European launcher situation, with the top priority of restoring independent access to space for Europe. In Copernicus, we are preparing the next generation Sentinel satellites. And we do need to close a funding gap of EUR 721 million. The European Parliament's support will be crucial to achieve this. We will also launch two exciting new science missions: JUICE, to explore the icy moons of Jupiter, in April, and EUCLID, with which we will better understand dark matter and dark energy, in July.

Ladies and gentlemen, Europe has a rich history of space achievements, including what is possibly dearest to me, in human spaceflight. Through our partnership in the International Space Station, we have secured opportunities for Europeans to fly to space and for European scientists to do research in microgravity.

We are a strong partner in the NASA-led Artemis program of lunar exploration, providing the European Service Module for the Orion spacecraft and a significant portion of Gateway, a space station that will fly in lunar orbit. Together with NASA, we intend to retrieve and bring back to earth samples of Martian soil.

As a member of the European Astronaut Corps, I myself had twice the privilege of representing Europe in space. Madam President, when we spoke for the first time last September, I was serving as commander of the International Space Station, the first European woman to do so, but certainly not the last.

At ESA just last year, we selected a new class of career and reserve astronauts, and over half of them are women. Let me add that we selected these new colleagues of mine out of over 23 000 applicants throughout Europe. This, ladies and gentlemen, is the power of space to inspire, to spark passions in our youngsters around Europe.

As an astronaut, I have witnessed that many times, how space can spark passions and dreams, those passions and dreams that make our youngsters choose studies, education and careers in science and technology so that they acquire those competencies that are so strategically important for Europe, for our research, for our industrial competitiveness, for our entrepreneurship.

I have seen how the ability of sending humans into space acts as a confidence-builder in a society. It builds the confidence that a nation or a community of nations like ours can tackle the really difficult, ambitious challenges. If we can send humans into space, there's nothing we cannot do, right? Let us have that ambition in Europe.

I have flown to space twice, once on a Russian Soyuz and once on an American Dragon. Twice I have fulfilled my dream of flying to space. And if I can allow myself at this point in my life one more dream, that dream is that of seeing one day astronauts flying on a European vehicle.

Flying our astronauts to space on our own vehicle, welcoming astronauts from other parts of the world on our own European space vehicle – it will be a mighty political, strategic, cultural, psychological, even philosophical symbol. It will be an expression of Europe's ambition to gain a position in space that matches Europe's political and economic weight.

It will allow us to continue to cooperate in international partnerships, but do that on a more equal level. It will allow us to not miss out on the enormous strategic and economic opportunities that space offers. And it will allow us to develop and retain in Europe vital STEM talent and to develop the capabilities, but also the mindset that is needed to solve the many big challenges that we are facing, for the benefit of the citizens in Europe and all over the world.

Let me conclude by recognising the important role that the European Parliament, and the ITRE Committee in particular, has played and continues to play in its consistent support of space activities. You have been a competent and reliable partner for ESA in all of our discussions and negotiations, as well as in the preparation of the legislative basis for our common space projects Galileo, Copernicus and now Iris2.

It is therefore an incredible honour to be able to hand over today the European flag that flew with me on the International Space Station.

Shirin Ebadi, *Iranian activist and 2003 Nobel Peace Prize winner.* –

(The following is a transcription of the interpretation of the original speech from Farsi into English)

Your excellencies, honourable President of the European Parliament, honourable Members of the European Parliament and dear guests, ladies and gentlemen, it is an honour for me to be among you on such a day and once again addressing you, the Members of the European Parliament. I would like to thank you for having given me this opportunity. It's an honour for me. It is as a result of the fight and protests by my people in Iran – it was the Iranian women who started a revolution, as a result of which the voices of the Iranian people have been heard throughout the world, including yourselves. It has guided me to this chair today from where I'm speaking to you.

As you're all aware, the revolution in Iran was sparked by the killing of a young girl, who was arrested on the street by the morality police only because a part of her hair was visible from under her scarf and she was killed. The family of this girl filed a complaint, but to no avail. However, the lawyer who was representing the family of this young girl has been prosecuted and has currently been released on bail. Moreover, two young reporters – who had published a photograph of this young girl while she was lying on a hospital bed and had filed a report on the funeral of this young girl in the domestic media in Iran – were both arrested on the charge of espionage. To date, they are still in prison. I am talking about a country where its government kills with impunity, while the profession of journalism and the legal profession are deemed a crime.

Of course, I am sure you representatives of Europe are well aware of the conduct of the Islamic Republic, and you know how many of your nationals are currently being held hostage in our prisons. Unfortunately, so far, at least two of them have been sentenced to the death penalty. Why? Because the government in Iran, by taking you European nationals hostage, wants to achieve its political objectives.

In that country, what is not important is justice – because our courts are not independent, they follow the security forces in Iran, and they only implement the ambitious policies of the regime. Lack of independence, of course, is one of the most important issues in Iran. In my country, Iran, in the past 43 years, a large number of people have lost their lives for opposing such a government. Now, the regime never publishes any statistics, and we only find out after verification from the families of these victims and how many have been killed. In this revolution, which was sparked by this young girl called Mahsa, which started in September 2022, to date, over 550 individuals have been killed and at least 70 of them were juveniles under the age of 18. Moreover, at least 20 000 protesters have been arrested. Recently, in this very month, the Iranian Government, in a bid to deceive public opinion, announced that they have pardoned some of these prisoners. Of course, yes, some were pardoned and released, however, what is so tragic is that the same number of people that they released, they went on and arrested exactly the same number again. And even more importantly, the protesters who were very influential in these recent protests remain behind bars.

Freedom of expression in Iran is so restricted that since September 2022 alone, 18 lawyers have been arrested merely for defending these protesters. They're being prosecuted at the moment. Some of them remain in prison. And I would like to name one of them, who has been a colleague of mine, and at the moment, he is on hunger strike. His name is Mohammad Najafi. The rest have been freed on bail. This stems from the lack of independence of the judiciary in Iran. In this very week, they announced that 35 artists, filmmakers, actors and actresses – simply because they had supported the people and supported the protests – have had their assets confiscated and their bank accounts frozen. Dozens of journalists, bloggers, vloggers – writers – are currently in prison. Why? Because freedom of expression in Iran is extremely limited. The people's efforts in the past years to change and reform the status quo have been in vain.

At the moment, the people continue to stage the protest which started in September 2022. And the people's demand is that the regime be changed – because they know that, unfortunately, this regime cannot be reformed. The constitution of our country has to change. With this current constitution, no reform is possible. For this very reason, the Iranian people want regime change.

Their slogan is 'Woman, life, Freedom'. You can look at this slogan from two perspectives. The first is that it rejects despotic theocracy in Iran. We do not want a theocracy in Iran. Because such a government does not bring the people welfare or freedom. They have even invaded the privacy of people in their own homes. And the positive aspect of this slogan is that we want a democratic government in which religion is separate from state – because, after 43 years of experience, the Islamic Republic has shown us and the Muslims in the region that if a government is mixed with ideology or religion how dangerous it will become. This is an experience and I hope that the other Islamic countries in the region will learn from us.

Now, you European states can rest assured that if Democracy is established in Iran, there will be fewer refugees entering your countries. Currently, one of the main problems of the Iranian people is emigration. We are suffering from brain drain. There is no employment in Iran. Even those who manage to find jobs, their earnings are so low that they cannot eke out a living. Only yesterday, the chancellor of one of the most important universities in Iran announced that only in one year, 70 professors have fled the country and emigrated.

Now, if we have democracy in Iran, the people will no longer need to emigrate or seek asylum elsewhere. Therefore, please support the establishment of democracy in Iran. Not only would that reduce the number of refugees in Europe, but we will also be able to build our country. Democracy in Iran will not only be to our benefit, but will also bring about peace and calm in the region. Because we, the Iranian people, oppose the regime's intervention in other countries. We are against the ambitious policies of the Iranian regime. We oppose Iran's nuclear programme. They have spent so much money on this and to no avail. Nuclear bombs will not solve Iran's problem. Our problem will only be solved through democracy. Democracy, I repeat, is not only good for us, but it will also be good for Europe.

What I have said is just a small fraction of the problems faced by the Iranian people. I now use this occasion to call on the democratic states throughout the world: please do not remain indifferent to the violation of human rights in Iran, please do not ignore what the Iranian people are saying, please do not sign any commercial and trade contracts with the Iranian Government until the human rights situation in that country improves.

A few years ago, in Iran, they signed the JCPOA nuclear accord. As a result, a great deal of money was sent to Iran and for three years, sanctions were lifted against Iran. However, in those three years, the situation of the Iranian people did not improve. Why? Because any money received by the Iranian Government is either spent on major embezzlement by the Iranian regime or it will be used in order to assist Lebanon's Hezbollah and paramilitary groups in the region, which has disrupted peace in other countries.

You, honourable MEPs, have you asked yourself why the Iranian government has not joined FATF? Have you asked yourself why we have not joined the Palermo Convention? The answer to this question is very simple: if the Iranian Government joins the FATF, it will not be able to continue with its embezzlement. Money laundering will end in Iran. Therefore, until we join these conventions, please, I urge you, do not forge any contracts with Iran. Because be sure: the money will not be spent on the welfare of the people. There is extreme poverty in Iran. However, the Iranian Government wants to ascribe all these problems to the sanctions. That is not right. The people's poverty stems from the major embezzlement, corruptions and the wrong policies of the government. Sanctions are effective.

In conclusion, in the recent protests, for the first time, we saw high school children taking to the streets to join the ranks of protesters. Why? Because they know that they have no future. Now, to create fear and intimidate those children and their families, they have been using chemical gases to poison young girls at their schools. Please write in your history books what this regime did to teenage girls. They're using chemical poisonous gases against women. Initially, the Iranian Government denied these reports. They said, 'No, they're fake. That's not happening.' However, when the number of these girls who were poisoned grew and the families and the teachers protested, they said, 'What is going on?' Then they had to accept that this had happened. But as usual, they gave the usual rhetoric: that this is the work of our enemies inside and outside the country and they arrested a few people. But everyone knows who the real culprits are. They're not the ones that the government has arrested, pretending they were responsible. But knowing that these poisoning of the girls is continuing, it shows that those arrested were not the real culprits.

I hope that my remarks have helped in a way to convince you honourable MEPs to stand on the right side of history. Please make sure that the IRGC, the Revolutionary Guards, are named as a terrorist group. The IRGC, based on the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran – I repeat, the IRGC, based on the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran – are tasked with protecting the regime. They're separate from the military and the army, which is to protect Iran and the people of Iran. These violent acts are being committed by the IRGC.

Once again, I urge you: do not ignore the widespread violation of human rights in Iran. Democracy in Iran, once established, will not only bring calm to Iran, but bring peace and calm to the whole region. And without any doubt, the situation with the current government in Iran is not any help for the situation in Ukraine either. Thank you very much for having listened to me.

(The Members gave the speaker a standing ovation)

VORSITZ: OTHMAR KARAS

Vizepräsident

6. Reanudación de la sesión*(Die Sitzung wird um 12.36 Uhr wieder aufgenommen.)***7. Turno de votaciones****Der Präsident.** – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Abstimmung.*(Abstimmungsergebnisse und sonstige Einzelheiten der Abstimmung: siehe Protokoll.)***7.1. Acuerdo UE-Estados Unidos: modificación de las concesiones en todos los contingentes arancelarios de la lista CLXXV de la UE (A9-0042/2023 - Bernd Lange) (votación)****7.2. Intercambio de información entre las autoridades policiales (A9-0247/2022 - Lena Düpont) (votación)****7.3. Nuevos actos de represión contra la población de Bielorrusia, en particular los casos de Andrzej Poczobut y Ales Bialiatski (B9-0163/2023, RC-B9-0164/2023, B9-0164/2023, B9-0165/2023, B9-0166/2023, B9-0167/2023, B9-0168/2023) (votación)***— Vor der Abstimmung:***Marcel Kolaja (Verts/ALE).** – Mr President, I apologise, but we have not seen the result of the previous vote. If you could please say what the result was.**Der Präsident.** – Das Ergebnis war sehr klar, und der Bericht wurde angenommen. Daher habe ich darauf hingewiesen, dass die erste Lesung des Parlaments abgeschlossen ist. Ich höre gerade, dass es nicht am Display war, und wir sind gerade dabei, diesen Fehler gutzumachen.**7.4. Una renta mínima adecuada que garantice una inclusión activa (B9-0099/2023, B9-0116/2023) (votación)***— Nach der Abstimmung:***Der Präsident.** – Ich darf eine Anmerkung zur Wortmeldung von Herrn Kolaja der Ordnung halber nachtragen. Bei dem Bericht von Frau Düpont waren 507 dafür, 99 dagegen bei 10 Enthaltungen. Daher habe ich gesagt: angenommen.**7.5. El funcionamiento del SEAE y una Unión Europea más fuerte en el mundo (A9-0045/2023 - Urmaz Paet) (votación)**

7.6. Semestre Europeo para la coordinación de las políticas económicas 2023 (A9-0044/2023 - Irene Tinagli) (votación)

7.7. Semestre Europeo para la coordinación de las políticas económicas: prioridades sociales y en materia de empleo para 2023 (A9-0051/2023 - Estrella Durá Ferrandis) (votación)

— Nach der Abstimmung über den 3. Teil von Ziffer 23:

Stéphane Séjourné (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, il y a à peu près la même majorité. Il faut que nos collègues du PPE comprennent qu'il n'y a pas de majorité quand Renew vote de l'autre côté. Donc il faut arrêter de dire «check» systématiquement. J'appelle juste à entendre qu'il y a a priori la même majorité sur les votes et on ne va pas faire des vérifications sur l'ensemble des votes.

Der Präsident. – Ich kann Ihnen nur sagen, Herr Kollege: Als Vorsitzender sehe ich genau, wer abstimmt. Ich kann Ihnen sagen, dass Ihre Abstimmungsanzeigen in einem hohen Ausmaß nicht mit dem Ergebnis im Mittelteil übereinstimmen. Das ist mein Problem, das ist nicht ein Problem einer einzelnen Fraktion.

Manfred Weber (PPE). – Herr Präsident! Ich wollte, lieber Stéphane, die Abstimmung, die wir jetzt haben, nicht politisieren. Ich möchte nur klarstellen: Die EVP wird jedes Ergebnis hier in diesem Raum akzeptieren. Das Problem ist aber, dass Deine Fraktion offensichtlich keine gemeinsame Position vertritt. Das ist das Problem.

Der Präsident. – Darf ich jetzt diese Scharmützel beenden? Jeder hat sein freies Mandat, und daher habe ich diese unterschiedlichen Zeichen, womit ich ein Problem habe gegenüber den Herrschaften, die in der ersten Reihe sitzen.

7.8. Informe de ejecución sobre el Acuerdo sobre la retirada del Reino Unido de la Unión (A9-0052/2023 - Pedro Silva Pereira) (votación)

7.9. Relaciones UE-Armenia (A9-0036/2023 - Andrey Kovatchev) (votación)

— Vor der Abstimmung über Änderungsantrag 5:

Andrey Kovatchev, rapporteur. – Mr President, I would like to move the following oral amendment to Amendment 5 on paragraph 4: 'Condemns the ongoing blockade of the Lachin corridor, which is worsening the humanitarian crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh; condemns the deadly incident between Azerbaijan and the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh on 5 March 2023, which resulted in multiple deaths and once again jeopardised the process towards establishing peace between the two countries.'

(Das Parlament akzeptiert, den mündlichen Änderungsantrag zur Abstimmung zu stellen.)

7.10. Relaciones UE-Azerbaiján (A9-0037/2023 - Željana Zovko) (votación)

Der Präsident. – Damit ist die Abstimmungsstunde geschlossen.

(Die Sitzung wird für kurze Zeit unterbrochen.)

IN THE CHAIR: MARC ANGEL*Vice-President***8. Reanudación de la sesión***(The sitting resumed at 13.16)***9. Composición de las comisiones y delegaciones**

President. – The S&D Group has notified the President of a decision relating to changes to appointments within a committee. This decision will be set out in the Minutes of today's sitting and takes effect on the date of this announcement.

10. Aprobación del Acta de la sesión anterior

President. – The minutes of yesterday's sitting and the Texts adopted are available.

Are there any comments on the Minutes of yesterday's sitting? I don't see any.

The minutes are approved.

11. Más Europa, más empleos: construimos la economía competitiva del mañana en beneficio de todos (debate de actualidad)

President. – The next item on the agenda is the topical debate (Rule 162): 'More Europe, more jobs: we are building the competitive economy of tomorrow for the benefit of all' (2023/2601(RSP)).

I should like to inform Members that for this debate there is no catch-the-eye procedure and that no blue cards will be accepted. I would also like to invite the speakers to keep the time as we are running a bit late, so I want you to respect the times.

Stéphane Séjourné, auteur. – Monsieur le président, Madame la Commissaire, chers collègues, Renew a la conviction que l'action européenne est essentielle pour créer les emplois d'aujourd'hui et de demain. Plus d'Europe, c'est plus d'emplois, plus de prospérité, plus de chances pour l'individu.

Nous croyons que c'est le travail et l'innovation qui assurent le développement de nos sociétés, pas la décroissance. Nous croyons que la production et les valeurs et la valeur ajoutée seront les conditions de la richesse de notre continent pour demain. Qu'il n'y a pas d'argent magique pour financer nos services sociaux, nos projets collectifs et la préservation de nos biens communs, dont l'environnement. Nous croyons que notre continent doit créer les ruptures technologiques et non les subir. Nous croyons que la transition écologique sera la réussite et la réussite acceptée uniquement si c'est une chance économique et pas seulement un impératif moral pour nos futures générations. Nous croyons que la compétitivité de notre économie est essentielle pour créer notre qualité de vie et la garder sur notre territoire européen.

C'est avec cette conviction que Renew pousse pour que l'Europe et ses institutions soient le moteur de l'économie de demain. Le marché unique a déjà assuré la prospérité de notre continent, mais aujourd'hui, ses fondements sont menacés. L'énergie fossile bon marché n'est plus. Nos compétiteurs nous mènent une guerre commerciale, technologique. Les conflits géopolitiques accentuent le risque de déclassement des économies européennes. Mais l'Europe reste la solution. Si on prend l'un des chantiers nécessaires qui est le chantier de l'économie de demain, il n'y a aucune possibilité, à l'échelon national de créer aujourd'hui des géants du numérique et des géants de la transition énergétique.

Le premier fondement, c'est la compétitivité, j'en parlais en introduction. Notre compétitivité industrielle a diminué à cause des coûts de l'énergie. C'est au niveau européen que nous devons investir massivement dans le renouvelable ou l'isolation des bâtiments. C'est en réformant notre marché de l'électricité que nous permettrons aussi la solidarité entre les États et une baisse des prix qui nous permettra la compétitivité de nos entreprises. Seuls nous pesons peu face à la Chine et les États-Unis. Il n'y a pas de réciprocité quand il n'y a pas d'égalité. C'est l'Europe qui assure aux Européens de parler d'égal à égal avec les autres puissances. Et, oui, plus d'Europe, c'est plus de compétitivité et plus d'emplois.

Le deuxième fondement, c'est l'autonomie et l'autonomie stratégique ouverte telle qu'on l'appelle dans notre groupe. La Covid puis la crise actuelle ont mis au grand jour notre dépendance aux chaînes d'approvisionnement mondiales, et nous en avons le souvenir avec nos crises successives. Nous devons être souverains sur notre alimentation, sur nos produits de santé, sur nos matières premières. C'est pour cela que mon groupe défendra et défendra toujours la PAC, la production de matières premières et des besoins essentiels de notre sol. Oui, l'Europe, c'est moins de dépendance, plus de souveraineté, plus de sécurité économique, alimentaire et sanitaire et donc plus d'emplois également sur le volet indépendance et autonomie.

Le troisième fondement, c'est la transition écologique. La transition demande une planification des investissements massifs et surtout d'être les premiers dans l'innovation. Ceux qui inventeront le modèle économique durable et décarboné auront pour clients le reste du monde. Et ce sont des objectifs politiques que nous devons nous fixer collectivement en Européens.

Le quatrième fondement, et j'en finis là, monsieur le Président, c'est l'innovation. L'Europe peut être l'usine du monde de demain, si elle est le laboratoire d'aujourd'hui. Nous devons encourager massivement nos enfants, nos jeunes, à embrasser les carrières de scientifiques, d'ingénieurs, de technologies d'IA en investissant dans les nouvelles technologies et la recherche pour nos entreprises, nos centres universitaires de recherche, pour la protection de notre propriété intellectuelle. C'est l'échelon européen qui est le plus pertinent.

Aucun de ces chantiers ne se fait seul. C'est l'Europe qui unit et fait notre force dans l'investissement sur ces fondamentaux-là. C'est l'Europe qui préservera notre pouvoir d'achat, nos emplois de demain, notre prospérité. C'est pour ça que le groupe Renew vous propose ce débat avec ces fondamentaux à débattre.

Le Président. – Merci Monsieur Séjourné, et j'ai oublié de préciser que c'est vous l'auteur de ce débat d'actualité.

Jessika Roswall, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, Honourable Members, Commissioner, as you know, long-term competitiveness is one of the Swedish presidency's priorities and I'm therefore very glad about the convening of this debate today. When the leaders meet next week for the European Council, they will address Europe's long-term competitiveness. And the message from this Parliament today in the morning was very clear: Europe needs to once again focus on its competitiveness. This is this is an issue that is at the heart of the Swedish Presidency. Investing in Europe's long-term competitiveness is how we create more jobs and build a stronger economy for all. The key to do this is, is to focus on our on our biggest and strongest assets, namely the Single Market and sustainable trade.

Like the European Parliament, the Council is also concerned with the multiple crises that are seriously affecting the economic situation in our continent. Part of the response to this is the Green Deal industrial plan that addresses some of the immediate competitive challenges that our businesses are facing. Together with the soon to be finalised Fit for 55 package, it sends a signal to investors and businesses that the European Union is stepping up to seize the net-zero opportunity. But when designing a policy response to the multiple crisis situation that we are in, we must also consider the view that Europe has been lagging behind its main competitors for quite some time now. In fact, long before COVID, the energy crisis and the war in Ukraine, over the last four decades, our growth rates have been sluggish compared to the United States and many OECD countries. Our productivity is lower than that of the United States and the G7. Europe spends far less than our competitors on R&D, and it makes our economies less competitive. That will be a key issue going forward.

Reskilling and upskilling is of great importance. It is a major driver in particular for SMEs and their competitiveness and access to qualified labour. This needs to be addressed and that is what the Swedish Presidency's priorities on competitiveness are about. It is therefore welcome that the Commission will present a strong strategy on long-term competitiveness later this week – tomorrow.

Clearly, the natural starting point for a comprehensive European approach to competitiveness is the Single Market. For the past three decades, the Single Market has offered Europe's businesses a large-scale home market to grow and compete globally. It has withstood the test of time and we need the Single Market to continue to deliver over the next 30 years. For this to happen, the Single Market cannot be taken for granted. The anticipated Commission communication on the Single Market at 30 will be important. The ideas put forward in that together with the forthcoming strategy to boost growth and productivity will provide us with a solid basis for how to strengthen our competitiveness in the coming decades. These initiatives will guide leaders' discussions at the March European Council, where the intention is that a long-term approach to European competitiveness will be anchored.

I have outlined here some fundamental milestones for building the competitive economy of tomorrow to the benefit of all. So let me stress the firm commitment of the Swedish Presidency to move this work forward and we count on support from the European Parliament to help us in this endeavour. Thank you very much for your attention. I am looking forward to the debate.

Nicolas Schmit, *membre de la Commission*. – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Représentante de la présidence, honorables membres,

Thank you first for setting this very topical debate, which perfectly follows up on the discussion which took place this morning on the preparation of the European Council.

Europe has faced multiple crises in the last few years, which forced us to react quickly and address the immediate challenges. The EU response to the pandemic, with NextGenerationEU as well as the SURE instrument, has mitigated the socioeconomic consequences of the crisis, facilitated a rapid recovery and set the conditions to boost the reforms and investments needed for the green and digital transitions.

NextGenerationEU remains a valid response to today's challenges, linked to the EU's energy security, sustainable industrial competitiveness and the industrial transition to a net-zero economy while contributing to upward social and economic convergence. This is true thanks to the unique design and the foresight in the priorities of the recovery and resilience facility, where additional funding of up to 268 billion remains available.

Obviously, as asked for in your resolution 16 February, we have to work on new own resources, including a financial transaction tax to ensure sustainable financing on a long-term basis.

Implementing the strategic reforms and investments foreseen under Member States' recovery and resilience plans timely and fully by 2026 will be essential to improve the resilience and competitive position of the European economy. They reply to country-specific recommendations with a focus on improving green and digital infrastructures and the regulatory and business environment.

Member States will soon be revising their recovery and resilience plans in a longer-term perspective and with focus on Europe's competitive future in an increasingly fraught global economic and geopolitical landscape.

We want Europe to lead the clean-tech industrial revolution, competing with other industrial nations, such as the US and China, having similar ambitions while relaunching its unique socioeconomic model.

A strong manufacturing base in Europe along the clean technology value chain ensures that the European Green Deal remains our growth strategy and a source of quality jobs. Climate neutrality and digital excellence are at the core of the Union's industrial strategy as it has been updated. A strong and innovative industry is essential for Europe's prosperity, but also security in the new geopolitical environment.

As President von der Leyen said this morning, we learnt the lesson about dependencies. The goal set with the Green Deal industrial plan is to enhance the competitiveness of Europe's net-zero industry and accelerate the transition to climate neutrality, providing a more supportive environment for scaling up the EU's manufacturing capacity for the net-zero technologies.

Europe's competitiveness is not an aim in itself. First, it brings together many factors: economic, social and environmental ones. It builds on resilient and cohesive societies. It is driven by innovation and productivity growth. Finally, its objective is to create quality jobs, good working conditions, territorial cohesion in the Union and the strong position of the EU in the changing global economy.

As President von der Leyen stated, we have once in a generation the opportunity to secure the EU's industrial lead for our companies and people. It means turning skills into quality jobs and innovation into mass production.

In this effort, the contribution and participation of our SMEs is crucial for preserving and relaunching our economic and productive landscape. A true European competitive shift cannot be successful without investing in key enabling factors such as technologies and human capital.

The Green Deal industrial plan focuses on four key pillars that will be the key to achieve this predictable and simplified regulatory environment, faster access to funding, open trade for resilient supply chains, as well as skills for quality jobs.

Social dialogue and good industrial relations are also key for the success of this major industrial transformation. At the European Council meeting of 9 February, the EU leaders called for bolder and more ambitious action to boost competitiveness simply and speed up state aid procedures while maintaining the level playing field in the single market and increase the flexibility of EU funds.

In your important resolution on an EU strategy to boost industrial competitiveness, trade and quality jobs, Parliament has stressed that the European industrial strategy should be designed both for securing European leadership in clean energy technologies and for improving the existing industrial base and supporting its transformation to provide high quality jobs and economic growth for all Europeans. Against this background, we will put forward a net-zero industry act and the critical raw materials act. This is scheduled for tomorrow.

We remain committed to proposing a European sovereignty fund before summer 23. Together with the competitiveness, communication and single market at 30, they are our response to rising challenges at global level.

This brings me finally to the importance of jobs, as recalled the title of this debate. We want more Europe and more jobs. A key aspect of these important initiatives, which will be boost our single market, is their job creation potential. These new green-tech jobs, which require skilling upskilling and reskilling of the workforce, need to be quality jobs based on adequate working conditions.

You are right, to face the international competition at the level of investments, we need more Europe, a better functioning internal market, strong European strategic supply chains, more and better coordinated R&D, as the President stressed this morning.

We have to support more important projects of common European interest. This is an indispensable tool to build a stronger European economy: not 27 European economies, one strong European economy.

Our answer to the labour and skill shortages and mismatches must lead to full employment and an inclusive labour market reaching out especially to women and young people and especially needs. They are over 8 million the EU and our education system have therefore to guarantee equal opportunities, and vocational training has to be better valued and extended.

The EU competitive shift will only be successful if its technological, industrial, economic, labour and social components will be mutually reinforcing. The European pillar of social rights plan and its EU 2030 headline targets on employment and skills are very much in line with these efforts. Skills leading to quality jobs are fundamental pillar of our Green Deal industrial plan. We are following through on our announcements to step up actions in the European Year of Skills.

And this brings me to my last point. We have the highest social and labour standards in the world, and this is part of our competitive advantage. We must protect this by ensuring a strong industrial base for the future. That's what we owe future generations.

Lídia Pereira, em nome do Grupo PPE. – Senhor Presidente, a criação de emprego é uma prioridade que nos deve unir a todos. Onde divergimos é, porventura, na estratégia para a alcançar. E não divergimos apenas entre partidos políticos, divergimos também entre Estados-Membros.

Todos dizem querer criar mais empregos e trabalho digno, mas ainda temos economias na União Europeia baseadas em salários baixos e impostos altos. Eu partilho do entusiasmo do Senhor Comissário em querer trabalhar para uma economia europeia forte, mas isso não se compadece com situações como o caso de Portugal – uma economia frágil, estagnada no crescimento e sequestrada por uma dívida pública gigantesca, que tem como resultado a emigração e a pobreza.

O desemprego jovem atinge, em Portugal, já um em cada cinco jovens e temos que encontrar soluções para não hipotecarmos o nosso futuro. Mas há governos nacionais, como é o caso do governo português, que estão mais empenhados em passar as culpas para a Europa do que em fazer o que devem fazer – pôr o país a crescer e contribuir para uma economia europeia forte.

O salário mínimo português é ridiculamente baixo e o salário médio é pouco diferente. Os impostos são extraordinariamente altos e impedem qualquer poupança das famílias ou investimento das empresas. A dívida pública é ingerível e já estamos a pagar juros que, a prazo, são insustentáveis.

Portanto, a pergunta é a seguinte: quem é o responsável pelo estado a que isto chegou? Será a União Europeia, que, ainda assim, é a principal financiadora do investimento público? Ou será o governo socialista em Portugal, que não consegue pôr o país a crescer, apesar de ter governado 14 dos últimos 18 anos?

Mas, o tempo das desculpas de mau pagador acabou. Este é o tempo de pedir competência aos governos. Recordo que uma competitividade de longo prazo é a mensagem da Presidência sueca. Portanto, este é um apelo que vem da Europa, mas é sobretudo uma exigência dos portugueses.

Gabriele Bischoff, im Namen der S&D-Fraktion. – Herr Präsident, Frau Ministerin, Herr Kommissar! Ich war letzte Woche in Athen, und deshalb würde ich gerne mit einem Zitat von Perikles anfangen, der nämlich gesagt hat: „Es kommt nicht darauf an, die Zukunft vorherzusagen, sondern darauf, auf die Zukunft vorbereitet zu sein.“ Die Frage ist deshalb: Sind wir darauf vorbereitet?

Ich glaube, auf der einen Seite kann man sagen, Kommissar Schmit hat es dargestellt: Wir haben in der letzten Zeit viele gute Schritte unternommen: NextGenerationEU, Fit für 55 – vieles ist hier genannt worden. Aber trotzdem schleicht sich hier der Eindruck ein – und das haben auch die Debatten heute Morgen gezeigt –, dass der Weckruf aus den USA, was wir mit dem *Inflation Reduction Act* vor uns haben, hier in Europa noch nicht wirklich zu 100 % verstanden worden ist. Deshalb gebe ich vielen recht, die sagen: „In der Tat, was Europa jetzt machen muss, ist investieren, investieren, investieren!“

Aber nicht nur in grüne Technologien, sondern auch in Menschen. Der Kommissar hat es gesagt: *skills*. Es gibt eine Gruppe, in die, wie ich finde, auf einem Arbeitsmarkt, wo wir händeringend nach Kräften suchen, viel mehr investiert werden sollte, und das sind z. B. Frauen. Da haben wir großen Nachholbedarf, das sollten wir tun!

Für diesen großen Umbau, den wir hier vor uns haben, müssen wir die Menschen mitnehmen. Damit das gelingt, gilt es, wirklich auch die Demokratie am Arbeitsplatz zu stärken und das Vertrauen in diesen Wandel zu schaffen.

Ich finde, Kolleginnen und Kollegen, es ist Zeit, dass wir endlich mal einen anderen, nachhaltigen Begriff von europäischer Wettbewerbsfähigkeit entwickeln, die eben nicht nur Bürokratieabbau ist, sondern auch schaut, dass es gute Arbeitsplätze sind – das machen die USA nämlich gerade –, und dass wir die ökologische und soziale Seite miteinander verbinden.

Ich stimme Herrn Séjourné und Renew zu, die sagen: Zukunftschancen zu verbessern, heißt wirklich auch, mehr Europa zu wagen – aber in dem Sinne, dass wir tatsächlich auch alle mitnehmen und nicht nur die Eliten dann davon profitieren. Dann wird es auch gelingen.

Dragoş Pîslaru, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, dear Commissioner, dear Minister, dear colleagues, how can we achieve more Europe, more jobs and a more competitive economy for all? The answer is by investing in our citizens. Investing in skills. Investing in our human capital. We need better and more adapted programmes for skilling, upskilling and reskilling to integrate more people in the labour market and decrease the unemployment rate. And this income will contribute directly to the economy and to the European industry.

The investment in skills needs to go hand in hand with a social investment in people. We need to give more room to private investment and, in particular, to social impact investment. What future can we have for our industry if we do not look at the young people? The strategic investment in children, in youth, should become the new norm with equal importance as bricks and mortar investments. Investment in next generation policies is essential to ensure that children and young people are indeed equipped for the future. The European Year of Skills is the momentum to become more ambitious in our action. Our economy cannot be more competitive without a strong human capital and without active young people.

Sara Matthieu, *namens de Verts/ALE-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, collega's, commissaris, minister, de Green Deal biedt een gigantisch jobpotentieel. Denk maar aan de vele banen in de bouwsector dankzij de net gestemde renovatiegolf voor gebouwen of de enorme kansen die liggen in de circulaire economie voor herstel, voor recyclage, die echt kansen biedt voor zowel laag- als hooggeschoolde arbeid. Dat gaat echt om duizenden jobs die niet zomaar naar het buitenland te verplaatsen zijn.

En ook die nieuwe industriële strategie biedt heel veel kansen. Maar daar, collega's, wringt toch het schoentje. Want uiteraard is het een heel goede zaak dat we massaal gaan investeren in de vergroening van onze industrie. Alleen blijft de Commissie toch eerder vaag als het gaat over de kwaliteit van die nieuwe jobs of het betrekken van de werknemers in de transitie. En dat staat in schril contrast met wat ze in de Verenigde Staten aan het doen zijn, bijvoorbeeld met concrete voorwaarden over collectieve loononderhandelingen, over kansen voor jongeren, zelfs over het voorzien van kinderopvang. Een job hebben garandeert niet altijd een kwaliteitsvol leven, want er zijn vele Europeanen die in armoede leven, ondanks het feit dat ze een job hebben.

Commissaris, enkel inzetten op vaardigheden is onvoldoende. Waar blijft de strategie van de Commissie om een eerlijke transitie te realiseren, met de bedrijven, met de vakbonden, met de werknemers? Vandaag zien we in veel bedrijven vooral een doorgedreven flexibilisering: nog harder werken, nog langer werken. Gebruik die transitie als een hefboom om de werknemers écht te betrekken bij de transitie en om kwaliteitsvolle jobs te creëren. Commissaris Schmit, ik reken op u om dat te realiseren.

Jorge Buxadé Villalba, *en nombre del Grupo ECR*. – Señor presidente, señor comisario, las clases medias y populares de Europa se encuentran al borde del colapso y tenemos un debate titulado «Más Europa, más empleos: construimos la economía competitiva del mañana en beneficio de todos». No hace ni puñetera gracia.

En el último Pleno este Parlamento aprobó prohibir los vehículos de combustión en 2035. Una semana más tarde Ford anuncia el despido de más de mil trabajadores en España. Más fanatismo, menos empleos.

Según Eurostat, sus políticas sociales ponen al 22 % de los europeos en riesgo de pobreza. Más fanatismo, menos empleos.

Dice la Comisión que la recuperación del empleo en España va bien. Debe de ser una broma. Es el país con más paro por primera vez en la historia; un 30 % de paro juvenil; y un fraude contable masivo que convierte en «trabajadores fijos» a quienes en realidad no están trabajando.

Mientras Sánchez les ría sus gracias le dorarán la píldora, pero sepan que, cuando Sánchez ríe, los españoles lloran. ¡Cómo van a construir la economía de mañana!

La Comunidad Europea se fundó sobre el carbón, el acero, la energía atómica, la producción agrícola común, la libre circulación y el orden social cristiano. Y ustedes se lo van a cargar todo. El fanatismo de unos pocos es la angustia de muchos. Pero no se apuren, que su tiempo está terminando.

Paolo Borchia, *a nome del gruppo ID*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, io ho chiesto di intervenire su questo punto in quanto molto incuriosito dal titolo: «Più Europa, più lavoro: costruiamo l'economia competitiva di domani». Titolo accattivante, poi uno torna in commissione, comincia a lavorare sui *dossier* e iniziano i problemi legati alla competitività.

È dall'inizio della legislatura che ci sentiamo dire che il *Green Deal* non avrebbe lasciato indietro nessuno. Però i numeri ci dicono il contrario: solo poche settimane fa, Ford ha annunciato il taglio di 3 800 posti di lavoro in nome della transizione all'elettrico. Così non va bene. Si continua ad insistere con un ecologismo militante che mette l'essere umano in secondo piano e non tiene conto che l'Europa va in una direzione e il resto del pianeta invece va in un'altra.

È difficile, colleghi, essere competitivi quando le politiche dell'Unione sono così zelanti, pensiamo ad esempio al clima, all'energia. Facciamo una riflessione, ad esempio, sul tema del regolamento imballaggi, che segue sempre lo stesso metodo: proposte fatte senza valutazione di impatto, senza ascoltare le imprese – imprese che definiscono queste proposte sbagliate e pericolose. Per cui, colleghi, il concetto di competitività piace a tutti ma i nostri imprenditori ci chiedono di concretizzarlo e non di parlarne basta.

Leila Chaïbi, *au nom du groupe The Left*. – Monsieur le Président, hier, entre deux réunions, je me suis rendue au magasin Castorama de Lampertheim, à dix kilomètres d'ici. Ce n'était pas pour refaire la cloison de mon bureau, mais c'était pour apporter mon soutien à Xavier, qui est salarié au rayon peinture et qui est en grève de la faim dans sa voiture, devant le magasin. Xavier y gagne 1 400 euros par mois alors qu'il a treize ans d'ancienneté. Avec les prix qui explosent, lui et ses collègues n'arrivent plus à boucler leurs fins de mois. Certains dorment même dans leur voiture toute l'année.

Pendant ce temps, Castorama se gave: près de 3 milliards d'euros de chiffre d'affaires en 2022; pour les actionnaires, plus de 540 millions d'euros distribués. Les profits n'ont jamais été aussi élevés. Et la prospérité dont vous parlez, les salariés n'en voient jamais la couleur.

Après la crise sanitaire, après la guerre, après l'inflation, il faut arrêter de ressasser encore et toujours les mêmes dogmes – le marché unique comme solution magique, la sacro-sainte concurrence, les restrictions des aides d'État... Un élément doit être désormais au cœur de notre stratégie économique européenne: partager. Partager la richesse produite avec celles et ceux qui la créent, cette richesse: les travailleurs.

Enikő Győri (NI). – Tisztelt Elnök Úr! Az európai gazdaságot egyszerre tartja súlyos nyomás alatt a háború, a szankciók, az energiaválság, a zöld és digitális átállás terhe, a bürokrácia és protekcionista iparpolitikája révén immár az USA is. Gazdasági és kereskedelmpolitikánkat áthatja az ideológia. Naponta gyártunk új szabályokat anélkül, hogy azok hatását előre felmérnénk. Márpedig ábrándokkal és gender-ötletekkel sem fűteni, sem munkahelyet teremteni nem lehet. A Bizottságnak tehát sürgősen irányt kellene váltania. Túlszabályozás helyett vállalkozásbarát befektetési és működési környezetre, az energiaárak tartós mérséklésére van szükség. A kereskedelmi partnereinket kölcsönös üzleti haszon reményében kell megválogatni. Álljunk több lábón, így csökkentjük a külső szereplőknek való kitettségünket és biztosítjuk az ipar stabil nyersanyagellátását.

Képviselőtársaim! A helyreállítási pénzek odaítélésére rendelkezésre álló idő egyharmada elmúlt, és a forrásoknak csupán az ötödét osztották ki. Öt tagország, köztük Magyarország, eddig egyáltalán nem jutott pénzhez. A források mondvacsinált visszatartásával a Bizottság rontja a magyar versenyképességet, és beleszól a tagállamok közötti versenybe. Ezt sürgősen abba kell hagyni. Kérem, hogy a Bizottság ne tartsa vissza politikai játszmákkal a pénzeket! Végezetül, csak a bürokrácia csökkentésével fogunk tudni – és nem eladósodás árán – új munkahelyeket teremteni.

Dennis Radtke (PPE). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Mehr Europa, mehr Jobs. Das ist eine Überschrift, die ich durchaus ansprechend finde. Aber offen gestanden finde ich es noch ansprechender, wenn wir die Politik, die wir auch hier in diesem Hause machen, viel, viel stärker auch an dieser Zielsetzung orientieren würden.

Gerade mit Blick auf die industrielle Wertschöpfung muss man leider feststellen: Wir fallen mehr und mehr zurück. Das, was wir gerade in den USA erleben, das ist ja regelrecht ein Staubsauger für industrielle Investitionen: heraus aus Europa, herein in die USA. Da geht es nicht nur um die 1 300 Milliarden, die Herr Biden mobilisiert hat, sondern da geht es vor allen Dingen auch um die Frage von Genehmigungsverfahren, von Planungssicherheit.

Die EU-Kommission hat in ihrer Industriestrategie ja selbst erkannt, dass wir da schneller werden müssen. Aber das Problem ist: In der konkreten Umsetzung tut die Europäische Kommission genau das Gegenteil. Wir haben eine Industrieemissionsrichtlinie auf dem Tisch liegen, die Planungsverfahren verkomplizieren und verlängern wird – mit Umweltschutzsystem für jede einzelne Anlage, mit der Verhinderung weiterer Nutzung von Altanlagen. Das wird Industrie weiter aus Europa vertreiben.

Was mich wirklich umtreibt ist: Wir haben hier vor vier Wochen die Debatte über das Verbrennerverbot gehabt, und da saß an dieser Stelle Herr Timmermans, und er hat nur darüber gelacht, als ich über die gut bezahlten Arbeitsplätze gesprochen habe, die wir in der Automobilindustrie und der Zulieferindustrie verlieren. Er hat gelacht über die Frage von Bezahlbarkeit, von individueller Mobilität. Mein Punkt ist: Wenn wir damit ernst machen wollen, dann müssen wir diese Punkte in der Debatte auch ernst nehmen und nicht über solche Argumente lachen. Denn ansonsten werden wir unser europäisches Projekt den Populisten von ganz rechts und von ganz links zum Fraß vorwerfen. Das kann niemand wollen.

Alex Agius Saliba (S&D). – Sur President, il-fatt illi wiehed ikollu xogħol mhuwiex garanzija kontra l-faqar, mhuwiex garanzija kontra l-eskluzjoni soċjali. Il-faqar fost il-haddiema hija problema illi qed taffettwa miljuni ta' haddiema fl-Unjoni Ewropea. Huma wisq il-haddiema li qed jiffaccjaw sitwazzjonijiet ta' prekarjat, nuqqas ta' sigurtà ta' xogħol, pagi baxxi u esklużjoni mill-aktar protezzjoni soċjali bażika. L-innovazzjoni diġitali, bidliet demografici, it-tranzizzjoni l-hadra komplew ihallu impatt aktar qawwi fuq is-suq tax-xogħol u fuq daww il-haddiema li għandhom l-inqas hiliet.

Il-kwalità tax-xogħol kienet diġà sfida qabel faqqgħet il-pandemija u l-gwerra kontra l-Ukrajna. Kwalitajiet tax-xogħol baxxi jwasslu għal irkupru tan-nofs kedda. Is-sitwazzjoni preżenti wasslet għal aktar retorika dwar pagi ġusti, protezzjoni decenti għall-haddiema, u protezzjoni tas-saħħa u s-sigurtà fuq il-post tax-xogħol illi llum qed jiġu kkunsidrati bhala barrieri – allajbierek – għall-kompetittività u l-holqien tax-xogħol fl-Ewropa. Ejja nieqfu ngħidu ċ-ċučati. Xogħol ta' kwalità mhuwiex piż. L-evidenza turina li xogħol ta' kwalità huwa fundamentali għat-tkabbir ekonomiku u l-kompetittività. Xogħol ta' kwalità jagħti sodisfazzjon lill-haddiema, ikabbar il-hiliet, jagħti aktar motivazzjoni u għaldaqstant iwassal għal aktar produttività.

President, Kummissarju – ma rridux biss noholqu x-xogħol fl-Ewropa, irridu noholqu xogħol ta' kwalità sabiex ikollna Ewropa aktar kompetittiva. Dan huwa dak li jista' jagħmel lill-Ewropa aktar kompetittiva f'dinja globalizzata – ma rridux illi jkollna ambizzjoni biss illi nikkompetu għal kundizzjonijiet tax-xogħol tat-tielet dinja. Għaldaqstant irridu nikkreaw xogħol illi jagħti kwalità ta' hajja għolja li-ċittadini tagħna. Ix-xogħol qabel kollox għandu jkun wiehed decenti, wiehed imħallas tajjeb, wiehed ibbażat fuq kundizzjonijiet ġusti, fuq il-livell għoli ta' saħħa u sigurtà, il-protezzjoni soċjali u li jkun ġust mal-generi kollha.

Martina Dlabajová (Renew). – Pane předsedající, když mluvíme o evropské ekonomice – a zní tady slova jako konkurenceschopnost, růst, prosperita, pracovní místa –, tak hned dodejme: malé a střední podniky. Ano, jsou to právě malé a střední podnikatelé, kteří drží klíč k růstu a k dostatku pracovních míst v Evropě.

Šest měsíců, pane komisaři, šest měsíců uplynulo od slibů představit balíček úlev pro malé a střední podniky. A já se ptám: Co se stalo s tímto slibem? Proč na jeho plnění musí podniky tak dlouho čekat? Tolik času přece nemáme. Rozumím tomu, že pravidla hry se hlavně v poslední době mění. A Evropa není výjimkou. Rozumím tomu, že hledáme společné komplexní řešení. Rozumím tomu, že boříme různá tabu kolem vnitřního trhu. Čemu ale nerozumím, je, proč stále nechápeme, že podnikatelé netouží po ničem jiném než potom, k čemu je předurčuje jejich definice, čili v klidu podnikat a přinášet tím užitek všem. Přístup k financím, svížené schvalovací procesy, dovednosti, inovace, investice, to vše je potřeba, ale pokud nezlepšíme podnikatelské prostředí, neodlehčíme firmám od byrokracie, tak se snažíme zbytečně. Pouze debaty a sliby konkurenceschopnost, růst ani pracovní místa nepřinesou.

Mounir Satouri (Verts/ALE). – Monsieur le Président, avec ce débat, le groupe Renew nous invite à penser ce que serait l'économie compétitive de demain. Dommage de ne pas plutôt évoquer ce que pourrait être une économie solide, inclusive pour l'Europe de demain. Dans cette période géopolitique et économique tendue, c'est pourtant l'important.

C'est ce que nous, écologistes, tentons systématiquement de dire dans cet hémicycle. Quand on parle de travail des plateformes, nous, les Verts, nous rêvons d'un modèle qui contrôle les algorithmes et consolide les acquis sociaux. Quand on parle d'égalité salariale, nous, les Verts, pensons à un modèle économique transparent et qui mette fin aux discriminations. Quand on parle emploi, nous, les Verts, construisons les conditions de la transition écologique juste et de la formation pour ces emplois durables. Quand on parle de salaire minimum, nous, les Verts, appelons à la décence et à la lutte contre la précarité.

Voilà ce que nous souhaitons pour la transition de l'économie et des emplois de demain. L'inclusion des plus vulnérables, de la formation pour une économie verte, durable, respectueuse de l'humain et de la nature.

Alexandr Vondra (ECR). – Mr President, yes, we terribly need a more competitive economy and to generate more jobs in Europe now. But we are taking the wrong way. A typical example is the monopoly in electromobility production, which this Commission is trying to promote. We are just shooting into our leg and we are inviting China to overcome us, instead of keeping our competitive advantage in combustion engines alive. We need to change course. We need less green ideology and more capitalist pragmatism. For innovation, we need fewer bureaucrats and more venture funds. We need less regulation and more liberty. We do not need bans, command economies or long-term planning. We need the freedom of choice and for competition inside Europe to succeed globally.

Guido Reil (ID). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Es wird immer verrückter. Im letzten Monat haben wir das Aus des Verbrennungsmotors beschlossen, was allein in Deutschland den Verlust von 600 000 gut bezahlten Arbeitsplätzen bedeutet. Gestern haben wir die energetische Zwangssanierung von Immobilien beschlossen, was Wohnen unbezahlbar macht, ältere Gebäude faktisch wertlos und Enteignung, sprich: Zwangshypotheken, möglich macht.

Heute reden wir über mehr Europa und mehr Arbeitsplätze. Wir bauen die wettbewerbsfähige Wirtschaft von morgen zum Wohle aller auf. So weit die Phantasie, jetzt zur Realität: Schaeffler baut in Deutschland 1 300 Arbeitsplätze ab, Borgas 800, Ford 3 200, ThyssenKrupp 2 200, BASF 3 000. Das Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft rechnet bis Ende des Jahres mit einem Arbeitsplatzverlust von 330 000. Das ist die Realität. Das ist die Folge des Grünen Deals, das ist die Folge der klimasozialistischen Planwirtschaft, die hier betrieben wird.

Ich möchte noch einmal ganz deutlich daran erinnern: Zu keiner Zeit und in keinem Land der Geschichte hat sozialistische Planwirtschaft zu Wohlstand und Freiheit geführt, sondern immer nur zu Armut und Unfreiheit. Das müssen wir verhindern. Deswegen müssen wir den Grünen Deal einstampfen. Wir brauchen endlich wieder eine Politik des gesunden Menschenverstandes und eine Politik für die Menschen.

Marc Botenga (The Left). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, Madame la Présidente en exercice du Conseil: «J'ai travaillé chez Delhaize pendant 41 ans et aujourd'hui on nous vend comme des produits soldés», c'est le témoignage d'une travailleuse de chez Delhaize, supermarché dans mon pays en Belgique.

Delhaize, qui fait 2 milliards de profits, veut faire passer tous ses magasins en franchise. Pourquoi: faire travailler les travailleurs plus longtemps pour jusqu'à moins 30 % de salaire. 30 % de salaire en moins! L'objectif: économiser un milliard d'euros sur les travailleurs pour filer un milliard d'euros de plus aux actionnaires comme BlackRock et Goldman Sachs, ces vautours.

C'est ça l'économie de demain, l'emploi de qualité, l'emploi de l'avenir, l'Europe que vous voulez? Des contrats précaires, toujours plus de flexibilité. Des burn-out à gogo sans contrepouvoir syndical. Parce qu'évidemment, dans ces franchises, la représentation syndicale n'est pas garantie.

On ne va pas vous permettre d'imposer ce modèle, ce modèle européen, ni en Europe, ni en Belgique! On sera du côté des travailleurs, chez Delhaize, mais aussi partout dans les autres secteurs de l'économie, pour garantir effectivement une économie à la mesure des gens.

Othmar Karas (PPE). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, meine lieben Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Wir müssen uns verstärkt bewusst machen, dass die Zeitenwende eine Chance für den Wirtschafts- und Sozialstandort Europas ist. Wer das Morgen nicht zu denken bereit ist, trifft heute die falschen Entscheidungen. Wir haben ja ganz klare Instrumente, wie wir diese Ziele umsetzen können: den Binnenmarkt stärken, die ökosoziale Marktwirtschaft leben, Fit für 55 umsetzen und Handelsübereinkommen mit der Welt auf dem Boden unserer Werte.

Wir müssen aber auch so ehrlich sein: Europa verliert in der Welt momentan an Gewicht, wenn wir nicht mehr Mut zum Gestalten, mehr Mut für Investitionen haben. Vor 30 Jahren entfielen 25 % des globalen Wohlstandes auf Europa. 2040 wird der Anteil nur mehr 11 % sein. China und Amerika werden vor uns liegen, und wir werden gleichauf mit Indien liegen. Wir benötigen daher mehr europäische Zusammenarbeit, Unabhängigkeit, Handlungsfähigkeit! Die Europäische Union muss wettbewerbsfähiger und ein unabhängiger Sprecher des Kontinents in der Welt sein.

Wenn wir uns anschauen, was wir in den letzten Jahren getan haben, dann haben wir unsere Produktionsstätten sehr oft nach dem Preis außerhalb Europas gelegt, unsere Energiezufuhr von außerhalb Europas erhalten. *Made in Europe* ist gefragt, und wir müssen in diesem Zusammenhang dafür Sorge tragen, dass wir für die neuen grünen Technologien Weltmarktführer sind und nicht wiederum eine Zukunftstechnologie an China und Amerika verlieren.

Heléne Fritzon (S&D). – Herr talman! Kommissionen och rådet! En av tre kvinnor i EU har inget eget jobb att gå till och ingen egen inkomst, det vill säga var tredje kvinna. Bland de kvinnor som arbetar handlar det oftast om deltid eller otrygga anställningar. När vi pratar om morgondagens konkurrenskraftiga ekonomi och fler arbetstillfällen måste vi därför se till att också kvinnorna är en del av detta. Kvinnors kompetens behövs, inte minst i klimatomställningen.

Låt mig vara tydlig: Kvinnors delaktighet på arbetsmarknaden är central för tillväxten i EU. Vi måste vara en union där både kvinnor och män går till jobbet, där de har en lön som man kan leva på och familj och arbete kan kombineras. När kvinnorna i vår union arbetar, stärks såväl individens frihet som ländernas BNP. Det är en fråga om våra grundläggande värderingar, om makt och inflytande i samhället. Det handlar dessutom om att det är ett verktyg, en nyckel, för att utrota barnfattigdom och en förutsättning för att kvinnor ska kunna lämna en våldsam partner.

Morgondagens konkurrenskraftiga ekonomi ska vara till nytta för alla, men då innebär det att alla också måste vara en del av den. Kvinnors fulla närvaro på arbetsmarknaden är helt avgörande för att vi ska kunna klara de utmaningar som vår union står inför.

Vi skriver faktiskt 2023. Det borde då vara en självklarhet. Alldeles nyss manifesterade vi Internationella kvinnodagen. Låt oss ta ansvar och se till att vi får en jämställd arbetsmarknad. Det tjänar alla på i vår europeiska union.

Valérie Hayer (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Ministre, Monsieur le Commissaire, chers collègues, cela fait huit mois que notre partenaire américain a lancé son grand plan d'investissement, l'IRA. Huit mois que l'Europe tergiverse. Mais les grands industriels, eux, n'ont pas de temps à perdre. Northvolt, Safran, Volkswagen, ces fleurons de notre industrie sont en train de renoncer à des projets sur notre continent pour bénéficier, eux, des subventions américaines.

Alors oui, la Commission a raison de présenter le *Net-Zero Industry Act*. Mais c'est tardif. C'est tardif et, on le sait, ce ne sera pas suffisant. Nous devons aussi répondre aux autres enjeux liés à notre autonomie stratégique. Il faut à nouveau produire en Europe pour ne plus être dépendants d'États peu fiables ou belliqueux, comme c'est le cas par exemple avec la Chine pour nos médicaments et nos matériaux rares, ou la Russie bien sûr, pour nos engrais et notre approvisionnement énergétique.

C'est pourquoi, Monsieur le Commissaire, nous attendons, dans ce Parlement, un fonds de souveraineté européen au champ large et à même de nous permettre de sortir de toutes nos dépendances critiques. Sans celui-ci, l'Europe sera condamnée à débours des centaines de milliards, encore et toujours, pour s'adapter aux prochaines turbulences géopolitiques. Et nous savons que ces turbulences, elles arriveront tôt ou tard.

Niklas Nienäß (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident! Ich möchte mich an dieser Stelle vor allen Dingen auch den Worten von Herrn Karas anschließen. Wir dürfen es nicht hinbekommen, dass wir am Ende wieder den Anschluss an Zukunftstechnologien verlieren, sondern müssen da wirklich Europa voranbringen. Das gilt aber vor allen Dingen auch für Spitzentechnologie, und wir müssen hier in Forschung und Investitionen investieren.

Aber was mir in diesen ganzen Debatten aufgefallen ist: Wenn wir über Jobs reden, dann geht es doch vor allen Dingen um die Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmer und nicht nur um die reine Herstellung von Jobs. Das heißt, wir brauchen Jobs im Sinne von Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmern. Ich glaube, dabei müssen wir vor allen Dingen darauf achten, dass auch mehr und mehr Unternehmen mit in die Verantwortung von Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeitern kommen, damit diese Unternehmen auch Entscheidungen im Sinne der Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeiter treffen und nicht nur im Sinne von höheren Dividendenausschüttungen.

Ich glaube, das kann man hinbekommen, wenn man eine Struktur aufbaut, in der wirklich alle, die in dem Unternehmen beschäftigt sind, daran beteiligt werden können. Dann haben wir auch eine Zukunft im Blick, die es schaffen kann, dass die Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeiter, dass die Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmer wirklich auch von ihrem Job profitieren, höhere Löhne, kürzere Arbeitszeiten bekommen und nicht nur für höhere Dividenden arbeiten.

Letzter Punkt: Wir müssen diese Entwicklung nicht nur in den starken Regionen vorantreiben, sondern wir müssen es hinbekommen, dass ganz Europa wirklich regional stärker zusammenwächst, dass diese Jobs in ganz Europa entstehen, dass Spitzentechnologie auch da möglich ist, wo heute Industrie noch nicht so vorhanden ist. Das ist für einen europäischen Ansatz im Aufbau der Industrie und Wirtschaft entscheidend.

Dominique Bilde (ID). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, nos entreprises n'en peuvent plus. Délocalisations, ouverture des marchés à la concurrence déloyale, libre-échange destructeur et pilotage de notre économie par des technocrates qui ne connaissent rien au monde de l'entreprise. Bref, la France subit depuis des décennies les mauvais choix de l'Union européenne.

La Commission n'a de cesse de réclamer à la France de tout brader. Mais pour quel résultat? L'économie compétitive que vous nous vendez comme des marchands de tapis est un leurre. Les Chinois s'attaquent au marché de l'automobile et mettent en péril toutes nos filières. Les Américains subventionnent leurs industries au détriment de la relance en Europe. À cela, vous ajoutez l'immigration massive censée régler le problème des pénuries de main d'œuvre, mais qui ne fait en réalité que peser sur le budget social. Et vous avez le tableau du désastre total.

Il est temps d'arrêter de mentir. Vos vieilles recettes ne marchent pas. Vos décisions se prennent en dépit du réel. Le réel, c'est la pauvreté et le chômage, les prix qui flambent et la fermeture de nos entreprises. Le réel, c'est le cauchemar que vivent les peuples, celui des nations qui avaient tout pour elles et qui n'ont plus que leurs yeux pour pleurer.

Face à cela, nous n'avons pas changé de ligne: des entreprises qui produisent ici, des frontières qui produisent de là-bas et des États qui agissent enfin. Vous dites plus d'Europe, plus d'emplois, nous disons plus de nation, plus de réindustrialisation, plus de patriotisme économique. Bref, tout ce que vous avez refusé mais que les peuples réclament depuis toujours.

Sandra Pereira (The Left). – Senhor Presidente, o título deste debate não poderia estar mais distante da realidade. A crescente desigualdade social é também resultado e consequência das opções políticas da União Europeia. Veja-se, entre outros, as recomendações específicas por país direcionadas aos Estados-Membros, no âmbito do Semestre Europeu, ou os chamados programas de assistência financeira que, a pretexto da defesa da competitividade de que tanto aqui se fala, têm sido peça fundamental no ataque aos direitos dos trabalhadores.

Num contexto em que os trabalhadores se deparam com um brutal aumento do custo de vida e com a deterioração da sua situação económica e social, estes debates só têm como objetivo mascarar as políticas e responsabilidades daqueles que, podendo, se recusam a tomar as medidas necessárias para fazer face a esta situação e responder às aspirações e justos anseios dos trabalhadores e dos povos, começando por exigir o necessário e urgente aumento geral dos salários, valorizando os trabalhadores, que são quem cria a riqueza, e protegendo e promovendo o trabalho com direitos.

É este o caminho que os trabalhadores nas ruas por essa Europa fora têm vindo a exigir.

Isabel Benjumea Benjumea (PPE). – Señor presidente, señor comisario, representantes del Consejo. Me alegro mucho, señor comisario, de que en este debate haya puesto usted en valor algo que considero esencial, que son los fondos Next Generation EU. Precisamente en un debate sobre competitividad, cuando tenemos en marcha un plan de 800 000 millones de euros que estamos financiando con deuda europea, que tendrán que pagar las futuras generaciones, y cuando hablamos de competitividad nos tenemos que preguntar si efectivamente esos 800 000 millones de euros, esos planes nacionales que los distintos Estados miembros han presentado y que la Comisión ha aprobado, están o no contribuyendo a hacer una Europa más competitiva, una Europa que permita crear más puestos de trabajo, una Europa en definitiva, como bien dice el nombre, más resiliente.

Y yo apelo a la Comisión directamente. ¿Está la Comisión controlando verdaderamente que las reformas que van incluidas dentro de los planes nacionales son las reformas que nos van a hacer una Europa más competitiva? ¿Estamos creando un marco jurídico que permita que las empresas puedan actuar de una manera que les permita competir en igualdad de condiciones con el resto del mundo? Sinceramente, tengo serias dudas.

Alerto de una reforma en concreto que está ahora mismo presentada por el Gobierno español, la reforma de las pensiones, que pone todo el peso sobre los empresarios. Es una reforma que ha anunciado sin haber pactado con los empresarios, simple y llanamente pactada con los sindicatos, y sin haber pactado con la oposición.

Y alerto sobre una reforma en la que el Gobierno español dice que cuenta con el apoyo de la Comisión. Es una reforma que no está demostrado que cree un sistema sostenible y es una reforma de la que todos los empresarios denuncian que se sentaron a la mesa sin siquiera haber visto un solo papel.

Por lo tanto, apelo a que la Comisión cumpla con esa labor tan importante de garantizar que las reformas de las reformas del Mecanismo de Recuperación y Resiliencia, las reformas de Next Generation EU nos hagan una Europa más competitiva.

Agnes Jongerius (S&D). – Mr President, Renew wants to have more Europe and more jobs. But we want well-paid quality jobs. Renew and the EPP and even the Swedish Presidency pretend to create jobs only by focusing on competitiveness. And it seems to be the new buzzword. They combine this with a focus on the green and the digital transition, and at the same time, some Member States are pushing to have these investments excluded from the deficit calculations. But this by itself doesn't create well-paid quality jobs and we will not allow these investments to be used as an excuse to cut down our work on the social dimension. We cannot allow cuts on social investments because to be truly competitive, we need to pursue well-paid quality jobs. Biden did this in the IRA (Inflation Reduction Act). He went for good paying union jobs by that companies pay their fair share. I think we can do this too. We have to put the money from taxing companies to good use by creating well-paid, quality jobs. We don't have to put the burden of the green transition on the back of the workers again.

Vlad-Marius Botoș (Renew). – Domnule președinte, stimate domnule comisar Schmit, stimată doamnă ministru Roswall, suntem într-un moment de răscruce pentru economia europeană și pentru politica mondială. Schimbările climatice, pandemia, războiul din Ucraina, toate aceste crize succesive ne arată că este foarte important să schimbăm direcția de dezvoltare pe continentul nostru, să sprijinim autonomia Uniunii Europene și să investim masiv în inovație.

Este nevoie să sprijinim industria ecologică, aici incluzând nu doar industria tradițională, dar poate să producă în moduri mult mai puțin poluante cu ajutorul inovației, dar și industria care va susține energia regenerabilă, produsele reciclabile și reutilizabile.

Inovația trebuie să fie prezentă și susținută financiar în toate domeniile economice, de la producția de energie la industria și reciclarea textilelor, la agricultură, educație, pentru că acestea vor fi locurile de muncă ce vor aduce plus valoare economiei noastre, economiei din Uniunea Europeană.

Fabio Massimo Castaldo (NI). – Signor Presidente, caro Commissario, onorevoli colleghi, negli ultimi anni abbiamo visto una crescita esponenziale della richiesta di competenze digitali in moltissime professioni. L'Europa si trova nel mezzo di una vera e propria rivoluzione industriale, fatta di sviluppi promettenti ma anche di sfide che non dobbiamo sottovalutare.

Una rivoluzione che può cambiare drasticamente la nostra economia e la nostra società. Sappiamo quanto sia importante la trasformazione digitale: si stima che il costo della non Europa in questo settore possa crescere nel tempo fino a raggiungere 1 300 miliardi di euro nel 2033.

Tuttavia, queste transizioni vanno governate, non dobbiamo esserne travolti. Ed è bene che il 2023 sia intitolato Anno europeo delle competenze, perché c'è ancora tanto da fare sullo *skilling* e sull'*upskilling*. Difatti, studi insigni dimostrano come l'impatto della digitalizzazione sul mercato del lavoro dipenda principalmente proprio dalle competenze richieste e dal grado di routinarietà delle mansioni. Il 24% della popolazione poco qualificata, nella nostra Unione, è a rischio povertà, una percentuale che si riduce all'aumentare del livello di istruzione.

Questa è la sfida davanti a noi e dovremmo essere particolarmente attenti a non lasciare davvero nessuno indietro, altrimenti saremo ovviamente preda di una pericolosissima rabbia sociale.

Krzysztof Hetman (PPE). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzu! Szanowni Państwo! Choć na tej sali nierzadko się spieramy, wydaje się, że temat dzisiejszej debaty powinien zjednoczyć nas wszystkich. Nie ulega bowiem wątpliwości, że budując bardziej konkurencyjną gospodarkę, nie tylko stworzymy więcej miejsc pracy dla naszych obywateli, ale także kładziemy podwaliny pod lepszą przyszłość dla przyszłych pokoleń. To nadrzędny cel, jaki powinien zawsze przyświecać naszej wspólnotce.

Tworzenie większej liczby wysokiej jakości miejsc pracy w Unii Europejskiej ma zasadnicze znaczenie dla promowania wzrostu gospodarczego, zmniejszania bezrobocia i poprawy standardów życia. Wymaga to jednak wieloaspektowego podejścia i współpracy rządzących, przedsiębiorstw i obywateli.

Jak to zrobić? Musimy inwestować w kształcenie i szkolenie, gdyż dobrze wykształcona i wykwalifikowana siła robocza jest niezbędna do przyciągania inwestycji i tworzenia wysokiej jakości miejsc pracy. Musimy wspierać innowacje przez stworzenie sprzyjającego otoczenia biznesowego, w tym zwłaszcza przez uproszczenie przepisów i stworzenie równych szans dla wszystkich firm, niezależnie od ich rozmiaru. Musimy też inwestować w infrastrukturę, taką jak szybki internet, sieci transportowe i tzw. inteligentne miasta, które będą przyciągać przedsiębiorstwa.

I wreszcie musimy pamiętać, że trwały rozwój to zrównoważony rozwój, więc wszelkie podejmowane działania muszą być włączające i obejmować nie tylko największe ośrodki, ale także tereny wiejskie i oddalone. Ich potencjał rozwojowy i kapitał ludzki jest często niedoceniany, a zapewniam, że także stanowi nasz ogromny zasób.

Jonás Fernández (S&D). – Señor presidente, señor comisario, señora representante en ejercicio del Consejo, estamos, sin duda, ante un debate oportuno, un debate relevante y un debate también necesario para afrontar el futuro de la economía europea. Es verdad que en esta discusión que estamos manteniendo hay distintas propuestas, distintas ideas, distintas aportaciones. Pero yo creo que en estos momentos también de —digámoslo claro— incertidumbre para el futuro, podemos recordar a los padres fundadores, y podemos recordar el principio de la economía social de mercado, a la que hemos añadido las motivaciones verdes, la transición energética, como una base que nos pueda iluminar el camino.

Esa economía social de mercado, también verde, exige consolidar aún más el mercado interior, exige explotar las ventajas de este gran mercado único, pero también fortalecer y construir, también a nivel europeo, sistemas de redistribución de la renta que permitan que los beneficios del mercado lleguen a todos los ciudadanos, a todos los hombres y mujeres de la Unión Europea.

Y, por lo tanto, ahí y en el ámbito fundamentalmente financiero —tenemos la unión bancaria, pendiente de completar, la unión de mercados de capitales y sin duda, los retos en materia impositiva— se nos exige tener un sistema europeo que redistribuya también la renta entre todos los europeos.

Irena Joveva (Renew). – Gospod predsednik! Več Evrope, več delovnih mest. Hiter razvoj gospodarstva, boljša konkurenčnost. Ustvarjanje novih poklicev, ustrezno izobraževanje. Vse naštetu gre z roko v roki, a ničesar ni brez ustreznega šolanja in usposabljanja.

To posebej poudarjam, ker je letošnje leto – slišali smo že večkrat danes – evropsko leto spretnosti, zato moramo pri oblikovanju gospodarskih strategij in ustvarjanju novih delovnih mest upoštevati potrebo po dodatnem, učinkovitem izobraževanju posameznik in posameznikov za usklajevanje potrebnih spretnosti za opravljanje novih poklicev.

Na tem področju lahko Unija s strategijami ciljnega gospodarskega razvoja spodbudi podjetja k nadaljnjemu razvoju ter jih sočasno pozove k upoštevanju potrebe po ustrezni kvalifikaciji in prekvalifikaciji delovne sile.

To je za našo prihodnost ključno.

Christophe Hansen (PPE). – Mr President, I am glad that we are finally addressing the competitiveness elephant here in this room, even if Ms Jongerius doesn't agree on that point. Europe's cutting-edge green industry is our biggest ally in the green transition, but we cannot ask them to complete the mission with their hands tied to their backs by excessive regulatory burden. And here I think, Mr Commissioner, we clearly have to do something for our companies. And secondly, of course, for the lack of raw materials, because Europe is a raw-material-poor continent.

We need to maintain a strong manufacturing base in Europe. On this, I think that everybody here in the room agrees. But this does not mean that we should chase the illusion of autarchy. If we deprive ourselves of the needed inputs to produce in Europe, we will make the green transition impossibly expensive for consumers and the uptake and the exception will not be there. Instead, we should play to our strengths and leverage our unrivalled network of trade agreements and expand urgently to others like Australia, Mercosur, Chile, to name just those that we could ratify before the end of the mandate to diversify our supply chains, to complement and sustain a strong green manufacturing base in Europe. I therefore welcome, for example, the launch of negotiations on a targeted critical raw minerals agreement with the US and I hope this won't remain a one-off.

Einstein is claimed to have said that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. Let's show instead that our generation is in fact capable of learning from past protectionist errors.

Robert Hajšel (S&D). – Mr President, dear colleagues, the green transition will massively impact Europe's labour markets and some regions will be exposed to job losses, and new job opportunities will arise in the other regions. Smaller Member States cannot stand alone in this and we need more Europe to come up with alternative solutions for those that will be affected the most.

Green transition is not only about high-skilled jobs. On the contrary, it will generate demand for low- and medium-skilled employees in the renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors, with 75% of jobs for workers and technicians in 2050. The outcome depends on how effectively Europe will introduce skill policies and here an anticipatory-based approach will be crucial.

To succeed, we need adequate financial resources, massive investments into upscaling and rescaling of workers, creation of SMEs, friendly environment and removing of still-existing administrative obstacles will be the key elements of success. The workers should not pay the cost of transformation. To achieve more resilient and social Europe, we need to act now and to transform statements and promises into actions.

Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (Renew). – Señor presidente, la digitalización y la descarbonización son las claves de la hoja de ruta que en 2050 debe hacer a la Unión viable y resiliente como comunidad y competitiva como sistema productivo. Tenemos que innovar en procesos y normas, generar canteras de datos protegidos y accesibles, transformar nuestra movilidad, la generación de energía, los hábitos de consumo y fomentar los cambios que forjan las personas.

Por eso, debemos considerar la igualdad una ventaja competitiva. Los más duchos en romper techos de cristal tendrán las economías más ricas en talento. Y eso es competitivo. Por eso debemos tratar la inmigración como una oportunidad, porque nuestra sociedad envejecida necesita personas dispuestas a aprovechar una oportunidad. Y, por eso, tenemos que distribuir justamente la riqueza y ayudar a los más desfavorecidos. La marginación es incompatible con la resiliencia. Por eso, la clave de esta transformación está en adaptar nuestros sistemas educativos a un mundo que, además de tecnología, necesita humanidad, talento, justicia social, igualdad e innovación. Sí, inteligencia, pero más que artificial.

Antonius Manders (PPE). – Voorzitter, commissaris, een mooi onderwerp bespreken we hier: “Meer Europa en meer banen”. Ik zou dat graag willen veranderen in “Een beter Europa en betere banen”, want “meer, meer, meer” is neoliberal. En we moeten ook kijken naar wat de toekomst brengt.

We willen allemaal onze welvaart behouden voor onszelf, voor onze kinderen, onze kleinkinderen. Dat willen we natuurlijk ook. Dat doen we niet door steeds maar meer regels, meer wetgeving te maken, maar we moeten ook kijken naar hoe Europa functioneert. Investeer in beter onderwijs om de toekomstige innovatie te garanderen.

Investeer in een gezonde leefstijl als preventieve gezondheidszorg, om de kennis en ervaring van ouderen langer actief in de maatschappij te behouden.

De interne markt holt achteruit. En waarom? Het toezicht en de controle op al die wetgeving die wij hier produceren, wordt niet meer gedaan door de lokale overheden omdat men zich geen Europeaan voelt. Europa is een grijpbak van subsidies en dat is de reden waarom we bij Europa willen zijn. Europa is economische samenwerking. En wat missen we? We missen verbinding tussen de Europeanen. We hebben allemaal dezelfde geschiedenis in Europa en toch denken we nationaal.

Ik roep dus op om meer te investeren in een Europese emotie en identiteit. En dat doe je niet alleen door economische samenwerking te beloven. We moeten dat ook doen via cultuur, sport et cetera. Ik denk dat als we dat gaan doen, men zich verbonden voelt met Europa. En dan is het ook makkelijker om na te leven wat in Europa wordt afgesproken, en niet alleen op basis van winst in de toekomst. Die winst ligt in ons welzijn in de toekomst en in ons welzijn.

Nicolas Schmit, *membre de la Commission*. – Monsieur le Président, d'abord, je crois que c'était un débat très utile sur un enjeu majeur, puisque ce qui est en question, c'est finalement l'avenir de l'Europe, l'avenir de nos pays et la prospérité de nos pays.

Comme il est à la mode maintenant de regarder beaucoup vers les États-Unis, qui ont provoqué une sorte de choc, j'aimerais juste citer un président américain, qui semble aussi inspirer beaucoup l'actuel président américain, à savoir Roosevelt. Il a dit, au moment de la crise de 1929:

«The only limit to our realisation of tomorrow will be our doubts of today».

Donc je crois que c'est une bonne leçon, parce qu'il ne suffit pas de douter, de semer la peur – autre thème, d'ailleurs, de Roosevelt. Je crois que ce qu'il nous faut aujourd'hui, c'est une volonté politique forte. Et celle-là, elle doit être réalisée à l'échelle européenne. Et j'entends tout à fait la leçon, très claire, qu'il serait extrêmement dangereux d'ignorer, de négliger les nouvelles réalités géopolitiques et géoéconomiques auxquelles nous devons faire face.

Je pense que l'Europe a réagi. Nous avons été les premiers à réagir et à agir, notamment face au changement climatique. Il est quand même étrange que soudain, on remette cela en question. Quand les autres, que ce soient les Chinois, que ce soient les Américains, que ce soient les Canadiens, qu'est-ce qu'ils font? Eh bien, ils mettent en œuvre des politiques en matière de changement climatique; ils mettent en œuvre des politiques industrielles fortes, celles que nous avons préconisées dès le départ. Donc, ne nous laissons pas déstabiliser. Je pense que le plus grand danger, c'est maintenant d'ajouter de l'imprévisibilité à l'incertitude qui de toute façon existe dans le monde d'aujourd'hui.

Ce dont les entreprises ont besoin, c'est, il est vrai, un cadre réglementaire acceptable. Et là je suis d'accord qu'il faudrait peut-être revoir cela, mais ce n'est pas une question uniquement pour l'Europe. On a toujours l'impression que c'est l'Europe qui régleme tout. Il faut peut-être aller voir aussi un peu du côté des États membres. Et surtout, comment les États membres mettent en œuvre les réglementations. Les délais, ce n'est pas l'Europe, ce sont les États membres. Et donc ça, c'est absolument un point dont il faut s'occuper.

Mais l'autre point, c'est aussi maintenant poursuivre sur notre voie. Remettre en cause des décisions qui ont été prises, est-ce que cela aide les entreprises? C'est ajouter de l'imprévisibilité dans leurs plans. Je constate qu'aux États-Unis, maintenant, ils misent sur l'électrique aussi au niveau de l'automobile. Parce que tout le plan, c'est précisément encourager la fabrication de voitures électriques aux États-Unis.

Et que font les Chinois? Les Chinois sont en train, ou du moins ils envisagent d'inonder les marchés avec des voitures électriques. Et donc c'est par rapport à cela qu'il faut se préparer. C'est par rapport à ces défis-là qu'il faut effectivement investir dans la technologie plus rapidement, investir dans le capital humain, ce qui a été dit.

Je crois que nous avons de bonnes cartes, il faut les jouer. Il faut les jouer collectivement. C'est cela que veut dire plus d'Europe. Mais une meilleure Europe, pour qu'effectivement, dans ce nouveau jeu international, l'Europe ne soit pas le grand perdant.

Jessika Roswall, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, honourable Members, Commissioner, thank you very much for a very interesting debate. Let me also start by quoting Ms Bischoff, since she said that it is not about predicting the future, but rather being prepared for it. Allow me to put it like this: we can do both. We can predict that if we do nothing, we will remain less competitive in the global world. And we can prepare the future by laying the groundwork for long-term competitiveness. That means deepening the single market, better and sometimes less regulation, investing in research and innovation, realising the green and digital transition.

The European Parliament is clearly engaged in this common striving to make the European economy stronger and competitive. And, as I mentioned, the Commission's strategy on long-term competitiveness and the single market at 30 communication that we are awaiting, as well as the Green Deal Industrial Plan, will be important grounds for a comprehensive approach on how to further enhance our competitiveness, productivity and more jobs, both for women and men, as Ms Fritzon said.

Ms Jongerius just called for well-paid quality jobs, and I can only agree. If competitiveness is becoming a buzzword, well, that is good. That means that it is at the top of the agenda, which it has not been for decades.

Making a long-term strategy a success requires determined and consistent work over many years on a broad array of issues: single market, capital markets union, better regulation, global trade agreements, research, innovation, policy and skills. We will continue putting this issue high on the political agenda and engage our discussions with the European Parliament to build the competitive economy of tomorrow for the benefit of all.

VORSITZ: EVELYN REGNER

Vizepräsidentin

Die Präsidentin. – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)

Milan Brglez (S&D), *pisno*. – Pozdravljam razpravo o tako pomembni temi, kot je poglobljanje evropskega povezovanja za ustvarjanje novih delovnih mest, čeprav v okviru pomanjkljivega naslova, ki ne daje pravega konteksta.

Naslov razprave ne odraža smernic, ki nam jih je dala Konferenca o prihodnosti Evrope, ter velikega dela, ki smo ga opravili za izgradnjo socialne Evrope s socialnim vrhom v Portu, z akcijskim načrtom za implementacijo Evropskega stebra socialnih pravic, evropsko minimalno plačo ter minimalnim dohodkom.

Pravi naslov razprave bi moral biti Več Evrope za več kakovostnih delovnih mest, dostojne, višje plače, socialno pravičnost ter trajnostno gospodarstvo v korist vseh ljudi.

Konkurenčno gospodarstvo, ki ni družbeno in okoljsko odgovorno, ni pot v dostojno prihodnost, še najmanj pa tistih najbolj izkoriščanih in zapostavljenih. Prav v imenu konkurenčnosti smo prišli do praks, kakršne je „outsourcing“ – prenašanje donedavno zaposlenih na zunanje izvajalce.

Ta razprava bi v resnici morala biti namenjena iskanju načina, kako preprečiti vedno nove primere prekarizacije, proti kateri se po vrsti drugih skupin delavcev zase in za vse nas prav te dni borijo hotelske sobarice v Sloveniji.

Estrella Durá Ferrandis (S&D), *por escrito*. – Europa debe liderar la revolución industrial de tecnologías limpias, compitiendo con EE. UU. y China, al tiempo que promueve su modelo socioeconómico único.

Frente a una derecha que pretende crear puestos de trabajo centrándose exclusivamente en la competitividad, el Grupo S&D defiende que la competitividad de Europa no es un objetivo en sí mismo, ya que los factores económicos, sociales y ambientales son clave. La competitividad por sí sola no crea empleos de calidad bien remunerados, por lo que no debemos permitir que estas inversiones se utilicen como excusa para reducir nuestro trabajo en la dimensión social. No podemos permitir recortes en las inversiones sociales porque para ser verdaderamente competitivos. Poner la carga de la transición verde sobre las espaldas de los trabajadores no es una opción.

Nuestros objetivos: crear puestos de trabajo de calidad y buenas condiciones de trabajo y garantizar la cohesión territorial en la Unión y su posición fuerte en la economía global. El diálogo social y las buenas relaciones laborales también son clave para el éxito de esta gran transformación industrial.

Ibán García Del Blanco (S&D), *por escrito*. – Europa debe liderar la revolución industrial de tecnologías limpias, compitiendo con EE. UU. y China, al tiempo que promueve su modelo socioeconómico único.

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Alicia Homs Ginel (S&D), *por escrito*. – Europa debe liderar la revolución industrial de tecnologías limpias, compitiendo con EE. UU. y China, al tiempo que promueve su modelo socioeconómico único.

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César Luena (S&D), *por escrito*. – Europa debe liderar la revolución industrial de tecnologías limpias, compitiendo con EE. UU. y China, al tiempo que promueve su modelo socioeconómico único.

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Javi López (S&D), *por escrito*. – Europa debe liderar la revolución industrial de tecnologías limpias, compitiendo con EE. UU. y China, al tiempo que promueve su modelo socioeconómico único.

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Adriana Maldonado López (S&D), *por escrito*. – Europa debe liderar la revolución industrial de tecnologías limpias, compitiendo con EE. UU. y China, al tiempo que promueve su modelo socioeconómico único.

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Marcos Ros Sempere (S&D), *por escrito*. – Europa debe liderar la revolución industrial de tecnologías limpias, compitiendo con EE. UU. y China, al tiempo que promueve su modelo socioeconómico único.

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Domènec Ruiz Devesa (S&D), *por escrito*. – Europa debe liderar la revolución industrial de tecnologías limpias, compitiendo con EE. UU. y China, al tiempo que promueve su modelo socioeconómico único.

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Alfred Sant (S&D), in writing. – The call for a more competitive Europe comes in the wake of the COVID pandemic and the war in Ukraine. Concurrently, the EU has adopted an ambitious industrial strategy aimed at countering global climate warming while achieving a radical digital transformation. This requires huge investment commitments, public and private. They have lagged. Also, the EU needs to ensure that its enterprises remain competitive internally and externally. To face these challenges we must choose: –between an open, free market model on a global scale; or –a gated globalisation, which accepts that continental markets like the EU need active public interventions to lever investments and maintain economic momentum. The latter has been happening during and post-COVID. In my view, it is the best available approach. How to effectively implement it cannot be declared ex cathedra. It must emerge as the result of incremental experience in protecting and promoting jobs, plus in generating innovation. This will require innovative ways of directing the interplay between social welfare funds and labour markets; a review of state aid rules; greater clarity in exercises launched to secure Europe's strategic autonomy; educational reforms; and bold, new efforts to build capital markets that can effectively mobilise investment funds. It is a tall order.

12. Quiebra de Silicon Valley Bank y repercusiones en la estabilidad financiera de Europa (debate)

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Tagesordnungspunkt folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärung der Kommission zum Zusammenbruch der Silicon Valley Bank und zu den Folgen für die Stabilität des Finanzsystems in Europa (2023/2608(RSP)).

Mairead McGuinness, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, thank you for the opportunity of this debate, which is very timely.

We are monitoring the situation in the US carefully. The direct impact on the European Union seems to be limited, but we should reflect on whether there are lessons to be learned for the European Union's banking sector.

Let me start first by giving a brief overview of recent events. Over the last few days, we saw three US banks fail. They are Silicon Valley Bank, Signature Bank and Silvergate Bank. US authorities took swift and decisive action based on their extensive resolution experience. There was strong cooperation between the different authorities involved: the resolution authority, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation; the supervisor, the Federal Reserve; and the US Treasury, providing a backstop.

The failures of these banks show shortcomings in the management of their balance sheets. This became apparent when the downturn in crypto and the tech sector led startups to withdraw their deposits. In particular, it seems that the biggest of the three banks, Silicon Valley, received a large inflow of corporate deposits during and after COVID. They invested a significant part of these deposits in long-term fixed-rate assets. But they were then faced with an outflow of deposits so had to sell these long-term assets at a significant loss as interest rates had risen. This loss in turn triggered more outflows of deposits. The bank was unable to raise capital on the market and the US resolution authorities had to step in.

Let me turn now to the impact on the European Union. Silicon Valley Bank has a very limited presence in the European Union and we're in touch with the relevant supervisory authorities. So the direct impact of these bank failures on the EU seems to be limited. Silicon Valley Bank's German branch had lending, where BaFin has already issued a moratorium, but no deposits. In Denmark and Sweden, Silicon Valley Bank was present with representative offices but had no operating branch gathering deposits.

Of course, we are monitoring developments with EU supervisors, and that includes the reaction on the markets, which was initially negative on the EU banking sector but has since calmed down. It is the role of competent authorities, under the coordination of the EBA if necessary, to form a view of the possible exposure of businesses and particularly the technology sector.

The situation around Silicon Valley Bank is still unfolding and there are many particularities about it. There are no immediate parallels with EU banks. But, more broadly, this situation shows how the economic and financial situation is changing globally and in Europe. The shift in interest rates has created a new environment. The EU financial system and banks in particular are adjusting under close supervision. We have to stay alert to this new environment. Higher inflation and rising interest rates present different challenges to financial stability than 'low-for-long' interest rates. The problem of unrealised losses on the bond portfolio of Silicon Valley Bank is an illustration of that. However, the possible difficulties this environment may create for banks' balance sheets are not new.

So, we can say that the EU banking sector is in overall good shape. It has built up its resilience in recent years and it is supervised closely by national and European authorities. But I think at this very early stage we can start to look at some of the lessons that these failures in the US have for the European Union. These US banks were not subject to strict regulatory requirements for liquidity because the United States does not apply Basel to mid-sized and smaller banks, while here in the European Union we do apply the Basel prudential standards to all banks. Had this been the case in the US and the Basel requirements on liquidity applied, it is likely these US banks would have had a stronger liquidity position. The net stable funding ratio in particular makes it much harder for banks to finance long-dated illiquid assets with a volatile deposit base prone to fast withdrawals.

I repeat that here in the European Union, the Basel prudential standards are applied to all banks. This introduces an important layer of caution into the prudential regulation and supervision of the EU banking sector, and that includes liquidity risks, interest rate risk and the need to cover unrealised losses on bond portfolios with capital.

Supervisors have paid particular attention to interest rate risk in recent years. EU supervisory authorities are closely monitoring recent changes in interest rate risk and liquidity conditions, including possible contagion risks at the level of banks and the system level.

Finally, prudential and accounting rules require EU banks to cover, with capital, unrealised losses on their bond portfolios in a timely manner. A second question is to understand under what conditions Silicon Valley Bank expanded abroad. The bank was subject to lighter rules in the United States. Basel standards should apply on internationally active banks. This shows how important our discussions are in the banking package trilogues, in particular for rules relating to third country branches.

These cases we're discussing today also illustrate the importance of a strong and operational crisis management framework that includes the appropriate tools for dealing with all banks in trouble. Like any bank failures, these cases are distinct, but we can see the importance of a robust crisis management and deposit insurance framework. Such a framework allows the failure of banks to be handled in an orderly and timely manner, regardless of their size or business model. One interesting aspect is that the case of Silicon Valley Bank concerns a US mid-sized bank, which by EU standards would in fact be considered a big bank. The US authorities decided to extend their guarantee to uninsured deposits to avoid repercussions on financial stability and the regional economy. They acted to prevent additional volatility in light of the simultaneous failures of smaller banks. All of this confirms that we need an effective crisis management toolbox for the banking sector to protect depositor confidence, financial stability and taxpayers.

So, I want to close by reiterating the following. We are watching events in the United States where authorities did take swift and resolute action. The direct impact on the European Union seems limited, and we are in touch with the relevant supervisory authorities. We are also considering what these failures can teach us in terms of prudential regulation, supervision and bank crisis management and deposit insurance.

So, I look forward to today's debate and I thank the Parliament for their flexibility in facilitating a very timely debate on a really important topic.

Markus Ferber, *im Namen der PPE-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen, liebe Kollegen, Frau Kommissarin! Zunächst mal ein ganz herzliches Dankeschön für Ihre klaren Worte und die Beschreibung dessen, was in den Banken in Amerika zurzeit stattfindet. Die Hintergründe sind komplex. Sie sind auf individuelle Faktoren zurückzuführen, aber wir müssen uns auch mit der Frage beschäftigen. Es ist auch für uns in Europa relevant.

Einer der wesentlichen Auslöser für die Pleite der Silicon Valley Bank war eine regelrechte Liquiditätsschwemme. Diese Liquidität konnte scheinbar nicht vernünftig angelegt werden. Ganz wesentlich zu dieser Geldschwemme beigetragen haben die Notenbanken, auch die Europäische Zentralbank. Deswegen müssen wir uns damit beschäftigen.

Die Notenbanken haben aber nicht nur einen Liquiditätsüberhang geschaffen, sondern sie haben jetzt natürlich auch die Aufgabe, die Inflation, die sie mit geschaffen haben, zu bekämpfen, und das ist eine weitere Ursache. Ich will das ganz deutlich sagen. Ich halte die Zinsschritte für richtig, auch die, die die EZB beschritten hat. Ich hoffe, dass weitere Zinsschritte beschlossen werden. Aber es gibt natürlich Nebeneffekte, und darauf müssen sich Banken entsprechend vorbereiten.

Der zweite Aspekt für die Bewertung der Vorfälle ist der Umstand, wie in den USA und wie in der Europäischen Union internationale Standards für Bankenregulierung umgesetzt werden. Ich bin Ihnen sehr dankbar, Frau Kommissarin, dass Sie darauf hingewiesen haben. Bei uns in Europa ist, was die Baseler Regeln betrifft, auch die kleinste Bank genauso verpflichtet wie die größte Bank, sie einzuhalten – ein ganz großer Unterschied zu den USA.

Das, was wir an Erleichterungen gemacht haben, war ausdrücklich für Banken, die nicht grenzüberschreitend tätig sind, die ein einfaches Geschäftsmodell haben, und wir haben sie nicht befreit von Aufsichtspflichten, wir haben sie nur befreit von Berichtspflichten. Das ist ein ganz großer Unterschied.

Deswegen sollten jetzt nicht reflexartig neue Regulierungen beschlossen oder gefordert werden, sondern wir sollten unser System sicher halten, abschirmen vor Einflüssen aus den USA. Dann sind wir auf dem richtigen Weg.

Jonás Fernández, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señora presidenta, señora comisaria, seré muy rápido. Muy rápido, porque estoy razonablemente de acuerdo con usted en cómo ha expuesto la situación y las emergencias o los problemas que tenemos en Europa.

Primero, necesitamos una propuesta ya para revisar el marco de gestión de crisis bancaria. Sabemos que se ha venido retrasando y necesitamos una propuesta legislativa ya para tramitarla rápidamente.

Segundo, mensaje a mis colegas en el Parlamento y a nuestros amigos del Consejo: en el diálogo tripartito de la implementación del Acuerdo de Basilea tenemos que ser muy, muy cuidadosos —a la vista de lo que ha ocurrido en los Estados Unidos— y revisar, negociar y ver hasta qué punto Europa es capaz de cumplirlo. Porque, aunque apliquemos criterios similares a todos los bancos, no aplicamos todos los criterios de Basilea, y en esa negociación deberíamos evitarlo.

Y, por último, el Seguro Europeo de Desempleo y el Sistema Europeo de Seguro de Depósitos (EDIS). En este Parlamento estamos intentando reactivar la negociación. En el Consejo está parado. Pero es urgente.

Stéphanie Yon-Courtin, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, chers collègues, merci, Madame la Commissaire, d'être présente pour cet échange important et qui arrive au bon moment compte tenu de la situation, puisque de la Silicon Valley Bank à la Silvergate Bank en passant par la Signature Bank, c'est une nouvelle vague de défaillances bancaires sur la tech qui déferle aux États-Unis. Alors, cette vague arrivera-t-elle en Europe et comment impactera-t-elle nos banques et les entreprises de la tech européenne? Personne ne le sait vraiment aujourd'hui.

Une chose est certaine, et vous l'avez rappelé, les mécanismes d'urgence et les règles mises en place après la crise financière de 2008 sont des digues solides pour assurer la résilience de nos banques européennes. En Europe, nous testons régulièrement la résistance de nos banques face à divers risques, dont l'inflation. Les annonces faites ces derniers jours par plusieurs ministres européens de l'économie nous rassurent sur notre système solide en Europe. Mais soyons réalistes, la faillite de ces banques américaines concerne l'industrie du numérique, un secteur mouvant qui ne connaît pas de frontières.

Restons donc vigilants. Vigilants pour protéger la compétitivité des petites entreprises de la tech. Vigilants pour éviter tout risque systémique en Europe qui toucherait les banques, les citoyens européens. Il y va de la responsabilité, de la stabilité financière également et de la confiance de notre marché, de la résilience de ce marché européen. C'est à l'Autorité bancaire européenne, vous l'avez rappelé, en lien avec les autorités nationales, d'y veiller. Le Parlement européen, pour sa part, représentant plus de 450 millions de citoyens européens, doit continuer à les protéger.

Ernest Urtausun, *en nombre del Grupo Verts/ALE*. – Señora presidenta, señora comisaria, la quiebra del Silicon Valley Bank y de otros dos bancos estadounidenses de menor tamaño es motivo de preocupación, ya que se trata de la mayor quiebra desde la gran crisis financiera de 2008.

Desafortunadamente, tengo que decir que las lecciones de la crisis de 2008 parecen ya olvidadas. Llevamos mucho tiempo alertando desde mi grupo sobre el riesgo de la reversión en curso de la regulación financiera. Y el caso del Silicon Valley Bank nos da la razón. Desde las medidas desreguladoras de Trump en 2018, el Silicon Valley Bank ha estado sujeto a un escrutinio y unos requisitos regulatorios menos estrictos por motivo de proporcionalidad.

Pero, lamentablemente, tengo que decir que en la Unión se está observando esta misma tendencia, donde estamos avanzando peligrosamente hacia un Acuerdo de Basilea que no va a respetar los estándares internacionales.

Esta crisis, además, también debería ser una llamada de atención para completar la unión bancaria, como hace mucho tiempo que sabemos que tenemos que hacer. Un Sistema Europeo de Seguro de Depósitos completo aumentaría la confianza y limitaría el riesgo de quiebras bancarias.

También llama la atención, en estas últimas horas, cómo se está incumpliendo completamente de nuevo la promesa de no volver a rescatar al sector financiero con dinero público. La Corporación Federal de Seguro de Depósitos en Estados Unidos ha extendido garantías de depósitos a todos los depositantes y, además, la Junta de Reserva Federal ha anunciado que aceptará colateral a su valor nominal. En otras palabras, ganancias privadas, pérdidas para todos.

Si queremos reducir el riesgo bancario en Europa: seguro de depósitos común, refuerzo de nuestro marco de recuperación y resolución y estricto respeto del Marco internacional de Basilea.

Johan Van Overtveldt, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – Madam President, Commissioner, the bankruptcies of Silicon Valley Bank, Silvergate and Signature Bank were accidents waiting to happen. Two lessons should be drawn from this experience. First, central banks should stay the course and withstand pressure to deviate from their present policy trajectory, not only to fight inflation, but also to contain excessively speculative behaviour. Should central banks give in to the pleas for monetary expansion, then new impulses are given to the disastrous cycle of excessive debt accumulation and asset bubbles ending always in major financial accidents. Secondly, financial regulation or financial regulators always tend to fight the last war. A better way to financial stability are higher capital requirements for banks or financial institutions in general to ensure absorption of shocks and lower the probability of bailouts by taxpayers. This lesson is very relevant for the ongoing trilogues on the banking package. It is not too late to finalise the post-crisis reforms 15 years after 2008 with the faithful implementation of the Basel recommendations.

Gunnar Beck, *on behalf of the ID Group*. – Madam President, Madam Commissioner, the failure of Silicon Valley Bank is the largest bank failure since the financial crisis. The contagion risk remains non-trivial.

Two points. First, SVB was a leading tech start-ups financier. If its failure were to crush the tech bubble, we should also have to worry about dozens of billions of NGU money which was funnelled into digitalization. NGU money was created out of thin air and may well vanish into it.

Second, SVB's chief administrative officer, Joseph Gentile, was the CFO of Lehman Brothers until its collapse in 2008. He also worked for Arthur Andersen, an accounting firm that went bankrupt in 2002. Now, will this House ever address the problem, the impunity of these banksters?

Or, in view of Mr Gentile's dismal record of achievement, is he now being considered as the next ex-pat President of the European Commission?

José Gusmão, *em nome do Grupo The Left*. – Senhora Presidente, 15 anos depois da grande crise financeira, o que a crise do SVB nos mostra é que a indústria financeira é a única do mundo que continua a não se aguentar de pé sem apoios públicos e sem garantias públicas. Mesmo num tempo de política monetária restritiva, política salarial restritiva, política orçamental restritiva, para a banca continua a não haver restrições.

O problema não é que os Estados não façam o que for preciso para assegurar a estabilidade do sistema financeiro. O problema é que o mesmo princípio não valha quando se trata da vida das pessoas e dos seus direitos.

E a grande questão é saber se o BCE também irá, como a Reserva Federal americana, parar para pensar na sua política, porque a política monetária restritiva, sabemos-lo, teve um papel na crise do SVB. A Reserva Federal norte-americana vai parar para pensar e convinha que o BCE fizesse o mesmo, porque hoje sabemos que esta política monetária restritiva é ineficaz e encerra múltiplos riscos económicos, inclusive para o sistema financeiro.

E a outra questão é a de saber se a União Europeia vai continuar a apostar numa convergência com o modelo de sistema financeiro norte-americano, fortemente titularizado, ou se vai apostar num sistema mais conservador, mais prudente, com uma forte presença pública e com regulação a sério.

Jérôme Rivière (NI). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, quinze ans après la crise financière de 2008, qui a ébranlé l'économie mondiale, la faillite de la SVB, banque des start-up et de la nouvelle économie, sonne comme un avertissement face aux dérives dogmatiques du système bancaire. Si la vitesse fulgurante de la vague de retraits est liée au poids des réseaux sociaux, ne nous exonérons pas d'analyser les raisons de la mauvaise santé financière de cette banque californienne.

Certes, les trop larges investissements en bons du trésor, dont la valeur s'est effondrée avec la baisse des taux décidée par la FED pour lutter contre l'inflation, ont contribué à cette faillite. Mais plus insidieusement, comme l'ont affirmé aussi plusieurs grands patrons américains, notamment Bernie Marcus, fondateur de la chaîne de grands magasins Home Depot, elle s'explique aussi par le choix de la SVB et de quelques autres banques de réaliser des investissements en priorisant non pas la rentabilité et la sécurité pour les actionnaires, mais des sujets *woke* par principe, comme le réchauffement climatique ou la diversité. Actionnaires et salariés paient aujourd'hui le prix de cette exposition exclusive et dogmatique à un marché sous-jacent très fragile, alors que les dirigeants responsables de la banque ont précipitamment sauvé leurs intérêts personnels.

Je veux croire qu'en dépit d'un dogmatisme similaire de certains établissements financiers en Europe, la régulation bancaire européenne, beaucoup plus solide, interdirait un risque aussi inconsidéré. Souhaitons que, dans nos échanges, le dogmatisme sur ce sujet ne l'emporte pas.

José Manuel García-Margallo y Marfil (PPE). – Señora presidenta, señora comisaria, la Escritura nos habla de las vírgenes necias y las vírgenes prudentes. En la crisis de 2008 la Unión Europea se comportó como las vírgenes necias y cuando llegó el Señor no tenían aceite en el candel. En aquel momento el Banco Central Europeo tardó mucho más que sus colegas estadounidenses, japoneses o ingleses en bajar los tipos de interés o en comprar activos en los mercados. Los Gobiernos nacionales se vieron forzados a acudir al rescate de sus instituciones financieras en completa soledad, hasta bien avanzada la crisis, porque no hubo una reacción solidaria. El resultado fue unos programas de austericidio realmente notables y un torpedo en la línea de flotación del proyecto europeo.

¿Hicimos algo bien? Hicimos algo bien. Hicimos el Mecanismo Único de Supervisión y regulación de bancos, de seguros, de mercados, acciones y la Junta Europea de Riesgo Sistémico. Pero se nos quedaron temas en el tintero: completar el mercado de capitales, el seguro europeo de fondos y los mecanismos de gestión de crisis.

Y una advertencia: soy perfectamente consciente de que el objetivo principal del Banco Central es mantener la estabilidad de precios; pero sin olvidar los otros objetivos del Tratado, sin olvidar que debe actuar —debe— de tal manera que no ponga en riesgo un crecimiento, que es muy débil y que puede desembocar en recesión. La política de interés —el Banco Central es independiente— debe hacerse contemplando estos dos objetivos.

Irene Tinagli (S&D). – Madam President, thank you Commissioner for being with us for this important debate. The failure of Silicon Valley Bank teaches us some lessons. Commissioner has already outlined several of them, but I want to stress two of them in particular.

The first is that an ambitious prudential regulation is a necessary condition not only for having healthy and solid banks, but also for preventing financial dominance. The second lesson is that either there is a fully fledged bank crisis management framework able to deal with both idiosyncratic and systemic crises or, in the end, only citizens pay the bailout bill.

In the EU, we were pretty good on the first point – although the work has yet to be completed and I agree with most of the things that our rapporteur Fernández said on the Basel III negotiations – but momentum was lost on the second part, the bank crisis management framework. If we really want to strengthen the banking system and make economic policy truly independent, we have to deliver as soon as possible on one thing: the completion of the banking union.

Claude Gruffat (Verts/ALE). – Madame la Présidente, la faillite de la Silicon Valley Bank nous rappelle la Grande Dépression, une bonne vieille panique bancaire comme au début du XX^e siècle. Qui aurait pu le prévoir? Eh bien, tout simplement les superviseurs, si le gouvernement Trump n'avait pas pris le chemin de la dérégulation financière en assouplissant les exigences réglementaires pour les banques de taille moyenne.

Sans cet assouplissement, je vais prendre l'exemple de la Silicon Valley Bank, celle-ci aurait pu mener des tests de résistance qui auraient révélé sa vulnérabilité à la remontée des taux d'intérêt. Cela aurait permis à la banque et aux superviseurs de réagir à temps. Car depuis ces réformes, la petite Silicon Valley Bank a beaucoup grandi et a doublé son bilan, jusqu'à dépasser les 210 milliards d'actifs tout en continuant de bénéficier desdits allègements.

Chers collègues, nous discutons en ce moment de la révision de la régulation bancaire. La plupart des États membres, dont la France, et la majorité des groupes s'accordent pour dévier des standards internationaux et alléger les exigences applicables aux banques européennes. La faillite de la SV Bank et des autres nous avertit: ne reproduisons pas nos erreurs de la crise de 2008 et sortons, bien sûr, de la trajectoire de la dérégulation.

Michiel Hoogeveen (ECR). – Voorzitter, de val van Silicon Valley Bank is het gevolg van het roekeloze gedrag van beleidsmakers en centrale bankiers. Door het lagerentebeleid en het gratis geld werden onverantwoorde risico's genomen. Daardoor kwam er geld op de verkeerde plekken terecht. Daar ligt óók de oorzaak van de hoge inflatie. Centrale banken moesten daarom snel de rente verhogen, waardoor de banken die onverantwoorde risico's namen nu in de problemen komen. De belastingbetaler mag hier niet voor opdraaien.

We kunnen enkel hopen dat Europa gevrijwaard blijft. Wat we in ieder geval niet moeten doen, is de renteverhogingen stoppen. We moeten doorgaan met het onder controle krijgen van de inflatie, de dief van de gewone man. Dus: doorgaan met de renteverhogingen, doorgaan met het opbouwen van kapitaalbuffers van banken, en eindelijk hervormingen doorvoeren en schulden afbouwen.

Voorzitter, inflatie aanpakken gaat zelden met een zachte landing. Laten we hopen dat een domino-effect ons bespaard blijft.

Antonio Maria Rinaldi (ID). – Signor Presidente, Commissario, onorevoli colleghi, premesso che l'attuale crisi bancaria statunitense per ora ha dei contorni molto diversi rispetto a quelle precedenti, non possiamo fare a meno di evidenziare queste considerazioni.

Primo: il fallimento della *Silicon Valley Bank* è stato innescato dal default di una piattaforma finanziaria e bancaria legata ad attività in criptovalute. Siamo sicuri che il sistema bancario europeo sia esente dallo stesso rischio?

Secondo: la politica monetaria intrapresa nell'ultimo anno dalla BCE sull'aumento dei tassi per contrastare l'aumento dell'inflazione espone oltremodo il sistema bancario finanziario a rischi sistemici come quello del 2008: all'aumento repentino dei tassi ha corrisposto una caduta dei corsi degli *asset* obbligazionari in circolazione, generando potenziali problemi di liquidità nel sistema bancario.

Potrebbe manifestarsi quello che gli economisti chiamano la «teoria del cigno nero». Queste considerazioni dovrebbero indurre la BCE, come già sta accadendo per la Fed, a rivedere immediatamente le sue prospettive sulla dinamica dei tassi di interesse, unitamente a una comunicazione più rassicurante nei confronti di cittadini e imprese, già enormemente colpiti dal recente aumento del costo di prestiti e mutui.

Danuta Maria Hübner (PPE). – Madam President, the failure of SVB is attributable to the bank's mismanagement and its particular risk profile. However, the bank's mismanagement went unnoticed because the bank was not captured by the regulatory scrutiny, as it was not under the scope of prudential rules. This is why, while the ultimate fault rests with the bank itself, there are important lessons for the regulators and two in particular. First, that the politically motivated watering-down of prudential rules and safeguards must be avoided, and also agreed international standards should be implemented faithfully and promptly.

After the 2008 crisis, the Dodd Frank Act defined banks with 50 and more billion dollars in assets as systemically important and subject to the strictest scrutiny. But in 2018, the Trump administration raised this threshold five times. Conveniently, SVB stayed just under the 250 billion in 2021 and 2022, escaped regulatory scrutiny, and the lack of liquidity caused the bank's demise.

The second message: I trust that in the review of the EU's crisis management and deposit insurance (CMDI) framework, we will ensure that mid-sized banks do not become a source of systemic risk. And we need an ambitious review of the CMDI framework promptly.

With today's rules, if we had a similar situation, the ECB would not have the same capacity or the same tools to intervene as the US authorities. Our banking union remains incomplete and that's why I hope that the Commission will include the ECB's recommendations on the CMDI revision, including a bigger role for deposit guarantee schemes. But we all know that what we really need is an agreement on this.

Marek Belka (S&D). – Madam President, well, high inflation requires tightening of monetary policy. Tightening of monetary policy brings about some collateral damage. We were afraid of monetary policy being overly restrictive. We in Europe were and still are afraid of market segmentation. But the thing that we never really feared so much was financial instability.

What we got from the US is a free-of-charge alarm bell. It really didn't touch us, but it made us more aware of the risks and the lessons we can draw from it is: number one, no time to soften regulatory regime, and second, be prepared for higher financing costs for start-ups, for development.

Rasmus Andresen (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin! Wir werden aktuell Zeuginnen und Zeugen der größten US-Bankenpleite seit 2008. Die Pleite der Silicon Valley Bank hat viel Unruhe auf den europäischen Märkten ausgelöst, wie auch die aktuellen heutigen Kursverluste von Credit Suisse zeigen. Die Ratingagentur Moody's hat sogar den Ausblick für das US-Bankensystem auf negativ gestuft.

Es scheint, als hätten viele die Lehren aus der Finanzkrise von 2008 wieder vergessen. Denn diese Krise ist zum großen Teil hausgemacht. Sie ist auch eine direkte Folge der Deregulierungspolitik von Donald Trump. Im Streben nach immer höheren Profiten wurden wirksame Gesetze für kleine und mittelgroße Banken außer Kraft gesetzt.

Aber wir haben keinen Grund, mit dem Finger einfach auf die USA zu zeigen. Auch bei uns stehen die Banken immer stärker unter Druck. Auch bei uns wurden zu viele Schlupflöcher in einige Gesetze verhandelt. Während der Verhandlungen zum Bankenpaket haben beispielsweise auch Konservative und Liberale hier im Haus dafür gesorgt, dass Ausnahmen für kleine und mittelgroße Banken in Beschlüsse hinein formuliert wurden.

Wir brauchen wirksame Regulierung, und wir brauchen eine stärkere Verantwortung der Banken. Sie müssen durch Risikovorsorge für Verfehlungen geradestehen. Die Banken – nicht die Steuerzahlerinnen und Steuerzahler – stehen in der Verantwortung!

André Rougé (ID). – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, chers collègues, la faillite de la SVB rappelle les crises passées et leur contexte géopolitique, social et économique. Lorsque Bruno Le Maire explique aux Français que cette crise ne traversera pas les frontières, cela rappelle M^{me} Buzyn expliquant que le virus n'avait pas de passeport. Le cours du Crédit suisse chute de 30 % cet après-midi. Et l'aventure hasardeuse dans l'immobilier chinois, les actifs fébriles de la Deutsche Bank, étroitement en lien avec la Société générale et Monte dei Paschi, nous rappellent que la finance est une bulle prête à éclater.

L'Union européenne coupe les États de leur souveraineté, mais n'hésitera pas à leur faire payer une nouvelle crise liée à sa politique économique et financière. Tout cela dans un contexte de surendettement justifié par l'invocation de l'argent magique. Les Européens ne veulent pas payer une crise pourtant prévisible. L'Union européenne doit réagir. Inflation, faillites de nos entreprises, surréglementation, surtaxation, chômage, croissance en berne, mise en concurrence, investissements discutables, surendettement et dépendance à des puissances étrangères: cette poussée de fièvre américaine est un avertissement qu'il faut prendre au sérieux.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Tsvetelina Penkova (S&D). – Madam President, Commissioner, it was very interesting and a good overview that you have presented to us. I just want to bring attention to two things. The first one is the fact that the banks that have collapsed have significant investments in start-up and technology companies, which of course is going to have a serious impact on the sector. So hence, I'm calling for a more stable regulatory environment when we speak about the EU market that protects start-ups and facilitates the protection of investors and capital going in that direction. That's the first point. And the second point is based on something that you have said that we should be careful and more diligent when we are applying stricter rules when it comes to banks operating in the EU market, but they originate from abroad. Based on that, I urge you to have a look at our relationship with the UK and to strike a deal there because the financial sector is quite significantly dependent. The European financial sector is dependent on the UK one and we need a proper deal and regulation there.

Fabio Massimo Castaldo (NI). – Signora Presidente, gentile Commissaria, onorevoli colleghi, abbiamo seguito con grande apprensione il collasso della *Silicon Valley Bank* (SVB) di venerdì scorso, soprattutto visto il potenziale riverbero che ha avuto sulla filiale inglese e il possibile contagio nel nostro continente.

Di fronte anche ai segnali inquietanti che arrivano dal *Credit Suisse*, vediamo un *pattern* tristemente simile a quanto accaduto 15 anni fa. Da una parte siamo rassicurati dai segnali positivi delle nostre autorità di supervisione sugli ottimi livelli di capitalizzazione e di liquidità delle banche europee, ma dall'altra speriamo, anzi chiediamo con grande forza, alla luce di questa crisi e delle relative preoccupazioni, che la BCE ascolti la voce della ragione e della prudenza, impegnandosi a scongiurare ulteriori aumenti dei tassi di interesse che farebbero impennare i costi di finanziamento oltre il dovuto, già insostenibili per imprese e famiglie.

Inoltre, abbiamo anche visto che, nonostante la SVB fosse considerata una delle migliori banche degli Stati Uniti fino a qualche giorno prima del suo collasso, e nonostante il complesso quadro normativo che abbiamo adottato già da 15 anni a questa parte, le crisi possono comunque accadere.

Un cigno nero non è mai impossibile. Abbiamo quindi il dovere di garantire i depositi dei nostri risparmiatori che devono essere sempre messi al sicuro. La Commissione e il Consiglio devono riprendere velocemente i negoziati sull'EDIS. Senza la terza gamba dell'Unione bancaria, il tavolo non sarà mai stabile.

Karen Melchior (Renew). – Madam President, I would like to thank my colleagues and the Commissioner for a lovely and enlightening debate. Our economic times are changing. Interest rates are at a record high, and that means that there is no more easy money, including for our start-ups. The SVB made some very risky choices during the pandemic and when interest rates were low. They also made a risky choice by concentrating on the tech sector. However, these management choices by the SVB have provided a collapse of the bank because they did not, in the US, have the same financial regulation that we do in the EU.

But where does this lead our start-up sector? Because many start-ups in the US sought to get money from the SVB because they were specialised in this. They were willing to lend to the start-ups and they had services that the start-ups needed. How do we make sure that we provide the money for our start-ups that they need in Europe? We have the financial regulation for stability, but we also need the money for start-ups in Europe so that they stay here and that they can scale up.

Mislav Kolakušić (NI). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, živimo u svijetu kojim vlada virtualni novac u bankama i burzama bez ikakvog pokrića u financijskom ili bilo kojem drugom smislu. Miki Maus sustav nepostojećeg novca nastoji se održati na način da se građanima što više oteža ili u potpunosti onemogućuje podizanje gotovine.

KBC Bruxelles otkaže račune onima koji se drznu podignuti dio vlastitog novca s vlastitog računa. Danas gotovo ne postoji banka koja može preživjeti da jedan posto, samo jedan posto štediša zatraži isplatu svog novca. To se dogodilo i u Americi.

Ukidanje ili zabrana gotovine neće spasiti financijski sustav jer se on jednako raspada i u slučaju prekomjernog štampanje gotovog novca ili prekomjernog izmišljanja virtualnog novca.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Die Präsidentin. – Sehr geehrte Frau Kommissarin, Sie haben es gesehen, eine Diskussion, breit gestreute Argumente, sehr reichhaltig. Sie sind an Wort, um Ihre Schlussfolgerungen zu ziehen.

Mairead McGuinness, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, this has been a really important debate, so thank you all very much for the contributions that you've made. And to say very clearly that we all know there is no room for complacency and that we do need to look and to learn lessons. But, to repeat a core point that I make frequently, the visitors in this Chamber today, they know that we are responsible for financial stability. That's in the core of my mandate, and I take that very, very seriously, as colleagues in this House do. So it's very important that we do watch and see what happened in the US. We will continue to monitor very closely all of the events.

Also, I thank you for your support on the crisis management and deposit insurance proposal, which will come very soon. We will have an ambitious proposal and I would really urge for your support for our ambitions in this area.

This is the year in which we mark 30 years of the single market, and I'm sad to say that we have not a single market in capital. We have not completed banking union. We have not completed capital markets union. We either look at that as a problem or an opportunity. And I see it as a real opportunity.

To the point about the tech sector in Europe needing finance, this is a really important issue and if we complete our capital markets union, we will provide that finance in Europe to allow start-ups to grow up. And I think the points were very, very well made.

So we remain ambitious for the financial sector. We remain very conscious and cautious about the new environment that we are living in, and we will reflect very closely on what has happened in the US, mindful that we are negotiating the banking package. I have to say, in the first triologue, under the stewardship of the Chair of the CONT Committee, Ms Tinagli, the atmosphere was very good for a positive outcome and I hope that that will continue, and we as a Commission will support you in that.

And the points made about being faithful to Basel implementation, I would absolutely support all of those. We have time in this mandate to develop the single market for capital. We will not complete it in this mandate, but I think we should collectively want to make huge progress. And I urge and thank you in advance for your support for that objective.

Die Präsidentin. – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Ich möchte mich ganz herzlich bei allen bedanken, die sich so lebhaft in die Debatte eingebracht haben.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)

Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE), kirjallinen. –Viime viikkoina olemme seuranneet huolestuneina Yhdysvaltain Silicon Valley Bankin kaatumista ja sen vaikutuksia Euroopan talouteen. On sanomattakin selvää, että tilanne on vakava, sillä Yhdysvallat on maailman suurin talous ja sen pankkisektorin haasteet vaikuttavat koko maailmaan. Keskuspankit ympäri maailmaa ovat nostaneet korkoja epätavalliseen tahtiin, mikä näkyy eurooppalaisten arjessa pian. Aikoinaan kymmenen vuoden takaisen finanssikriisin jälkeen tehdyt toimenpiteet, kuten Euroopan vakausmekanismi ja sen yhteydessä toimiva kriisirahasto, ovat merkittävästi lisänneet Euroopan talousvakautta. Uuden laajamittaisen finanssikriisin todennäköisyys on kuitenkin hyvin pieni, koska edellisen finanssikriisin jälkeen tehty laaja sektorin vakauttaminen ja lainsäädännön uudistaminen ovat vahvistaneet uskoa eurooppalaiseen rahoitusmarkkinaan ja sen kestävyYTEEN. Pahimpaan on silti varauduttava, ja EKP:n on tehtävä kaikkensa rahoitusvakauden säilyttämisen eteen ja uuden pankkikriisin välttämiseksi Euroopassa.

13. Refuerzo de la defensa de la Unión en el contexto de la guerra en Ucrania: aceleración de la producción y del suministro de armas y munición a Ucrania (debate)

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärungen des Rates und der Kommission zur Stärkung der Verteidigung der EU vor dem Hintergrund des Kriegs in der Ukraine: Beschleunigung der Produktion und Lieferung von Waffen und Munition an die Ukraine (2023/2609(RSP)).

Jessika Roswall, President-in-Office of the Council. – Madam President, honourable Members, Commissioner, thank you for raising the issue of speeding up the production and delivery of weapons and ammunition to Ukraine. It comes very timely and only a few days after a crucial discussion on the issue at the Stockholm informal meeting of defence ministers.

At the moment, Ukraine continues to face Russia's brutal war of aggression with significant casualties amongst the civilian population and regular and indiscriminate attacks on civilian and critical infrastructure. The situation on the ground remains therefore critical, and that was the message that the Ukrainian Minister of Defence Reznikov gave to his EU colleagues last week in Stockholm.

It is absolutely clear that that Ukraine's ability to protect its territorial integrity depends to a high degree of military assistance, in particular from the EU and Member States.

We have already made a large contribution to expand the number of Western artillery systems, in particular 155 mm-calibre systems, because the reality is that Ukraine is still outnumbered by Russian troops.

This is why EU defence ministers at the meeting in Stockholm welcomed the High Representative's proposal for a three-track approach that will serve two key objectives: to speed up the delivery and to ensure the joint procurement of artillery ammunition for Ukraine. The first track is European Peace Facility (EPF) assistance measure to incentivise Member States to deliver ammunition to Ukraine from their stocks. The second track is another EPF assistant measure to facilitate the joint procurement of ammunition, building on a project of the European Defence Agency or via a lead nation procuring on behalf of at least three Member States. Regarding the third track, ministers are broadly in favour of measures to help the industry, address supply chain bottlenecks and ramp up production.

Such measures are key for the immediate assistance to Ukraine but also for the long-term development of the European defence industry. We therefore look forward to the concrete measures that the Commission is working on to this effect.

The details of the three-track approach are currently being discussed in the Council and Ministers will return to this issue at the Foreign Affairs Council on 20 March. It is the Presidency expectation that we will be able to reach a political agreement on the main aspects.

Let me finish by underlining, in broader terms, that the Swedish Presidency is absolutely committed to continuing to provide EU support to Ukraine on all various domains and across the various Council formations. I am sure that we can count on Parliament's strong support for our endeavours. Thank you very much for your attention and I look forward to the debate.

Mairead McGuinness, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, thank you, Minister, Jessika, thank you, Colleagues, I take this debate on behalf of my colleague, Commissioner Breton and HR/VP Borrell. And as we know, over the last year the entire European Union has mobilised all its tools in support of Ukraine, including considerable military support.

A conservative estimate puts EU Member States' collective effort and support at EUR 12 billion. However, the Ukrainian Minister of Defence has informed us that they have an urgent need to ensure the stable supply of 155 mm artillery ammunition.

This urgent need calls for coordinated European response and that is what the Commission, together with the High Representative and the European Defence Agency, have recently proposed an ambitious, pragmatic and rapid response around three intrinsically linked areas: immediately transfer ammunition from existing stockpiles; structure demand by placing massive orders with European industry, covering both the needs of Ukraine and those of Member States; increase European production capacity massively and rapidly, which is a prerequisite for these orders to be met.

To provide Ukraine with the right support at speed we need to act in parallel on these three axes. Without an increase in industrial production, we will not create confidence for Member States to transfer more ammunition from their stocks. We want them to know that those stocks will be replenished fast in the face of a threat that is likely to last.

The Defence Joint Procurement Task Force has established a fairly precise industrial mapping of ammunition production capacities, particularly for artillery shells. We identified 15 producers in the 11 Member States. We also know that the current EU production capacity is larger than in many of our non-EU partners. However, almost all of this production is already contracted.

The good news is that the potential of EU industry to produce 155 mm ammunition remains significant, and we need to unlock this potential. Signing large contracts consolidated at European level will send the appropriate signal to industry to take action, but this is not a guarantee of delivery on time.

Our industrial objectives are clear: reduce production time and increase production volumes and, above all, secure the earliest possible availability of the required volumes. In order to do this, we need to support an increase in capacity and address bottlenecks, especially in the value chain. We need to monitor industrial ramp-up efforts and ensure contracting of industrial production conditions.

The Commission is ready to mobilise its regulatory clout and the available resources as appropriate to support the defence industry to ramp up. We are working on all options, including mobilising the EU budget if needed. More specifically, we recently put on the table the European Defence Industry Reinforcement through common Procurement Act. This short-term instrument with EUR 500 million could be used to accelerate industrial production of the required ammunition.

The support of Parliament to reach swift agreement will be essential. If necessary, we are also ready to mobilise other resources. At the same time, we need to be able to mobilise private finance, including from the EIB and banks. To that end, Member State support will be essential.

Finally, we know what industry is doing today. Now we need to know what they will do tomorrow and what they could do tomorrow. In that light, Commissioner Breton has started to visit each of the 15 companies identified by the task force to discuss with them directly and understand their constraints and to see how to help them increase their production capacity. Thank you. I look forward to the debate.

Michael Gahler, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, Commissioner, Minister, indeed, time is of the essence to effectively counter the aggressor and for the Ukrainians to push him back from Ukrainian territory. And we have lost time. Too much time last year because the reality was that many Member States, including my own, remained too passive for too long, in spite of strong verbal commitments. The Netherlands – to name one positive example – in 2022 purchased twice as much ammunition in Germany than the German army itself. While Denmark, already in June last year, refurbished M113 transport tanks in a German company in Flensburg for Ukraine, the German government did not give the order to start the refurbishing of 100 Leopard 1 tanks that were stocked in the very same factory, FFG, where the Danish tanks were already refurbished. That practice must end. I hope that last week's Stockholm informal discussion will lead to decisions that are swiftly implemented, especially for the ammunition that is so desperately needed. And I hope that our industry is really pulling all strings, ramping up capacities and not waiting until they are tasked by whatever government. I can assure them your products will be needed and therefore be purchased for a long period because we cannot assume that the evil empire will perish soon. And we need to deliver to Ukraine as long as it takes for Ukraine to win. And we need to replenish our stocks in time as soon as possible in order to be able to defend ourselves.

Last year, already with a colleague, Sven Simon, we published an article in the German Handelsblatt suggesting we should think of a European Lend-Lease Act, the one that the United States had already in the Second World War to be able to swiftly supply Britain and other allies with the needed weapons. Perhaps you might embark on such a reflection again, a European Lend-Lease act, which would facilitate enormously the purchasing. We need to do what we can as long as it takes. *Slava Ukraini!*

Tonino Picula, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Madam President, Commissioner, Minister, we are all aware of our long-standing problems in defence: duplication of resources, lack of coordination and collective action, and low speed of developing them jointly.

For a long time, there was no real need nor political will. Now there is a both but we have institutional obstacles that prevent us from doing it at the needed speed.

The inability of the allies to supply Ukraine with sufficient resources would be a decisive factor in this war. We should do all possible to avoid this scenario.

Our political goal should be clear: we should not only help Ukraine to resist Russian offensive actions, we need to supply Ukraine to win this war. More resources allocation and reorientation of existing defence production to meet the current needs are essential.

In the past year, we have shown that we can act together. Let us not make our efforts go in vain. *Slava Ukraini!*

Nathalie Loiseau, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Madame la Présidente, il y a le feu à nos portes et nous ne pouvons pas regarder ailleurs. L'Ukraine est assaillie et l'Europe menacée. Nous avons tout à gagner à une victoire de l'Ukraine alors qu'une victoire de la Russie nous ferait perdre notre sécurité et notre place dans le monde.

Dans ce contexte, il nous faut actionner tous les leviers dont nous disposons en même temps. Fournir en urgence des munitions à Kiev, d'où qu'elles viennent, en nous appuyant sur la Facilité européenne de paix. Être capables de tenir dans la durée en augmentant nos productions propres, à la fois pour continuer à aider l'Ukraine, parce que la guerre sera longue, et en nous assurant que nous avons pour nous-mêmes les équipements dont nous avons besoin. Nos industries de défense doivent être encouragées à produire plus en ayant de la visibilité sur des commandes que nous devons passer en commun. C'est le but d'Edirpa, un instrument destiné à nous rendre plus résilients, plus souverains et plus sûrs.

La paix et la liberté n'ont pas de prix, mais elles ont un coût. Notre devoir est de l'assumer et d'expliquer à nos compatriotes pourquoi l'aide militaire à l'Ukraine et le renforcement de nos moyens de défense exigent des efforts importants autant qu'indispensables.

Viola von Cramon-Taubadel, *im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Mit der Unterzeichnung der UN-Charta verpflichten sich alle Länder in Artikel 2 Absatz 4 dazu, Gewalt in internationalen Beziehungen zu unterlassen. Artikel 51 bestärkt das Recht von Staaten zur Selbstverteidigung. Für mich ist die Situation absolut klar. Wir unterstützen die Ukraine in ihrem Recht auf Selbstverteidigung.

Als Grüne teilweise noch etwas schwer zu vermitteln, aber es bleibt wichtig, die Ukraine militärisch zu stärken. Denn wir haben das Recht, in Frieden zu leben, und das Recht, uns zu verteidigen, wenn unser Leben und dieser Frieden angegriffen werden. Jeder Panzer, jede Drohne, jede Patrone, die wir der Ukraine zur Verfügung stellen, rettet unzählige ukrainische Leben. Jede Unterstützung, ob finanziell oder militärisch, ist eine Investition in die Sicherheit Europas. Wenn die Ukraine fällt, werden auch weitere Länder fallen.

Die Welt, wie wir sie vor 2022 kannten, gibt es nicht mehr. Putin wählte den Krieg statt Frieden, die Konfrontation statt Zusammenarbeit, Imperialismus statt einer regelbasierten Ordnung. In dieser neuen Welt, in der der Stärkere Recht haben will, können wir uns den Luxus nicht leisten, unbewaffnet zu sein und unsere Verbündeten nicht zu beschützen. *Slawa Ukrajini.*

Zdzisław Krasnodębski, w imieniu grupy ECR. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Muszę powiedzieć, że gdyby koledzy byli tak zdecydowani parę lat temu, to w ogóle by do tej wojny nie doszło. Nie musielibyśmy mówić „sława Ukrainie”, bo Ukraina nie byłaby przedmiotem agresji rosyjskiej. Zupełnie niedawne były czasy, kiedy armia, przemysł obronny wydawały się przeżytkiem, zwłaszcza tradycyjne rodzaje broni, broń pancerna, artyleria, wojska terytorialne. I Europa żyła w absurdalnym poczuciu bezpieczeństwa. W Berlinie, w Paryżu, w Brukseli wierzono w siłę perswazji, w (słowa niezrozumiałe) handel, w dobre intencje Rosji. Tylko myśmy w Europie środkowo-wschodniej nie mogli tego zrozumieć. A dzisiaj się okazuje, że nie ma wystarczającej ilości amunicji, a także zdolności do jej szybkiej produkcji, że rzekoma potęga przemysłowa, Unia Europejska, nie ma środków, by wesprzeć Ukrainę szybko – być może teraz zaczniemy – w jej walce, że trzeba remontować stare czołgi, które rdzewiały dotąd spokojnie. I okazuje się, że jest potrzebna armia zdolna do obrony terytorium i prowadzenia konwencjonalnej wojny i że wojsko nie jest tylko do prowadzenia misji pokojowej.

Więc musimy, po pierwsze, zapewnić – tak szybko jak to jest możliwe – zaopatrzenie Ukrainy w amunicję i sprzęt wojskowy. I tutaj jesteśmy zgodni. I cieszę się, że jest ta decyzja ministrów obrony, słusznie podjęta poza Parlamentem Europejskim, gdyż stracilibyśmy tylko niepotrzebnie dużo czasu, i niestety przykład EDIRPY to potwierdza. Po drugie, potrzebujemy także odbudowy i rozbudowy przemysłu obronnego krajów europejskich w długofalowej strategii. I tu jest potrzebna współpraca z Parlamentem Europejskim. Po trzecie, musimy pracować nad wspólną kulturą strategiczną narodów europejskich, wyciągając wnioski z błędów polityki appeasementu ostatnich dekad. Bez wspólnej kultury strategicznej nie będzie ani wspólnej polityki bezpieczeństwa z prawdziwego zdarzenia, ani wspólnej polityki zagranicznej.

Özlem Demirel, im Namen der Fraktion The Left. – Frau Präsidentin! 384 Tage und keine einzige diplomatische Maßnahme der EU zur Beendigung des Krieges in der Ukraine. Stattdessen hat die EU die Verunsicherung in der Bevölkerung hier massiv genutzt, um die sogenannte Diplomatiemacht EU in eine Militärunion umzuwandeln, um die gesellschaftlichen Hürden gegen Militarismus und bisherige Tabus gegen Waffenlieferungen in Kriegsgebiete beiseite zu schieben.

Für die vielen bedeutet Krieg Tod, Leid, Verwüstung, für einige wenige ist Krieg die Party, um in Chefetagen die Sektorkernen knallen zu lassen. So am offenkundigsten für die Rüstungsindustrie. Seit dem Überfall Russlands auf die Ukraine ist die Rheinmetall-Aktie in den DAX aufgestiegen. Ihr Wert hat sich verdoppelt. Jetzt plant Rheinmetall sogar eine Panzerfabrik in der Ukraine. Sie reden davon, auch die Rüstungsindustrie in der EU auszubauen.

Die Menschen in der EU fordern aber Frieden! Denn nur Frieden bedeutet Sicherheit für die Menschen. Sie fordern soziale Gerechtigkeit und nicht Kriegsgeschrei. Es ist kein Zufall, dass der Roman von Erich Maria Remarque *Im Westen nichts Neues* den Oscar erhalten hat. Die Menschen in Europa haben aus ihrer Geschichte gelernt. Was haben Sie gelernt?

Елена Йончева (S&D). – Г-жо Председател, колеги, днес всички говорят, че искат мир в Украйна и зареждат боеприпаси в оръжията на Украйна. Европа се е превърнала в снабдител, а трябва да е лидер, да предложи решения.....

(Председателят прекъсва изказването заради шум в залата.)

President. – Sorry, I would like you to start again, please. And I just really say to those quarrelling not to do so here in the plenary. We listen to the speakers. So if you could start again, please.

Елена Йончева (S&D). – Г-жо Председател, колеги, днес всички говорят, че искат мир в Украйна и зареждат боеприпаси в оръжията на Украйна. Европа се е превърнала в снабдител, а трябва да е лидер, да предложи решения. Европейците не искат война в Европа. Държавите, които бяха определени да бъдат на предната отбранителна линия, не искат война. Българите също не желаят да бъдат въвличани в този конфликт и всички ние искаме, настояваме да се сложи край на тази жестокост, на тази бруталност в Украйна.

Един мъдър световен лидер, папа Франциск, ни каза наскоро: „Краят на войната може да бъде постигнат само чрез конкретни мирни инициативи.“ Милиарди долари изпратихме в помощ на Украйна и въпреки това, въпреки това ескалацията се засилива. Прекратяването на огъня, търсенето на компромисни решения е пътят, който може да спаси Украйна и да предотврати самоунищожението. Тази война няма да има победители. Никои не е спечелил война срещу огромна ядрена сила. Европейският съюз е създаден, за да съхрани мира. Може би все още имаме шанс да го направим. Може би.

Guy Verhofstadt (Renew). – Madam President, the problems that Mr Gahler and Ms Loiseau have indicated – a lack of ammunition that is there for the moment, the fact that some countries who make ammunition don't want to send it to Ukraine, like Switzerland – this is all proof of the fact that we have an enormous problem in Europe, and that's the lack of a European defence community. Without the help of the Americans, this war would be already over and in the wrong direction, with the wrong result. We don't have a European defence community. And so, what I hope is that the Commission comes forward, as fast as possible, during the war, by the end of the war, with a strategic concept of creating a European defence community. It's not because you buy together in the EPF some weapons that you have a European defence community. It's a good measure, but it's not enough. The training of soldiers, it is good that we do that. But that's not a European defence community. A European defence community is putting together the EUR 250 billion we spend on defence. We spend 30% of the Americans on defence and can only do 10% of the operations of the American Army. Why? Duplication, duplication, duplication. One hundred and thirteen weapon systems – the problem in Ukraine today. Also in ammunition.

And so what the European Commission and the European institutions and the European Council have to do is, as fast as possible, before the end of the war, come up with a strategic concept for European defence – not in contradiction with NATO, but as the European pillar of NATO. That has to be the lesson of this brutal war and this invasion of Russia in Ukraine.

Nicolae Ștefănuță (Verts/ALE). – Doamna Yoncheva, ce ironie să pomeniți *Nichts neues im Westen*, și să nu spuneți că acolo erau soldați, trei soldați la o pușcă, în Primul Război Mondial.

Domnule Wallace, ce ironie să vă pese de săracii lumii, de cei din Sudul slab dezvoltat și să îl sprijiniți pe Putin în această casă și să spuneți că ucrainenii nu au nevoie de ajutor. Statele membre care au stocuri de armă, la ce le țineți? Pentru ce zi le țineți? Acum, când mor alții pentru interesele voastre, la ce bun le mai țineți acasă?

Noi trebuie să ajutăm Europa, pe Ucraina cu *Peace Facility*, Facilitatea Europeană pentru Pace, iar statele membre trebuie să livreze tot ce pot. Și președintele Zelenski spus foarte clar care îi sunt nevoile: artileria este numărul 1 – sisteme, cât și muniție, precum obuze în cantități mari, pentru a opri Rusia. Nu pentru a trage în teritoriul lor, ci pentru a-i da afară din al nostru. Despre asta este vorba.

(Vorbitorul a fost de acord să răspundă unei intervenții de tip „cartonaș albastru”)

Mick Wallace (The Left), blue-card speech. – I'm actually surprised, Nicolae, that you tell lies about me. I have never in my life said a good word about Putin, but you're buying into the mainstream media narrative that because we fight for peace, we're accused of being Putin puppets. We have no interest in Putin or in what Russia is up to. We've condemned the war. It's completely illegal. Why are you buying in? Are you trying to play it to your own media by telling lies about me? What's wrong with you? And if you're so goddamn fond of the war, why aren't you over there fighting yourself?

Nicolae Ștefănuță (Verts/ALE), blue-card reply. – I think you are Irish, if my memory serves me well, but you might have been Chamberlain in the 1930s proclaiming peace, a peace that is so elusive that it led to the biggest catastrophe of the Second World War because actions were not taken when the time was right. How did the extreme left in this house become equal to the extreme right of other days?

Javi López (S&D). – Señora presidenta, la invasión de Ucrania ha sido probablemente la sacudida geoestratégica más importante para Europa desde el fin de la caída del Muro de Berlín. Pero también ha evidenciado nuestras carencias y nuestros retos en materia de defensa y de seguridad. Un país agredido y un país agresor.

Y obviamente, Europa busca la paz: una paz justa, que respete los principios de soberanía e integridad territorial. Pero para buscar una paz justa, hoy, son indispensables el apoyo a aquel que se defiende en legítima defensa y la asistencia militar que se ha dado y se debe continuar dando a Ucrania. Estar en contra de la asistencia militar no es estar a favor de la paz, es aceptar, por la vía de los hechos, que Ucrania sea un país sometido a la barbarie y la brutalidad: eso es lo que supone hoy.

No solo ha sido, obviamente, una señal de alerta; también es un llamamiento a la acción, a la acción en materia de defensa para construir capacidades propias, una industria propia, para utilizar, obviamente, las economías de escala y coordinar nuestras compras para continuar asistiendo a aquel que continúa defendiéndose en legítima defensa.

Ivars Ijabs (Renew). – Priekšsēdētājas kundze! Cienījamā komisāres kundze! Miers Eiropā šobrīd ir atkarīgs no Ukrainas aizsardzības spējām, un Ukraina Bahmutā šobrīd aizstāv visus mūs, lai mēs šeit varētu sēdēt un lemt. Ir nožēlojami, ka Eiropas Aizsardzības aģentūra šajos 13 mēnešos nav spējusi nonākt līdz kopīgiem aizsardzības iepirkumiem. Tāpēc ir jārikojas mums — Eiropas Parlamentam, ar Eiropas Aizsardzības industrijas stiprināšanas likumu ar kopīgiem iepirkumiem, kuram ir jātiek pieņemtam pēc iespējas ātrāk.

Mums tajā likumā ir jālidzvaro, no vienas puses, protams, šis tūlītējais uzdevums atjaunot tos aizsardzības materiālu krājums, kas ir nosūtīti Ukrainai no dalībvalstīm, no otras puses — tas ir jautājums par vidēja termiņa uzdevumu attīstīt mūsu aizsardzības industriju šeit, Eiropā, mūsu ražošanas jaudas. Tie 500 miljoni, kas ir piedāvāti no Komisijas, protams, ir niecīga summa, ņemot vērā tās Ukrainas aizsardzības vajadzības. Bet mums ir jāsāk beidzot rīkoties un nevis jāgaida uz kaut kādām lielākām summām kaut kad tālā, nezināmā nākotnē.

Reinhard Bütikofer (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin, verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Es ist in der Tat schlimm, dass wir die Kapazität unserer Rüstungsindustrie hochfahren müssen. Aber wir tun das nicht, weil die EU plötzlich kriegsgeil geworden wäre, sondern wir müssen das tun, weil Russland zum Aggressor geworden ist, der nicht nur die Ukraine von der Landkarte löschen will, sondern die ganze europäische Friedens- und Sicherheitsarchitektur zerstören will. Deswegen müssen wir das tun.

Ich frage mich, wieso Sie eigentlich ihre Forderungen nicht an das faschistische Regime in Moskau richten, wieso Sie die ganze Zeit so tun, als läge es in der Macht der EU, den Krieg zu beenden! Haben Sie schon einmal zur Kenntnis genommen, dass die Ukraine das Recht auf Selbstverteidigung hat, dass die UNO-Charta verlangt, dass Russland sich zurückziehen muss, die nationale Souveränität und die territoriale Integrität der Ukraine akzeptieren muss? Wenn Sie so hochtrabende Worte im Mund führen, warum sagen Sie das nicht ein einziges Mal?

Nach der Logik, die Sie vertreten, hätte man die Anti-Hitler-Koalition verurteilen müssen, weil sie den Aggressor mit Waffen bekämpft? Das hat nichts mit Friedenspolitik zu tun, Frau Demirel; die Lügen, die Sie hier verbreiten, sind die Lügen der fünften Kolonne Moskaus.

Die Präsidentin. – Die ordentliche Rednerliste ist damit geschlossen.

Blaue Karten werden an jene Rednerinnen und Redner gegeben, die noch nicht die Gelegenheit hatten, sich in der Debatte zu Wort zu melden.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Katarína Roth Neveďalová (S&D). – Vážená pani predsedajúca, ja absolútne nesúhlasím s tým, čo tu všetci rozprávajú, že by sme mali spoločne obstarávať zbrane. Vidíme, ako to dopadlo so spoločným obstaraním vakcín. Ale hlavne v prvom rade si myslím, že my nie sme inštitúcia, ktorá sa má zaoberať vojenskými a obrannými vôbec vecami. Veď my máme sami napísané v našich zmluvách, že našou obrannou politikou je udržiavanie mieru, predchádzanie konfliktom, vojenské poradenstvo, odzbrojovanie a humanitárna pomoc. My tu ideme proti niečomu, čo vôbec ani nemáme robiť. To znamená, že ako toto vysvetlíme občanom? Ja súhlasím, že treba Ukrajine pomáhať, ale nemyslím si, že tým, že teraz Európska únia spoločne začne obstarávať zbrane, že to je niečo, čo je riešením pre tento konflikt, ktorý sa na Ukrajinu momentálne deje. Nesúhlasím s tým. Myslím si, že vojenskou inštitúciou je NATO. Krajiny Európskej únie, ktoré chceli byť v NATO, v ňom sú, tie, ktoré chceli vojensky spolupracovať, spolupracujú a nie je naším miestom a naším právom, aby sme sa vôbec zaoberali takýmito otázkami. To nám občania nedali.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, Russia invaded Ukraine; it was illegal, it was 100% wrong and we've condemned it from day one. We've also condemned the fact that the EU has done so little to develop the dialogue and diplomacy to bring it to an end.

Armoured cars, tanks and guns did not bring peace to the streets of Belfast and Derry. They brought misery, that's what they brought. And only poor people die in these wars, whether they like it or not. The middle class and the rich don't fight in these wars.

At the recent Munich Security Conference, when asked why Namibia abstained at the UN on the vote regarding the war, then Namibian Prime Minister said our focus is on resolving the problem, not on shifting blame. The money used to buy weapons, she said, could be better utilised to promote development in Ukraine, in Africa, in Asia and other places in Europe itself where many people are experiencing hardships.

This is madness. We have lost the plot in here. We want peace and we're not supporting Putin and we're not Putin's puppets, we have no respect for him, but we want peace and not war.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, listening to the cheerleading in here, safe and secure thousands of miles away from the front line, I think it would be a useful exercise for us to remind ourselves about what ordinary Ukrainians are experiencing.

The Economist's reports of forced recruitment across the country. Draftees with no experience or training are being sent to the front in what a UK minister calls WWI-levels of attrition. Casualty figures are secret but we know there are estimates of about 120 000. Battalion commanders tell the Washington Post of recruits fleeing positions en masse. Politico reports a crackdown on deserters.

These are human beings and there is a shameful lack of empathy for ordinary people in the war rhetoric in here. The debate is about keeping the weapons flowing to keep the war going. Ukraine is burning through a generation of men; sons, husbands, brothers who can never be replaced. This cannot go on indefinitely. And you sickening war generals who sit in here and will these men to our debts, you make me sick! We need peace. We need dialogue, however unpleasant that may be.

Die Präsidentin. – Mit diesen leidenschaftlichen Worten wird nun die Debatte geschlossen, und ich möchte nun alle darauf aufmerksam machen, dass die Geschäftsordnung den gegenseitigen Respekt in der Debatte vorschreibt, und daran möchte ich alle Abgeordneten erinnern.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Mairead McGuinness, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, I think we should reflect on the fact that we are very privileged in this House, that we can have different views and nobody stops us having those opinions. That is not the case elsewhere and indeed in Russia. So to close this debate, I have listened very carefully to all of the comments, including those who ask questions about the alternatives. We all want peace. I think there is nobody who does not want peace in this room. But, of course, we are concerned about helping Ukraine in what is an illegal invasion of their sovereign territory. Just to repeat the point that I made in my opening remarks: we fully support the three-track proposals presented to Member States and we would hope for the support of this House in that regard.

Jessika Roswall, President-in-Office of the Council. – Madam President, Commissioner, honourable members, thank you very much for the debate. I think it's very good that we have the possibility to talk about Ukraine and the ways to speed up the delivery and production of weapons and ammunition.

EU support for Ukraine in all the relevant domains and for as long as necessary is, and will remain, a clear priority for the Council and indeed for the Swedish Presidency. On the particular issue of military support and delivery of ammunition, we will spare no effort in the coming days, working with Member States, the High Representative and the Commission to deliver swift results.

Together with our partners, we must continue to increase the pressure on Russia through sanctions and to make sure that the sanctions already in place are implemented and followed properly. In dialogue with the partners and in line with EU and international law, we continue our efforts to explore our options to use frozen and immobilized Russian assets for the reconstruction of Ukraine.

Those responsible for war crimes and other more serious crimes will be held to account. We will continue supporting the investigation by the International Criminal Court. There can be no impunity for the crimes committed under Russian occupation. We also need to work to ensure accountability for the crime of aggression. The agreement to establish an international centre for the prosecution of the crime of aggression against Ukraine is important in this regard.

The EU will continue to strengthen our political, financial and humanitarian, legal and military support for Ukraine. It is of utmost importance that the reconstruction of Ukraine can begin as soon as possible, and here the EU has a crucial role to play, together with our international partners. The EU and its Member States have stood by Ukraine from day one. So has this Parliament.

Every day, as we witness brutal acts by the Russian war machine, we are reminded of the fact that Ukraine is not only fighting for their freedom, their land and their right to self-determination; they are also fighting for our shared European values. This is why we say that we will continue to stand by Ukraine for as long as it takes.

Die Präsidentin. – Nun, jetzt quasi eine Minute nach 16, also nachdem diese Aussprache jetzt geschlossen wurde, möchte ich nochmals und zwar nach Artikel 173 der Geschäftsordnung Frau Demirel das Wort geben, und zwar geht es um eine persönliche Bemerkung.

Mitglieder, die zu einer persönlichen Bemerkung um das Wort bitten – und das war offensichtlich das Zeichen, das sie mir gegeben hat und nicht eine nochmalige Wortmeldung im Verfahren der spontanen Wortmeldungen – haben das Recht, sich am Ende der Aussprache über diesen Tagesordnungspunkt, der gerade behandelt wird, zu Wort zu melden, allerdings nur persönlich. Das heißt, nicht zum Gegenstand der Aussprache, sondern nur auf diese persönlich bezogene Bemerkung, die Ihnen gegenüber von anderen Rednern zum Ausdruck gebracht wurde.

Özlem Demirel (The Left). – Frau Präsidentin! Herr Bütikofer meinte eben, mich als die fünfte Kolonne Russlands, Putins, bezeichnen zu müssen, weil ich für den Frieden und gegen den Militarismus aufstehe. Ich möchte Sie darauf hinweisen, Herr Bütikofer, dass ich zu denjenigen Politikerinnen und Politikern dieses Parlaments gehöre, die gegen jedes Regime niemals ein Blatt vor den Mund genommen haben. Selbstverständlich kritisiere ich das Putin-Regime für den Überfall auf die Ukraine.

Ich möchte aber nicht, dass Sie hier als Parlament diesen Überfall dafür ausnutzen, um die EU zu einer Militärunion umzurüsten. Ich möchte nicht ein Blatt vor den Mund nehmen, wenn Sie diesen Angriff und das Leid der Menschen in der Ukraine für eigene geopolitische Interessen missbrauchen.

Ich schweige nicht zu Herrn Putin, ich schweige auch nicht zu Herrn Erdoğan, ich schweige zu keinem Regime! Ich schweige auch nicht über die Politik der USA, die Sie als Premiumpartner bezeichnen. Wie viele völkerrechtswidrige Kriege haben die USA geführt, Herr Bütikofer? Wie oft haben Sie das verurteilt?

Die Präsidentin. – Mit dieser persönlichen Bemerkung ist die Aussprache nun endgültig geschlossen.

14. Muertes en el mar: respuesta común de la Unión para salvar vidas y medidas para garantizar vías seguras y legales (debate)

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Tagesordnungspunkt folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärungen des Rates und der Kommission zu Todesfällen auf hoher See – eine gemeinsame Reaktion der EU zur Rettung von Menschenleben und Maßnahmen zur Sicherstellung sicherer und legaler Migrationswege (2023/2590(RSP)).

Jessika Roswall, President-in-Office of the Council. – Madam President, honourable Members, Commissioner, before we start, allow me to say that I am deeply saddened by the recent terrible shipwreck off the coast of Italy that claimed the lives of over 70 people, including several children. I wish to extend my deep-felt condolences to the families and friends of those who lost their lives in this tragic event.

Sadly, this was not an isolated event. Over the past years, thousands and thousands of people, many of them young children, have lost their lives in attempts to reach Europe. This tragedy serves as a stark reminder that saving lives at sea is not only a legal obligation, but also a humanitarian and moral imperative.

These tragedies also serve a brutal reminder of the need to take political action. Moving forward on the Migration Pact and increased external action is imperative. Fighting trafficking and smuggling is a priority. A joint European response is necessary. This is a broad agreement at the Council that we need to adopt effective and lasting solutions to address the immediate and ongoing challenges on all routes, including the central Mediterranean route.

In this regard, the European Council recognises 'the specificities of maritime borders, including as regards safeguarding lives.' It also underlines the need for reinforced cooperation regarding search and rescue activities.

Let me now say a few words on some of the main lines of action that the EU is pursuing. We welcome the relaunch of the European contact group on search and rescue by the European Commission. Several Member States are engaged in discussions to set up an enhanced cooperation framework for search and rescue amongst source actors, including international humanitarian and maritime organisations.

We also need to move forward with the work to partnership with third countries along the routes, increasing capacities in border and asylum management. Providing financial support and technical and material assistance is ongoing in many partner countries. This work will continue and will step up where it is feasible.

In this context, it is important to recall that the effective protection of the Schengen external borders is not contrary to respect for the values and fundamental rights in the EU. Indeed, our frontline Member States have not only the right but also the duty to protect the European borders. This is a common responsibility and we manage, despite the considerable difficulties and challenges that we are faced with. Naturally, in carrying out these duties, the Schengen Borders Codes must be applied in accordance with the European and international law.

Honourable Members, safe and legal migration is also a central part of a comprehensive approach to migration. With almost three million third-country nationals migrating to the EU every year, the opportunities clearly exist.

These legal pathways have the potential to benefit migrants, countries of origin, as well as countries of destination. Legal pathways also contribute towards reducing irregular departures and consequently saving lives at sea.

When it comes to those most vulnerable, our Member States have shown that they are committed to stepping up their efforts, in particular by way of resettlement. Since 2015, successful EU-sponsored resettlement schemes and humanitarian admissions programmes have helped more than 130 000 people in need of international protection to find shelter in our Member States.

I should also mention the steps forward taken by both co-legislators towards an agreement on the Union Resettlement Framework Regulation. As a result, we will finally be able to move from ad hoc resettlement schemes to a stable framework with greater sustainability and predictability for the protection for those who need.

Honourable Members, the EU needs a comprehensive migration policy that protects our borders, provides protection to those in need and prevents the loss of migrants' lives. I outlined today a number of areas on which we are working. It is the combination of these different strands of action that will ultimately bring about results.

VORSITZ: OTHMAR KARAS*Vizepräsident*

Ylva Johansson, *Member of the Commission*. – Imagine you're a woman and all you want is a better life for your child. You think your only choice is to go on a very dangerous journey. Imagine how high the waves, how small the boat, how crowded, how ice cold the wind, the pouring rain. Imagine the fear, imagine the terror that you might not be saved. And all because you have not found a legal way of coming to the European Union.

Since this Parliament put this debate on the agenda, yet another tragedy at sea: 30 people missing, presumed drowned.

Behind the numbers, there are people, human beings, like Shahida Raza. She was 27 years old, from Pakistan. She was such a woman. All she wanted was to care for her disabled son, Hasan. She could not come legally, she thought. She's one of their more than 80 people, as far as we know, who died in the waters off Calabria on 26 February. The price of her life: EUR 8 000 – the smugglers fee, blood money.

The shipwreck apparently happened when the smugglers steered the vessel onto shallow ground. The smugglers abandoned ship, leaving their passengers to their fate.

This tragedy must be a call to action. Our first priority: save lives. Our alternative: safe and legal pathways. Our mission: fight the smugglers who ruthlessly endanger people's lives.

We must work relentlessly to bring them to justice, be always one step ahead. Fighting smuggling is central to our action plan on the Central Mediterranean. We must step up the fight as team Europe with Member States.

We are building partnerships to fight smuggling, supporting joint investigations between Member States and North African partners. I will soon travel to Tunisia – where, as you know, the situation is of concern – to boost our joint fight against smugglers and strengthen our comprehensive migration partnership.

And we must do more to prevent irregular departures, stop people getting into smugglers boats and risking their lives at sea.

But we need migration but in a regular way: safe ways, legal pathways. We must work as team Europe with countries of origin, transit and destination to manage migration jointly with our partners along the routes, including the Central Mediterranean.

To save lives, we also need to work better together. Coordination is at the heart of the new European integrated border management strategy that the Commission adopted yesterday, based on your valuable input from this House. And we relaunched the European Contact Group on Search and Rescue. I welcome the active participation of Member States who are now working to improve situational awareness and cooperation at sea.

But we need also to give people alternatives to smugglers, boats and trucks. Legal migration for those who want to work. Our societies and economies need skilled labour. Healthcare alone lacks 2 million professionals today. So we are setting up an ambitious new talent pool to help people enter into the EU safely and legally. And we are working on the talent partnership so people can learn and work in key sectors in Member States. And we will provide legal pathways for refugees, safe journeys to safe homes, resettlement and humanitarian corridors for 50 000 people in the next two years, supported by at least half a billion euro. We are linking community sponsorship of refugees to work by supporting companies with a targeted funding call to employ refugees now living in camps and in limbo. We have already successfully adopted the new blue card and I encourage the co-legislators to make progress and adopt the two legislative proposals on the Single Permit Directive and the Long-Term Residence Directive.

In the letter from President von der Leyen to the leaders, she outlined the key operational actions on migration we are taking already now. She will update the Council on progress next week. All of these policies and operations are important but will only be truly effective as part of the European migration policy.

I am encouraged by the JHA Council last week, when ministers from across the EU committed to adopt the whole pact on migration and asylum during this mandate. I am encouraged by the Swedish Presidency committed to start trilogues already in June on the central pieces on solidarity and responsibility, including the special category for the search and rescue cases on relocation. And, of course, by the progress this House is making by adopting the mandates on the key pact files, I hope already this month.

So let these tragedies at sea remind us: migration challenges need a European response to save lives, to manage migration, to fight smugglers, to open safe and legal pathways. I am fully aware that you, in this House, already know this. We need to work together to find solutions and to agree on the pact.

Jeroen Lenaers, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Mr President, every death at sea is an unspeakable tragedy. Men, women and children losing their lives in the Mediterranean is truly heartbreaking. And yes, we need, as this debate title suggests, a common EU response. And it starts by breaking the lucrative business model that smugglers have built at the expense of vulnerable people. We need to fight against these ruthless criminals who put hundreds of people on far too small, unseaworthy vessels in the most difficult of conditions at sea. Thank God, luckily, most people are saved like the 1300 people last weekend. But for some, like the more than 70 people that perished off the coast of Calabria, help tragically came too late. We need a fundamental change of policy. No matter how many search and rescue operations are deployed at sea, if hundreds of thousands of people continue to embark on this dangerous journey, help will never be able to reach all of them on time. Arrivals by sea in Italy have increased three times compared to last year. It means the risk of accidents has also tripled. So we need a common but also a holistic approach. No oversimplification of complex challenges by focusing on one solution only. Most asylum seekers arriving in Europe are not in need of international protection and they will most likely continue to risk their lives to come here irregularly, regardless of the legal pathways we put in place for those who need it. At least until we change the automatism that paying a smuggler equals entry to the territory of the European Union. Changing that needs to be the core of the policy Europe finally adopts because there is no silver bullet: fighting smugglers, creating pathways, code of conduct for search and rescue, strengthening external borders, discouraging illegal migration, improving cooperation with third countries, increasing returns – these are all intertwined. They're all part of the same puzzle. And we need to complete this whole puzzle. We need to adopt the migration pact in full if we want to make debates like the one today a thing of the past.

Iratxe García Pérez, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señor presidente, ocho años después de la crisis humanitaria de 2015 la Unión Europea sigue sin encontrar una solución al desafío común más divisorio de nuestro tiempo. La tragedia del naufragio en Calabria por la inhumana omisión del Gobierno de Meloni y las deportaciones ilegales, robos y maltratos a migrantes por parte de las autoridades griegas son los últimos episodios de un vergonzoso fracaso de salvamento marítimo en la Unión Europea.

Los Gobiernos de Italia y Grecia, y también la Comisión, están obligados no solo a investigar y a dar explicaciones de los hechos, sino a adoptar medidas que pongan fin a esta situación y a estos abusos. En los diez años transcurridos entre las tragedias de Lampedusa y Calabria más de veintiséis mil personas se han dejado la vida en el Mediterráneo. Años de negociaciones frustradas, parálisis y bloqueos.

Ahora, en lugar de avanzar en la conclusión de un nuevo pacto sobre migración y asilo la derecha prefiere debatir sobre si levantar muros en las fronteras exteriores de Europa y quién debe financiarlos. Si hay algo peor que los muros materiales son los muros mentales de la derecha. Los muros representan un retroceso de la idea de Europa, de aquella Europa reaccionaria y excluyente, de la visión más miserable del ser humano y opresora del conocimiento y del egoísmo. Realmente necesitamos recuperar la dignidad de Europa. La idea de los muros es la solución falsa y mágica de aquellos ultranacionalistas interesados en presentar a los extranjeros como una amenaza que nos divide.

El millón de solicitudes de asilo de 2022 también demuestra que no habrá muro que logre disuadir a quienes huyen de la guerra, del hambre o de los desastres naturales. Cerrar las vías legales a la protección tampoco acabará con el instinto de supervivencia humana. Solo incrementará la migración y fortalecerá las bandas criminales, enriquecidas con la explotación de los más desesperados.

La llegada de refugiados e inmigrantes es un fenómeno cuya gestión más eficaz y humanitaria no pasa por medidas falsas e ineficaces, sino por un enfoque integral, solidario y cimentado en la responsabilidad compartida, como el que propone el nuevo Pacto sobre Migración y Asilo; un nuevo pacto que garantice la protección internacional a los demandantes de asilo, que favorezca la integración de los refugiados y garantice las vías legales para la inmigración, incluyendo la educación, el empleo y los visados humanitarios. La conclusión del Pacto es una prueba para la Unión no solo con respecto a una política concreta, sino para nuestros mismos principios fundacionales.

Sophia in 't Veld, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, first of all, I would like to thank the Commissioner for her words. I think that, as a Parliament, we should endorse your line of action.

You said, Commissioner, 'imagine you are one of those people'. I think this is where the problem begins: we have dehumanised those people. We cannot imagine anymore what it feels like because we have dehumanised them. It always strikes me how we are talking about an amount of migrants, rather than a number of migrants. A number of migrants is about individuals. Let's start and go back to our humanity and think of them as people.

I entirely agree with my EPP colleague who said there should be no oversimplification of complex problems. That is why I have a bit of difficulty understanding why the EPP is always coming up with fake, simplified solutions like walls around Europe. It doesn't work. OK? It may work in an electoral campaign, but it doesn't work at all in solving the problem.

The Renew Group has written to the European Council and called for swift action because we do think that the JHA Council now has to move. Yes, we are working on the pact. It's very difficult, but we hope we will get there. But that is not going to solve the problem today. The people who are getting on boats today need to be helped and that is why we need sufficient and adequate rescue capacity organised by the Member States and the European Union.

Erik Marquardt (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident! Ich glaube ja, dass einige recht haben, ich sehe das auch so. Die Schmuggler, das sind böse Menschen, die aus falschen Beweggründen mit krimineller Energie Menschen auf einen gefährlichen Weg schicken, und in der Folge sterben Menschen. Aber der Grund, warum wir uns hier heute treffen, ist ja nicht, dass die Schmuggler die Menschen losschicken – das passiert seit Jahrzehnten –, sondern der Grund ist, dass Seenotrettungsfälle nicht mehr gerettet werden, obwohl wir sie hätten retten können.

So geschehen am Samstag, z. B. morgens um zwei Uhr, halb drei rufen Menschen schreiend an, weil sie untergehen, rufen Menschen schreiend an und finden niemanden, der ihnen Hilfe schickt. Über 30 Stunden wird in internationalen Gewässern keine Hilfe geschickt. Die IRINI-Mission hätte da sein können, die NGO-Boote hätten da sein können, wenn sie nicht in Italien blockiert wären. Die Frachtschiffahrt hätte da sein können und Menschen retten können, aber niemand hat ihnen den Auftrag gegeben, sie zu retten.

Ich glaube, wenn wir ernst nehmen, was die europäischen Werte eigentlich sein sollen, wenn wir ernst nehmen, dass die Würde des Menschen auch auf dem Mittelmeer unantastbar sein sollte, dann können wir doch nicht länger einfach immer nur mit dem Finger auf die Schmuggler zeigen, nach jedem Unglück, noch bevor die Leichen geborgen sind, so tun, als seien immer die anderen schuld, sondern dann müssen wir endlich anfangen, auch den Kern der Debatte so ernst zu nehmen, dass wir sagen: Wenn jemand in Seenot ist, dann schicken wir Rettungsboote und retten diese Menschen, ganz egal, woher sie kommen und aus welchem Grund sie in Seenot sind.

Dass das nicht passiert, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, ist eine europäische Schande, eine Schande, für die wir uns schämen sollten. Ich hoffe, dass wir nicht bei schönen Worten bleiben, sondern dass wir endlich anfangen zu handeln. Ansonsten müssen wir einfach davon ausgehen, dass uns die folgenden Generationen für das, was wir hier tun, für wirklich abgrundtief böse halten.

Vincenzo Sofo, a nome del gruppo ECR. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, sulla tragedia di Cutro abbiamo assistito a uno sciacallaggio da parte della sinistra, arrivata addirittura ad accusare il presidente Meloni di avere le mani sporche del sangue di quei morti.

Morti in realtà a causa di organizzazioni criminali che ogni anno trafficano centinaia di migliaia di esseri umani che, complice la propaganda immigrazionista della sinistra, vengono convinti a cercar fortuna in Europa e stipati in barche sempre più fatiscenti da trafficanti, consapevoli che quei mezzi potrebbero affondare, ma convinti di poter contare in mare sull'aiuto di ONG che dell'ideologia *no borders* fanno una missione. Morti perché avvistati troppo tardi da chi ha il compito di sorvegliare le nostre frontiere, ma non ha strumenti a sufficienza per farlo, anche perché azzoppato dall'opera di boicottaggio messa in atto dalla sinistra, come il caso Frontex insegna.

Come vedete, dunque, sulle responsabilità morali di queste tragedie ci sarebbe molto da dibattere. Ma il nostro dovere ora è, semmai, ragionare a soluzioni urgenti per flussi migratori fuori controllo, destinati a causare ancora tante di queste morti. Soluzioni che la Commissione inizia finalmente a intravedere annunciando di accogliere le nostre richieste, come il rafforzamento di Frontex, la responsabilizzazione degli Stati bandiera e rimpatri più efficaci. E la sede in cui accoglierle è la riforma del Trattato di Dublino, sulla quale a breve inizieremo a votare in commissione LIBE.

In questa sede, quindi, chiediamo alla sinistra, se vuole davvero porre fine a queste tragedie, di riconoscere il fallimento dell'approccio che ha sempre avuto e accettare la nostra richiesta di rafforzare l'azione esterna alle frontiere, affinché non ci si limiti solo a redistribuire i migranti che sopravvivono al mare, ma si lavori innanzitutto a dissuaderli dal rischiare di trovare nel mare la loro morte.

Annalisa Tardino, a nome del gruppo ID. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la sinistra in questo Parlamento è fuori e continua a cercare i colpevoli delle stragi in mare, arrivando ad accusare vergognosamente la premier Meloni e il vicepremier Salvini e con lui la Guardia costiera italiana che, invece, è impegnata ogni giorno in operazioni di salvataggio di barchini.

Nessuno di loro ha però mai pensato, per esempio, di accusare il premier socialista Sanchez per la tragedia di Melilla. Sarà perché è espressione della stessa parte politica? La verità è che i colpevoli con le mani sporche di sangue, come dite voi, sono gli scafisti e, con loro, consentite, i falsi buonisti che illudono gente disperata con una terra promessa, purtroppo inesistente.

È nostro, vostro dovere, fermare i trafficanti di uomini, come ha detto Papa Francesco, obiettivo cui dobbiamo rivolgere tutte le nostre azioni politiche. Fermezza assoluta e nessuna indulgenza contro questi criminali. Al prossimo Consiglio europeo ci aspettiamo che l'Europa proponga azioni positive per combattere i trafficanti di esseri umani, fermare le morti in mare e proteggere i nostri confini.

Il dramma di Cutro è soltanto l'apice emblematico di una tragedia che continua da anni, ma che intendiamo fermare alla base, impedendo le partenze, attuando seri programmi di sviluppo nei paesi da cui fuggono queste persone, accogliendo chi ha diritto in via sicura e legale. La buona politica, se tale, deve assumersi la responsabilità di decidere, invece di rinviare un problema che resta sulle spalle dei soliti Paesi come da anni, Italia in primis.

Malin Björk, för The Left-gruppen. – Herr talman! Kommissionär, ordförande! 26 000 människor har drunknat i Medelhavet sedan 2014. De har namn, de har familjer, de var någons älskade. Om vi tar in det, då inser vi att svaret måste vara mer räddningsinsatser, mer livräddning till havs. Dessutom måste de hyllas som faktiskt är därute och räddar liv.

I stället ser vi att regeringar beskyller och förföljer solidaritetsorganisationer, icke-statliga organisationer. Så kan vi inte ha det. Min fråga är: Vad tänker kommissionen göra? Vad tänker ordförandeskapet göra? Inte i morgon, inte när pakten antas – utan nu. Det är nämligen nu som människor drunknar.

Smugglingsmodellen frodas för att människor inte har några lagliga vägar att söka skydd på. Som föredragande för vidarebosättningsprogrammet på EU-nivå är jag nöjd med att vi rodde detta i hamn, men vi ser alldeles för få platser. Det behövs betydligt större engagemang från medlemsländerna, vilket bara är en del i pusslet – det är bara en del i pusslet.

De farliga resorna fortsätter för att människor tvingas lämna sina länder, såsom Afghanistan, Iran, Syrien. Våra krav här i dag är konkreta: De stängda militariserade gränserna med EPP:s murar är inte lösningen – de ökar dödligheten. Vi behöver livräddningsinsatser till havs, gärna EU-koordinerade sådana. Vi behöver också stöd till icke-statliga organisationer och de livräddningsinsatser som görs redan i dag.

Att outsourca migrationsarbetet och kontrollen till tredjeländer ökar också dödligheten. Det är en väldigt farlig väg. Öppna fler lagliga vägar, skapa lösningar som fungerar för att rädda liv, inte för att hindra människor från att ta sig till Europa.

Laura Ferrara (NI). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, nel Mediterraneo, sempre più simile a un cimitero, si stanno recuperando ancora oggi i corpi del naufragio a Cutro, in Italia. Dal 2015 sono 26.000 i morti. Pene più severe per scafisti e trafficanti, anche se giuste, non bastano da sole se la carenza di vie legali e sicure di accesso all'Unione europea per chi fugge da conflitti e persecuzioni ha come unica alternativa viaggi spesso letali.

Sia chiaro: salvare vite in pericolo in mare è un dovere morale e un obbligo giuridico per gli Stati. E deve esserlo anche per l'Unione europea, perché ricerca, salvataggio e accoglienza non possono ricadere in modo sproporzionato solo sui Paesi costieri e di primo ingresso.

Serve solidarietà e responsabilità da parte di tutti i Paesi europei. E serve umanità, quella che purtroppo non ha dimostrato il governo italiano, con un ministro dell'Interno criticato per le sue dichiarazioni senza compassione e sensibilità umana, e con una premier che, pur andando sul luogo del naufragio, ha negato un saluto ai familiari delle vittime. Un governo, lasciatemelo dire, disumano.

Lena Düpont (PPE). – Herr Präsident, Frau Kommissarin, verehrte Ratspräsidentschaft! Es ist selbstverständlich: Menschen in Seenot zu retten ist nationale, internationale, europäische, moralische Verpflichtung. Dazu gehört aber auch: Gefährliche Überfahrten sind die Folge, nicht der Auslöser. Die Ursachen liegen nach wie vor an Land und nicht auf See.

Daher ist es richtig, dass die Ratspräsidentschaft sich wieder auf die Zusammenarbeit mit Herkunfts- und Transitstaaten konzentriert: Verbesserung der Lebensbedingungen vor Ort, Verhinderung gefährlicher Überfahrten und vor allem entschlossenes Vorgehen gegen die Schleuser, gegen kriminelle Netzwerke und dieses überaus zynische, aber leider profitable Geschäftsmodell.

Es ist nicht einfach, drei Organe, 27 Mitgliedstaaten und die meisten politischen Familien zusammenzubringen. Das wissen wir hier im Haus alle. Aber wir werden danach beurteilt, ob wir einen Beitrag zur Lösung der aktuellen Situation leisten können, ob wir das Handeln von Notlösung zu Notlösung beenden können. Der Pakt kann nicht zaubern, aber er kann tragfähige Strukturen und Verfahren schaffen und Vertrauen unter den Mitgliedstaaten wiederherstellen.

Die Balkanroute in den letzten Wochen hat gezeigt: Gemeinsames Vorgehen als Europäische Union hat einen Effekt. Der Pakt hat Instrumente für Krisen, er hat Elemente für eine effektive Rückkehr, für Seenotrettung, für die Zusammenarbeit mit Drittstaaten. Er wird flankiert, flankiert durch die Vorschläge zu legalen Wegen. Er baut auf wirksame Grenzkontrollen. Er kann in der Gesamtheit seiner Vorschläge die beste Wirkung entfalten.

2021 habe ich in einer ähnlichen Rede gesagt: Es ist gut, dass wir wieder diskutieren. Für dieses Jahr gilt: Liefern ist besser. Angesichts des Anstiegs der illegalen Grenzübertritte und der Zunahme der Sekundärmigration sind mehr Tempo, mehr Ehrgeiz, mehr Europa dringend erforderlich. Deswegen appelliere ich auch und vielleicht insbesondere in dieser Woche an das Haus. In der Vergangenheit war es viel zu einfach, den Rat zu kritisieren. Auch wir müssen jetzt liefern. Denn das einzige, wovon wir nicht mehr haben, ist Zeit.

Elisabetta Gualmini (S&D). – Signor Presidente, cara Commissaria, onorevoli colleghi, siamo con Lei sulla velocizzazione, speriamo, del pacchetto «Asilo e migrazione», per una solidarietà finalmente effettiva – ce lo auguriamo. Ma francamente bisogna dirci che non se ne può più di sentire dare la colpa all'Europa, sempre, perché le responsabilità politiche ci sono e si vedono.

Io non ho mai visto un governo di estrema destra chiedere di rafforzare le competenze europee sulla gestione dei migranti, mentre ho visto fior fior di governi di estrema destra chiedere soldi all'Europa per finanziare muri e ho visto governi di estrema destra, come quello di Meloni e di Salvini, ripetere all'infinito i peggiori slogan anti-immigrati: slogan nativisti «prima gli italiani», slogan neocolonialisti «aiutiamoli a casa loro», slogan cospirazionisti «i migranti approdano in Europa per favorire il grande capitale e sostituire i lavoratori europei», slogan razzisti «gli sbarchi selettivi».

E poi di fronte a stragi di innocenti, come quella di Cutro, cosa si fa? Si dice che l'Europa non fa abbastanza. Ma è troppo comodo! Ci si inventa un nuovo reato con parole enormi «andremo alla caccia dei trafficanti sull'intero globo terracqueo» – terracqueo, signiamocelo! – e non si chiariscono le responsabilità sui salvataggi quando è lo stesso governo che ha reso una corsa agli ostacoli salvare le persone in mare. E l'omissione di soccorso è un reato, anche questo, oltre a quello dei trafficanti.

E poi si finisce a fare il karaoke per il compleanno di Salvini e chi se ne frega quando ci sono i morti e le bare. Se avete interesse per la Nazione, non fateci vergognare e assumetevi le vostre responsabilità.

Fabienne Keller (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, cher Othmar Karas, Madame la Commissaire, chère Ylva Johansson, Madame la Ministre, chère Jessika Roswall, le naufrage du bateau près de Crotona, en Italie, nous choque. Précisément parce que ce bateau s'est échoué dans l'espace maritime européen. Pas en pleine mer, chers collègues, mais bien sur nos côtes, et alors que ce bateau avait été signalé aux garde-côtes italiens. Près de 60 personnes ont trouvé la mort dans cette tragédie. Plus de 2 300 en Méditerranée l'année dernière. Nous ne pouvons détourner les yeux face à ces décès.

Avec mes collègues Renew Europe, nous appelons à une force européenne de sauvetage en mer, en coopération avec les États membres, et à la création également de voies légales de migration. À moyen et long termes, notre réponse, c'est le pacte européen sur l'asile et la migration qui permettra d'assurer des règles d'asile harmonisées dans l'Union et un mécanisme de solidarité entre États membres.

Le temps presse. J'appelle la présidence suédoise, Madame la Ministre, et le Conseil à accélérer leurs travaux avec l'aide de la Commission, pour trouver rapidement un accord, un progrès sur cette réforme attendue de longue date.

Tineke Strik (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, the Mediterranean Sea is the deadliest migration route in the world. And this is not a law by nature; it's caused by mankind. But the political decision to ignore search and rescue obligations, shift responsibility to the Libyan coastguard, obstruct the work of NGOs saving lives, this is a policy of deliberate disengagement, a lack of solidarity and a shameless evasion of one's own obligations. And the response to every tragedy is giving more boats to the Libyan coastguard, meaning more people contained in hell.

But where are the genuine life jackets? Where is an EU-coordinated search and rescue mechanism? Where's the mandatory relocation for rescued asylum seekers? Where is the protection for humanitarian workers, and where are the safe and legal migration routes? Where is the display of humanity?

So, Council and Commission, stop this deadly tactic of looking away and fencing off, and hold up the fundament of the EU, namely our values.

Hermann Tertsch (ECR). – Señor presidente, cierto, toda muerte en el mar es un drama. Pero muchas de estas tragedias son evitables y algunos las asumen con gusto para continuar el inmenso negocio del tráfico de seres humanos hacia Europa. Los culpables de las muertes no son las naciones que protegen sus fronteras, sino las políticas de inmigración incontrolada y el irresponsable efecto llamada que llevan a multitudes a lanzarse al mar y jugarse la vida en manos de los traficantes.

Las mafias de traficantes no las integran solo las bandas criminales que seducen con promesas y cobran fortunas. Sus colaboradores necesarios son falsas organizaciones humanitarias dirigidas por la extrema izquierda, apoyadas por todos ustedes, y que recogen a la mercancía humana en sitios estipulados en el mar, último eslabón de la cadena de esclavistas del siglo XXI. Mientras tanto, en España y en Europa se disparan los efectos de esta inmigración ilegal: el colapso de los servicios y la escalada de inseguridad, violencia y delincuencia. Todo para conseguir mano de obra barata.

Si quieren acabar con las muertes en el mar Giorgia Meloni muestra el camino: cerrar las rutas de la muerte, repatriar a los ilegales y cárcel para los traficantes, los de los barcos y los despachos.

Tom Vandendriessche (ID). – Voorzitter, collega's, in 2022 rapporteerde Frontex meer dan 330 000 illegale oversteken naar Europa. 90 % van hen betaalde mensensmokkelaars. Eenmaal in Europa kan men immers genieten van de sociale zekerheid die onze voorouders opgebouwd hebben en onze belastingbetalers financieren zonder er zelf ooit aan bijgedragen te hebben. Het enige dat men moet doen is asiel aanvragen. Dit zijn helemaal geen echte vluchtelingen, maar economische gelukzoekers en asielbedriegers.

Wat doet de Europese Unie om onze mensen te beschermen? Helemaal niets. Integendeel, men wil het precies gemakkelijker maken om naar Europa te komen. Er is wel degelijk een alternatief voor dit falend en immoreel beleid. Wie illegaal Europa binnendringt, moet elk recht op asiel verliezen en een levenslang verbod krijgen ons grondgebied te betreden. Asielrecht betekent geen verblijfsrecht. Opvang moet per definitie in de regio van herkomst, en niet bij ons.

Κωνσταντίνος Αρβανίτης (The Left). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, κυρία Johansson, δεν θα μπορούσα να διαφωνήσω με αυτά που είπατε, σε καμία περίπτωση. Όμως εδώ διαπιστώνετε και εσείς και όλοι ότι έχουμε δύο Ευρώπες: μια Ευρώπη που διαπιστώνει και μια Ευρώπη που δεν καταλαβαίνει. Μιλάμε για την Ιταλία, για το ναυάγιο, μα εδώ, στην ολομέλεια, πριν από δύο συνεδριάσεις, δεν μιλούσαμε για τα Κύθηρα; Δεν σας είπα για το μεγάλο ναυάγιο στα Κύθηρα, όπου έφευγαν τα πλοία από την Τουρκία, από τη Σμύρνη, και έσκασαν στα βράχια των Κυθίων; Δεν τους είδε κανείς; Δεν τους είδε ούτε ένα πολεμικό, ούτε η Frontex;

Αυτή η ιστορία αρχίζει πια να κουράζει· να κάνουμε συνεχείς διαπιστώσεις και από την άλλη να μην έχουμε πρωτοβουλίες. Από τον Γενάρη έως τον Ιούνιο του 2022, κατά μέσο όρο, πέντε άνθρωποι πεθαίνουν την ημέρα, προσπαθώντας να διασχίσουν τα νερά μας, τη Μεσόγειο. Σύμφωνα με την Υπατη Αρμοστεία, ο συνολικός αριθμός των νεκρών ή των αγνοουμένων στη Μεσόγειο το 2022 ανέρχεται σε 2.000 ανθρώπους. Και μην ακούμε για το διεθνές δίκαιο, τι λέει και ούτω καθεξής. Εμείς μιλάμε, το λέμε εδώ χρόνια, ότι θέλουμε ασφαλείς και νόμιμες οδούς μετανάστευσης. Το είπατε και εσείς. Μα θα συμφωνήσουμε απόλυτα. Συμφωνεί η Δεξιά, που κάνει ότι δεν καταλαβαίνει; Αυτό είναι το βασικό θέμα. Εδώ έχουμε διαπιστώσει πολλές φορές το φαινόμενο να κινούνται ουσιαστικά διακινητές κάτω από τη μύτη των κρατικών αρχών, δεν ξέρω μήπως ακόμα και κάτω από τη μύτη της Frontex. Γι' αυτό σας είπα το παράδειγμα των Κυθίων.

Θα κλείσω όπως ξεκίνησα, με τα λόγια της κ. Metsola. Η κ. Metsola είχε προχθές μια πολύ καλή ομιλία και είπε: «Είμαστε γενιά πολιτικών που δεν μπορεί να αγνοεί την πραγματικότητα». Ναι, αλλά να νομοθετεί κιόλας, όχι απλώς να περιγράφει την πραγματικότητα, διότι εδώ υπάρχει πολύ σοβαρό θέμα. Έτσι λοιπόν, κλείνοντας, το αίτημα είναι: ένταξη, μετεγκατάσταση και, βεβαίως, νόμιμες οδούς μετανάστευσης.

Nicolas Bay (NI). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, alors que le Royaume-Uni annonce enfin des mesures fermes pour lutter contre l'immigration clandestine, alors que l'Italie anticipe une véritable invasion et que l'Europe devrait tout faire pour protéger ses frontières, alors que les ONG sont complices des trafics d'êtres humains, alors que vos atermoiements, votre laxisme et votre lâcheté sont responsables des morts en mer, vous voulez aller encore plus loin, toujours plus loin.

Les mêmes causes produisant les mêmes effets, les mêmes grands mots larmoyants d'ouverture et d'accueil pousseront évidemment toujours plus de migrants à partir et parfois à mourir en mer. Si vous aviez un peu d'humanité, la véritable humanité, vous les dissuaderiez évidemment de partir. Cessez donc de leur faire miroiter qu'il y aurait un eldorado européen qui n'existe pas. Arrêtez de les inciter à venir en Europe au risque de leur vie. Vous les poussez à se jeter dans les griffes des mafias de passeurs qui commettent d'ailleurs sur eux les pires atrocités. Vous organisez leur déracinement, loin de leur famille et de leur terre. La véritable humanité, c'est évidemment la fermeté migratoire. Votre laxisme, lui, est honteux et coupable.

Alessandra Mussolini (PPE). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, che vergogna! Che vergogna sentire esponenti anche italiani che strumentalizzano i morti pur di andare contro un governo. La tragedia di Cutro è una tragedia non italiana, è una tragedia europea. E le soluzioni devono essere europee. Ma perché non parliamo anche dei bambini che scompaiono, di quello che accade in Italia?

Ma non sapete quanto è complicato. L'Italia non lascia da solo nessuno e nessuno deve permettersi in Europa, e non lo si fa, di lasciare da sola l'Italia: 60.000 migranti sono stati salvati dalla Guardia costiera e dalla Guardia di Finanza. Chi lo ha fatto? A fronte di un aumento dei flussi migratori del 250% dalla Tunisia, dalla Libia, dalla tratta della Turchia.

Allora parliamo di questo. Non buttiamo veleno addosso ad uno Stato membro che deve essere aiutato da tutti perché noi siamo l'Europa, non è che c'è l'Italia e l'Europa è da un'altra parte. Quindi quello che ho sentito, guardate, è veramente vergognoso. Perché non si onorano e non si porta rispetto alle tante vittime, ai sacrifici di vite umane che appartengono a tutti e tutti li dobbiamo rispettare. Ma voi no, voi della sinistra no! È come se io dicessi che le ONG raccolgono tangenti e sfruttano le vite umane e i migranti e lavorano con gli scafisti. Vero, cara?

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señor presidente, señora comisaria Johansson, este es el quinto debate en los dos últimos años en el Parlamento Europeo sobre muertes en el Mediterráneo y la necesidad de vías legales y seguras y de un mecanismo europeo de salvamento y rescate.

Setenta y dos muertos en las costas de Calabria, cerca de Crotona. De acuerdo con el testimonio de los supervivientes, se hacían en el viejo barco pesquero al menos doscientas personas. ¿Y sabe qué? Frontex había avisado de la presencia de ese barco pesquero cerca de las costas. ¿Y sabe qué? Que el Gobierno de Giorgia Meloni ha hecho la vida imposible a las organizaciones no gubernamentales, de modo que no había ninguna cerca del naufragio. La consecuencia es que no intervino la Guardia Costera. No intervinieron ni respondieron las autoridades italianas, y por eso, hay una investigación penal dirigida por la Fiscalía italiana para determinar las responsabilidades.

Pero hay más. Se suman esas setenta y dos víctimas, de ellas dieciocho niños, a las veintiséis mil muertes en el Mediterráneo en los últimos diez años, procedentes de Irak, de Irán, de Siria, de Afganistán, de Pakistán, de Somalia, de nuestra vecindad torturada, y esto exige una respuesta. Esta puede venir del nuevo Pacto sobre Migración y Asilo, con solidaridad efectiva y realojamientos, mandatos de reubicación vinculantes y también, por supuesto, con obligaciones para los Estados miembros de atender el Derecho internacional humanitario en un mecanismo europeo de salvamento y rescate.

Por tanto, créanlo, no puede parar este Parlamento Europeo hasta que haya solidaridad vinculante de los Estados miembros, cumplimiento estricto del Derecho internacional humanitario y del Derecho europeo por parte de todos los Estados miembros y un mecanismo europeo de salvamento y rescate, además de vías legales y seguras y visados humanitarios para llegar a la Unión Europea.

Jan-Christoph Oetjen (Renew). – Herr Präsident, verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Seenotrettung ist natürlich eine staatliche Aufgabe, und viel zu lange haben wir darauf gesetzt, dass Nichtregierungsorganisationen diese Aufgabe übernehmen. Insofern ist es dramatisch, was im Mittelmeer passiert, und es ist umso dramatischer, wenn es auch noch in europäischen Gewässern – in italienischen Gewässern wie in diesem Falle – passiert.

Aber, verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen, was wir eigentlich wirklich brauchen, das ist nicht nur eine Lösung für das Thema Seenotrettung – wo wir natürlich eine Lösung brauchen –, sondern das, was wir wirklich brauchen, ist der große Wurf, verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen.

In diesem Monat werden wir hier im Europäischen Parlament, im Innenausschuss, über die ganzen Migrationsdossiers abstimmen und für uns als Europäisches Parlament endgültig eine Position finden. Damit wir liefern können, damit die Bürgerinnen und Bürger das bekommen, was sie von uns erwarten, nämlich endlich eine Lösung in der Migrations- und Asylfrage, die europäisch ist, die europäische Antworten gibt, verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen, muss auch der Rat, müssen auch die Mitgliedstaaten sich bewegen.

Es geht nicht, dass sich jeder auf Maximalpositionen zurückzieht, sondern alle müssen kompromissbereit sein. Wir brauchen eine Lösung für die Krise, wir brauchen eine Lösung für die Dublin-Nachfolge und für die Solidarität innerhalb der Europäischen Union. Wenn wir es nicht schaffen, hier zu Lösungen zu kommen, zu Vorschlägen, die wir dann verhandeln können, wo wir endgültig tatsächlich auch Gesetze beschließen, verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen, werden die Bürger zu Recht sagen: Ihr habt es nicht hingekriegt!

Grace O’Sullivan (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, colleagues, in the late 1980s I first saw someone drowning at sea. I was a crew member on board a Greenpeace ship, and we were on a campaign in the Mediterranean Sea just off Majorca. People often think of the Mediterranean as a calm sea. But that night, a ferocious storm was raging when we answered a mayday call. A sailing boat was going down in extremely rough conditions. We did everything we could, hauling the crew on board as the boat was sinking before our very eyes. Two made it. Two did not. Saving lives at sea is a duty, and Europe is failing to uphold that duty by closing legal pathways with illegal pushbacks, by persecuting humanitarians. The distress calls are still coming in. It’s time that we answered them. It’s time we answered them now.

Carlo Fidanza (ECR). – Signor Presidente, signora Commissario, signora Ministro, onorevoli colleghi, in questi giorni abbiamo assistito ad una vergognosa campagna diffamatoria contro il governo italiano e contro Giorgia Meloni, accusata addirittura di avere le mani sporche di sangue e ritratta indifferente, mentre dietro di lei una persona sta affogando. *How do you sleep at night?* si sono chiesti i colleghi di sinistra. Ed è quello che noi ora chiediamo a voi, colleghi. Voi che speculate sulla morte di tanti disperati, tra cui troppi bambini: *how do you sleep at night?*

Voi che condannate il governo italiano e non spendete una parola contro gli scafisti o contro il gruppo Wagner che usa gli immigrati per dividere l'Europa: *how do you sleep at night?* Voi che oggi accusate il governo di destra italiano e ieri avete taciuto su quello di sinistra spagnolo: *how do you sleep at night?* Voi che con le vostre politiche deboli e le vostre ONG da anni fate il gioco dei trafficanti di esseri umani: *how do you sleep at night?* Voi che non conoscete più verità ma soltanto odio, menzogna e ipocrisia: *how do you sleep at night?*

France Jamet (ID). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, prenez enfin vos responsabilités. C'est parce que vous incitez les migrants à faire ce dangereux trajet de la clandestinité qu'ils meurent tragiquement en mer. Avec vos appels continus à l'immigration, votre soutien au principe du non-refoulement, l'assurance donnée aux clandestins qu'ils ne seront jamais renvoyés dans leur pays – 90 % des OQTF en France ne sont pas appliqués. Et enfin, l'impunité à l'égard des réseaux mafieux de passeurs et votre bienveillance à l'égard des ONG complices, voilà votre responsabilité.

Le seul moyen d'empêcher ces morts, c'est que les migrants soient bien convaincus qu'il ne faut pas tenter la traversée. Nous ne les accueillerons pas. C'est ce qu'a fait l'Australie en 2015, ramenant à zéro le nombre de morts en mer. C'est ce que veut faire le Royaume-Uni, qui a engagé les Britanniques vers le Brexit. C'est le seul moyen d'empêcher des gens d'embarquer en risquant leur vie. C'est le seul moyen d'empêcher la disparition programmée de notre civilisation sous la submersion migratoire.

Jörg Meuthen (NI). – Herr Präsident, Frau Kommissarin, werde Kollegen! Wieder und wieder spielen sich zutiefst erschütternde Tragödien auf dem Mittelmeer ab. Viele Tausend Menschen haben bereits auf dem gefährlichen Weg nach Europa ihr Leben gelassen. Wenn wir heute über die sogenannte Seenotrettung sprechen, sage ich deutlich: Sie ist nicht etwa Lösung, sondern im Gegenteil, sie ist Teil des Problems und steht mit in der Verantwortung.

Jene Aktivisten, die sich im Mittelmeer als Retter aufspielen, tragen genauso wie die ganzen skrupellosen Schlepper und die ganze rotgrüne Masseneinwanderungslobby aktiv dazu bei, dass verzweifelte Menschen aus Afrika, dem Nahen und Mittleren Osten überhaupt erst versuchen, illegal nach Europa zu gelangen und sich auf den lebensgefährlichen, oft tödlichen Weg über das Meer machen. Sie tragen die volle Verantwortung für dieses menschliche Leid an unseren Außengrenzen.

Ich sage: Mit dieser illegalen und tödlichen Praxis muss endlich Schluss sein. Es kann nur eine Botschaft der EU an die Welt geben: Illegale Migration in die EU hat keine Chance, sie wird nicht geduldet. Nur so schützen wir wirksam unsere Außengrenzen, bekämpfen die Schlepperbanden und bewahren vor allem unzählige Menschenleben vor dem Tod durch Ertrinken.

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

Karen Melchior (Renew), blue-card speech. – This is a repetitive debate. The last time we had it in this very Chamber, we were discussing whether rescuing lives at sea encourages people to travel and seek refuge in Europe. Barry Andrews, my colleague from Renew, said that there is evidence that this is not the case. Do you have evidence for your claim that you just made that rescue-at-sea encourages people to travel across the Mediterranean?

Jörg Meuthen (NI) blue-card reply. – Well, it is quite clear if they have the opportunity to come to Europe this way, they will do it. It is just evidence, nothing else. So it is quite easy. If there is no more chance to come in this way, they won't do it any more. That's the Australian way, you know, and that would be a solution that not so many people must die in the Mediterranean as they do at the time.

So we must change this by saying, 'no, not this way'. I'm not at all against legal kind of migration, but not in an illegal way, which leads people directly into death by drowning.

Salvatore De Meo (PPE). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, durante la plenaria di novembre, qui in quest'Aula, io e altri colleghi abbiamo esortato Commissione e Consiglio a presentare una proposta concreta per impedire l'immigrazione illegale e il traffico di esseri umani e l'ennesima strage di morti in mare.

A questo punto mi chiedo se valga la pena continuare a discutere in quest'Aula, se poi non c'è qualcuno che prenda in considerazione le nostre posizioni e, soprattutto, non dia seguito a ciò che questo Parlamento ha espresso chiaramente e più volte. Questo è il terzo dibattito negli ultimi tre mesi sul tema dell'immigrazione, un tema drammaticamente attuale su cui incredibilmente sembra che non si riesca a trovare una soluzione comune.

Allora mi domando: quanti altri dibattiti dobbiamo avere? E, soprattutto, quanti altri morti dobbiamo continuare a piangere? Il naufragio di Cutro dei giorni scorsi ha sconvolto tutti profondamente e ancora una volta l'Italia è stata resa ingiustamente protagonista di questa tragedia. Ma sia chiaro: quella di Cutro non è una tragedia italiana, ma è una tragedia europea. Così come non esiste un'emergenza migratoria in Italia, ma esiste un'emergenza migratoria in Europa. Ed è un'Europa che deve intervenire e non solo discutere.

Allora, bene ha fatto il nostro premier ad inserire il tema dell'immigrazione al prossimo Consiglio europeo, a dimostrazione che l'Italia c'è e vuole fare la sua parte ma non può essere sola. Perché serve una politica europea unica che preveda la solidarietà vera e indiscussa di tutti gli Stati, il divieto ai trafficanti di esseri umani e soprattutto un nuovo patto per l'immigrazione che rafforzi la cooperazione con i Paesi d'origine e garantisca una migrazione legale che possa essere realmente accolta e integrata.

Non ci sono più scuse: un'altra disgrazia in mare avrà un'unica colpevole, purtroppo: l'Unione europea e la sua negligenza.

Pedro Marques (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, Senhor Representante do Conselho, Senhora Comissária, Caros Colegas e, em particular, Colegas do PPE, as mulheres, homens e crianças que arriscam a sua vida para atravessar o Mediterrâneo, sabendo que tantos ficam pelo caminho, fazem-no em absoluto desespero, para fugir da fome, da guerra, da perseguição étnica e religiosa nos seus países. 26 000 já lá perderam a vida.

Senhora Mussolini do PPE, muito em particular: limitar as atividades de busca e salvamento e restringir o trabalho das ONG, que salvam vidas, é o contrário do que os Estados-Membros deviam estar a fazer, do que o seu Estado-Membro devia estar a fazer. É profundamente desumano e é contra os valores europeus.

Devíamos, sim, estar a prender os traficantes – e, Senhora Mussolini, esses é que estão a explorar as vidas humanas, não são certamente as ONG que estão a salvar gente no mar – a reforçar as operações de salvamento, a tentar salvar todos os que correm risco no mar, por puro desespero, a oferecer caminhos seguros, com certeza, para os que fogem do perigo e, com certeza, com solidariedade europeia no acolhimento.

Mas, Senhor Weber e Senhora Mussolini, não continuem a dança com os extremistas italianos só por motivos eleitorais. Não há vitória alguma que valha perder os valores de humanidade.

Abir Al-Sahlani (Renew). – Herr talman! Det är ett europeiskt misslyckande att vi står här i dag, ännu en gång, sedan 20 år tillbaka, och ser att människor dör på Medelhavet i sitt sökande efter trygghet och efter en bättre framtid. Det är ett europeiskt misslyckande.

I dag vill jag dock vända mig till Giorgia Meloni som under sin valkampanj sa att hennes kristna hjärta och hennes föräldrahjärta brann för Italien och de italienska värderingarna. Frågan är, ryms det några flyktingbarn i detta föräldrahjärta som tillhör Giorgia Meloni, när hon antar lagstiftning som bestraffar båtar och volontärer som hjälper människor ute till sjöss i nöd? Nej, det verkar inte som om hennes hjärta hör de ropen.

För tio år sedan, när Lampedusakatastrofen inträffade, när Alan Kurdis lilla kropp sköljdes upp på de stränder dit vi tar våra barn för att skapa barnminnen – sa vi: Aldrig mer! Bilderna av Alan Kurdis kropp sågs i varenda europeisk mobiltelefon. Vi sa: Aldrig mer! I dag är vi här igen, och jag ska säga några namn: Ibrahim Salim, tre år, Halil Munir Abdulrezzak, tre år, Madina Hussini, sex år, Alan Kurdi – igen – två år, fast i en annan skepnad.

Många tusentals dör. Det är en europeisk skam att vi står här och att människor fortfarande dör.

Robert Roos (ECR). – Voorzitter, in dit debat wordt telkens een valse tegenstelling gecreëerd. Alsof het hardvochtig zou zijn om grensbescherming te willen. Alsof het humaan zou zijn om massale mensensmokkel naar Europa te blijven toestaan. Dit is allebei volledig onwaar.

Grenzen zijn noodzakelijk om de welvaart en de veiligheid van de mensen in onze landen te beschermen. En juist massale mensensmokkel is inhumain. Want de enige reden dat mensen op gammele bootjes plaatsnemen is dat ze hopen dat ngo's hen meenemen en dat ze de rest van hun leven in Europa kunnen blijven.

De oplossing is eenvoudig en iedereen weet het. Laat Frontex de grenzen beschermen. Asiel aanvragen kan voortaan vanuit derde landen. Wie toch illegaal naar Europa komt, wordt teruggestuurd en krijgt nooit meer toegang tot Europa. Dit beleid zal onze landen beschermen én levens redden.

En ik herhaal nog maar eens de woorden van mijn collega Rooker. Illegale immigratie witwassen, door dezelfde mensen voortaan legaal te laten komen, is geen oplossing voor het probleem.

Bernhard Zimniok (ID). – Herr Präsident! Schon wieder sind im Mittelmeer Migranten ertrunken, und es ist ganz offensichtlich für mich, dass daran die EU schuld ist. Sie ist es nämlich, die die illegale Massenmigration nicht nur bekämpft, sondern noch forciert. Sie ist es, die die sogenannten privaten Seenotretter unterstützt, statt zu verbieten, obwohl jeder weiß, dass sie Hilfsdienste für kriminelle Schlepper leisten. Die EU ist es auch, die weitere Anreize für Migranten setzt und sie damit erst aufs Mittelmeer lockt.

Die Todeszahlen auf null zu reduzieren, wäre problemlos möglich, indem man diese privaten Schlepper verbietet, dafür vorübergehend eine staatliche Seenotrettung einführt, alle Boote dazu zurückführt und die Migranten in die Herkunftsländer zurückbringt und dort Aufklärungskampagnen schaltet, dass sich der Weg in die EU nicht mehr lohnt. Wer die Todeszahlen auf null reduzieren will, der geht genau diesen Weg. Alle anderen verfolgen nur ihre krude Ideologie der offenen Grenzen und nehmen dafür in Kauf, dass weitere Hunderte und Tausende Menschen sterben, sinnlos sterben. Daran seid Ihr schuld!

Jérôme Rivière (NI). – Monsieur le Président, si la réalité n'était pas aussi dramatique, si de nombreuses personnes ne s'étaient pas noyées dans ces traversées périlleuses, on pourrait sans ciller affirmer que nous sommes une fois encore dans un débat qui dénie le réel, tant la majorité de cette assemblée est aveuglée par ses positions dogmatiques immigrationnistes.

Nos pays, et la France en particulier, laissent croire à des dizaines, des centaines de milliers d'étrangers qu'en tentant de migrer illégalement, ils trouveront ici logement et emploi qui les attendent. Les instances européennes et certains gouvernements de pays membres font le jeu des passeurs en ne les sanctionnant pas durement, en continuant à subventionner les ONG, elles-mêmes agissant en passeurs.

Nos pays européens sont littéralement submergés par l'immigration et ne peuvent plus accueillir d'étrangers supplémentaires sans mettre en péril la sécurité économique et personnelle de leurs concitoyens et en particulier les moins nantis d'entre eux. L'UE doit donner à Frontex des moyens beaucoup plus importants et la mission claire de ne plus laisser ces bateaux passer et de raccompagner ces candidats à l'émigration d'où ils sont partis et ainsi éviter ces terribles drames humains.

Sylvie Guillaume (S&D). – Monsieur le Président, au départ, je pensais que mon intervention allait exprimer une fois de plus, j'allais dire, une forme de désarroi sur le fait que l'Union européenne ne sache pas trouver une solution sur la question des sauvetages en mer et des voies légales de migration. J'ai entendu dire qu'on reparlait de personnes et plus seulement de quantité, donc finalement y a-t-il peut-être un petit gramme d'espoir devant nous. En effet, on a réussi à mettre en place, contre toute attente, d'une certaine manière, la directive «protection temporaire» 20 ans après son adoption, donc c'est une forme d'espoir.

Alors, est-ce qu'on ne serait pas capable aussi de relancer un mécanisme de sauvetage en mer réellement européen? Il y aurait plusieurs avantages à ça. D'abord, sans dénigrer, et au contraire, j'y insiste, l'action des ONG sur le terrain, cela contribuerait à éviter des épouvantables drames qui ont lieu en mer Méditerranée comme ailleurs. Ensuite, nous pourrions encadrer les arrivées et accueillir dignement les gens. En parallèle, nous devrions mettre en place des voies légales de migration qui assurent la prévisibilité des arrivées et qui permettent aux États européens comme aux migrants d'y trouver un intérêt commun. Et de cette manière, je crois que l'Europe en sortirait grandie.

Nicola Danti (Renew). – Signor Presidente, Signora Commissaria, signora Ministro, onorevoli colleghi, per l'ennesima volta ci troviamo in quest'Aula con ancora negli occhi le immagini terribili di una tragedia come quella di Cutro: le vite spezzate di bambini, donne, uomini che affidavano all'Europa speranze e sogni di libertà. Un naufragio sulla cui gestione dei soccorsi sono ancora troppi i lati oscuri e non per la responsabilità delle forze dell'ordine, che da anni salvano con coraggio e professionalità vite in mare.

Io guardo negli occhi chi ha responsabilità decisionali. Guardo negli occhi il governo italiano che ancora non è stato capace di dare risposte. Ed è insopportabile che un ministro si metta a sindacare sul perché una madre e un padre scelgano di affidare a un viaggio così pericoloso la vita dei propri figli. I perché li conosciamo, così come conosciamo le risposte che quest'Aula deve dare, dai canali di immigrazione legali a meccanismi di redistribuzione vincolanti.

Cari colleghi, non limitiamoci a dire, ancora una volta, che cosa stiamo aspettando, perché altrimenti la risposta del giorno dopo sarà sempre la stessa: aspettiamo che sia troppo tardi!

Joachim Stanisław Brudziński (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Szanowni Państwo! Powiedzmy sobie szczerze i bez owijania w bawełnę. Jeżeli chcemy dalej widzieć takie porażające sceny, o jakich była tutaj mowa, te śmierci dzieci, trzylatków, dwulatków na plażach od Grecji po Hiszpanię, to róbmy tak dalej. Zachęcajmy dalej tych nieszczęśników, aby do Europy przybywali. Twórzmy takie złudzenia, że jak będzie jakaś tragedia, to zawsze im pomoże jakaś organizacja pozarządowa, że zawsze znajdą się środki na to, żeby takiej pomocy udzielić. Proszę Państwa, dzisiaj do przyczyn, które od wieków popychały ludzi w poszukiwaniu lepszego życia, takich jak wojna, jak głód, jak nieszczęścia, wypadki losowe, dołączył jeszcze jeden szatan. Ten szatan nazywa się Putin. Była tutaj mowa o tym, że wagnerowcy w Libii organizują dzisiaj przerzuty ludzi do Europy. Wiemy, co działo się na wschodniej granicy Unii Europejskiej, na granicy polsko-białoruskiej. I dzisiaj atakujecie rządy, które chronią waszych obywateli, a gloryfikujecie tych, którzy de facto napędzają ten nielegalny przemyt do Europy. Jeżeli chcecie więcej takich tragedii, o jakich przed chwilą tutaj mówiliście, to róbcie tak dalej.

Balázs Hidvéghi (NI). – Mr President, dear colleagues, the shipwrecks on the Mediterranean are heart-breaking human tragedies. Blaming the legitimate border protection efforts of Member States, however, is a very dishonest and a completely wrong approach. The underlying reason for these tragic events, in reality, is the European indulgence and lack of sanction concerning illegal entries into the Union. It is the pro-migration statements, the quotas and the impunity for NGOs that cooperate with criminals – smugglers – that cause these deaths.

Italy faces the continuous arrival of more and more ships, with an estimated 650 000 people set to leave Africa just this year, as forecast by intelligence services. It is European migration policy that must be placed on a completely new footing in order to avoid more human tragedies at sea. To stop the vicious circle, the first thing to do is to start protecting Europe's borders so that there would be no point for smugglers and migrants to even begin their dangerous journey.

Also, all illegally arrived migrants in Europe who have no right to stay must be transported back home. Unless we do these things, there will be no end to the tragedies that we have witnessed.

Pietro Bartolo (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, le immagini dei cadaveri sulla spiaggia di Cutro e di quelli che galleggiano al largo della Libia non mi danno pace. La mia mente è ritornata ai dieci anni fa, quando a Lampedusa fui tra i primi a soccorrere quelle 500 persone e a ispezionare 368 cadaveri. Ciò che è successo e che a distanza di tempo continua a succedere è il manifesto di un'Europa che non riesce a gestire il fenomeno migratorio. È una vergogna! È scandaloso!

Non possiamo più tollerare politiche e rimpalli burocratici sulla vita delle persone. Occorre una missione di ricerca e salvataggio europeo anche per restituire umanità alla politica. Vorrei che per un momento tutti voi immaginaste quei bambini restituiti dal mare come i vostri figli, i vostri nipoti, i nostri figli, i nostri nipoti. E allora? Allora iniziamo a lavorare insieme: Parlamento, Consiglio, Commissione con la consapevolezza che tutto può essere negoziato: ma non i valori fondamentali, non la vita.

Assita Kanko (ECR). – Voorzitter, ik heb aandachtig naar de toespraak van commissaris Johansson geluisterd en ik geloof oprecht in haar goede bedoelingen. Maar met goede bedoelingen alleen komen wij er niet. Eind februari verdronken 16 mensen voor de kust van Italië. Vijf dagen geleden verdronken er opnieuw 14 mensen, vlak voor de kust van Tunesië. Deze keer zonder veel media-aandacht en zonder steunbetuigingen van EU-commissarissen. Worden we het stilaan gewend? Dit mag echt nooit wennen.

Op dit moment zitten 2 400 mensen vast in een opvangcentrum in Lampedusa dat bedoeld is voor 400 mensen. Hoe menselijk is dat? Ik ben blij te horen dat commissaris Johansson naar Tunesië gaat, maar ze mag niet met lege handen terugkomen, want samen moeten we het businessmodel van de mensensmokkelaars vernietigen voordat dit nog veel meer mensen vernietigt. We moeten een sterk signaal sturen.

Dino Giarrusso (NI). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, l'Italia, i meravigliosi mari italiani diventano cimiteri per migliaia di esseri umani, di donne, di bambini. A Cutro il lutto ci ha travolto. E il governo italiano non ha saputo salvare la vita di bambini, donne e uomini e ha osato dire, con il ministro Piantedosi, che la colpa è di chi parte con i propri figli. È uno schiaffo a secoli di civiltà. Le vite umane vanno salvate sempre e chi scappa da persecuzioni e guerra va accolto. Questo orrore riempie di vergogna non solo noi italiani, ma tutti i cittadini europei.

Sono stato eletto quattro anni fa e dal primo giorno ho chiesto una revisione dei trattati di Dublino che scaricano su un solo Paese la responsabilità di affrontare un fenomeno migratorio epocale per dimensioni e impatto, che riguarda tutti i Paesi europei. 26.000 morti dalla strage di Lampedusa a oggi. Capite?

A fronte di un governo italiano inane, impreparato, goffo, almeno l'Europa prenda atto di come questa realtà drammatica possa essere affrontata solo prendendosi ciascuno la propria responsabilità: investendo uomini, mezzi e denaro per salvare vite oggi e creare condizioni per stroncare domani il *business* di esseri umani.

L'Europa operi una scelta di dignità e umanità e rispetti le proprie radici. Se non lo farà, i nostri mari saranno ancora cimiteri d'acqua.

Thijs Reuten (S&D). – Voorzitter, commissaris, Raad en collega's, Torpekai Amarkhel was een Afghaanse journaliste, een aardige, sterke vrouw met een passie voor haar beroep dat ze niet meer kon uitoefenen sinds de machtsovername van de Taliban. En ze had maar één optie: vluchten naar Europa. Twee weken geleden verdronk ze voor de kust van Calabrië. Torpekai is een van de vijf familieleden die tegelijk verdronken, een van de tientallen opvarenden die in de golven verdwenen, een van de 26 000 mensen die sinds 2014 in de Middellandse Zee overleden. Nog zo'n verhaal als dat van commissaris Johansson.

Torpekai is gestorven omdat de EU geen veilige vluchtroute creëerde, omdat Italië doelbewust het werk van ngo's frustreert – ngo's die het gat vullen dat Italië zelf laat door verantwoordelijkheid voor reddingen te ontlopen. Achter elk getal zit een verhaal en zolang het EU-beleid er slechts op gericht is om vluchtelingen weg te houden, komen er verhalen bij. Wij blijven ze vertellen tot onze regeringsleiders hun holle condoleances omzetten in solidair Europees beleid dat echt levens redt.

Charlie Weimers (ECR). – Herr talman! Ännu en gång, för femte gången, debatterar vi tragiska dödsfall på havet mellan Afrika och Europa. Sanningen måste dock sägas: Båtmigranterna kommer att fortsätta att dö så länge som EU belönar illegal migration med uppehälle och välfärd.

Migranterna är ofta från Bangladesh, vars befolkning har växt med mer än 40 miljoner de senaste 20 åren, eller från Pakistan som ökat med 80 miljoner under samma tid. Hur ska era lagliga vägar kunna möta ett migrationstryck som bygger på den befolkningsökningen?

Se sanningen i vitögat. Följ Australiens exempel genom att flytta asylprocessen till tredjeland, avvisa alla migrantbåtar och sluta belöna illegal migration med asyl och välfärd. Ni säger nej till det – det enda som lyckats stoppa döden på havet. Fler lagliga vägar kommer inte att göra det, och då kommer båtmigranter att fortsätta att dö.

Det enda som då återstår är helt öppna gränser och ett Europa som snart inte står att känna igen. Var ärliga, är det egentligen det ni står för?

Carina Ohlsson (S&D). – Herr talman! Kommissionär! För varje båt som förliser på Medelhavet innebär det att fler föräldrar aldrig kommer att få se sina barn le igen. Värst drabbas nämligen barnen. Vi får aldrig glömma att det hade kunnat vara ditt barn eller mitt barn som satt i båten om vi hade fötts i en annan del av världen.

Migranter är mer än siffror på ett papper. I desperation riskerar människor sina liv. När det inte finns några lagliga vägar in i Europa kommer detta att fortsätta, och människors livsöden kommer att läggas i händerna på människosmugglare.

I väntan på gemensamma regler tävlar nu länder om vem som kan bete sig sämst mot migranter. Det hänvisas till att det är någon annans ansvar. Det måste vara slut på att skjuta ifrån sig ansvaret. EU kan självklart inte hjälpa alla, men vi kan ta vårt ansvar. Låt oss därför ta ansvar för en långsiktigt hållbar migrationspolitik, där den som har rätt att söka asyl får göra det. Vi har ett gemensamt ansvar för vårt Medelhav och de dödsolyckor som vi ser.

(Talaren godtog att svara på ett inlägg ("blått kort"))

Bogdan Rzońca (ECR), wystąpienie zasygnalizowane niebieską kartką. – Otóż chciałem Panią zapytać, bo kiedyś Angela Merkel popełniła ogromny błąd, proponując tzw. przymusowy mechanizm alokacji imigrantów. To było w 2015 r. I ta informacja wybrzmiewa jeszcze na różnych kontynentach. Migranci dlatego tu jadą do Europy. Czy nie uważa Pani, że prościej byłoby pójść drogą duńską i na przykład w tej chwili już wyasygnować ogromne kwoty pieniędzy z Unii Europejskiej i poinformować wszystkie kraje, z których pochodzą emigranci, żeby nie przyjeżdżali, bo nielegalne drogi są zajęte?

Carina Ohlsson (S&D). – Tack för frågan. Ja, då kan vi ju sända en annan signal nu att vi kommer överens om en långsiktigt hållbar migration och står upp för rätten att söka asyl, och tar emot migranterna på ett värdigt sätt för att de ska kunna söka asyl. Då är det viktigt att alla parter här inne nu förhandlar så att vi får en långsiktigt hållbar migration där vi står upp för människors lika värde och rätten att söka asyl.

Ангел Джамбазки (ECR). – Г-н Председател, колеги, нелегална миграция означава незаконно преминаване на държавни граници. Незаконното преминаване на държавни граници означава нарушаване на закона. Учудвам се, че в тази зала, в нейната лява част, където винаги се говори за върховенство на закона, има призови, има настояване да се подкрепя нарушаването на законността, нарушаването на държавните граници, на закона. Вашата подкрепа за неправителствени организации, които организират трафик на хора, означава подкрепа за престъпления, извършени със заплаха за живота на хората, които вие подлъгвате да нарушават закона. Изобщо във вашата позиция, уважаеми колеги, уважаеми тук е в кавички, се намира чудовишно противоречие. Вие говорите, настоявате за върховенство на закона, а подкрепяте неговото нарушаване и застрашавате човешки животи. Оттук вади извода, че за вас нарушаването на закона и рискуването на човешки животи е нищо в сравнение с това да натрупате дребни точки, дребен политически капитал и да се правите на защитници на живота, които застрашавате. Точно толкова просто е и трябва да ви е срам.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Tomislav Sokol (PPE). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, u pokušaju da stignu do Europe od 2015. na moru je smrtno stradalo ili nestalo više od 25 tisuća osoba. Pritom se procjenjuje da je 90 % nezakonitih migranata platilo krijumčarima kako bi pokušali stići do Europe.

Za kriminalne mreže to je vrlo unosna poslovna aktivnost. Primjerice, procjenjuje se da je krijumčarenjem migranata 2015. ostvaren promet od tri do šest milijardi eura.

Zahvaljujući angažmanu Europske unije u operacijama spašavanja migranata spašeno je više od 629 tisuća života. Međutim, da bismo riješili humanitarne katastrofe utapanja, nije dovoljno samo organizirati operacije spašavanja. Potreban nam je zajednički koordinirani europski odgovor protiv krijumčarenja ljudi s jedne strane i pojačana suradnja s trećim državama da bi se problem nezakonitih migracija riješio na njegovom izvoru, u trećim državama.

Europska unija nije dužna i neće primiti na svoj teritorij sve one koji se Europe žele domoći samo zato što je kvaliteta života ovdje bolja nego u trećim državama. Međutim, isto tako ne smije mirno promatrati gubitke života stotina ljudi kojima je netko lažno obećao da se europskog tla mogu dohvatiti na nezakonit način.

Javier Moreno Sánchez (S&D). – Señor presidente, señora comisaria, señora ministra, señorías, treinta muertos el domingo, ochenta y cinco en Calabria hace unos días, y podría seguir así hasta llegar a los mil trescientos que desaparecieron el año pasado. No son cifras, son vidas truncadas. Y, como subrayó la presidenta Metsola en su declaración de apertura de este lunes, no podemos tolerarlo.

Me pregunto cuántos migrantes más deben morir para que los Estados miembros cumplan con sus obligaciones y salven a la gente antes de ahogarse. ¿Cuánto tiempo tenemos que esperar para que haya un mecanismo de salvamento obligatorio, siguiendo el espíritu de la operación EUNAVFOR MED SOPHIA, con la que se salvaron más de cincuenta mil vidas en tres años, al tiempo que se luchaba contra los traficantes de migrantes? Para ello, debemos superar la narrativa de la extrema derecha basada en el racismo, el odio y el miedo, que son su caldo de cultivo electoral.

Señorías de las derechas, si les queda algo de respeto por la dignidad humana, apuesten con nosotros por la cooperación con los países de origen y de tránsito, la lucha contra las mafias, el salvamento marítimo y la apertura de canales humanitarios y de inmigración legal. Lo tienen fácil.

Karen Melchior (Renew). – Mr President, in the recent shipwreck, the Italian authorities refused to help and the responsible Libyan authorities did not help, despite having received both patrol boats and millions of euros from the European community. This is why we need to revoke the Libyan search and rescue area and we need to have EU state-led search and rescue. We cannot delegate the responsibility of refugees at the EU borders to other states. We need to make sure that we have legal pathways both for refugees and for migrants to the EU. This is the only solution to stop people from dying at the European borders. Our Member States need to take the responsibility for helping refugees at the borders of the EU. We need to have proper partnerships with trustworthy countries so that we can receive migrants and refugees properly and dignified and so that we can also send back the migrants who tried to come to Europe under the guise of being refugees.

Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE). – Señor presidente, no hay peor muro que el muro de la deshumanización. Esta última tragedia demuestra la falta de solidaridad europea y, sobre todo, la vergüenza y el escándalo. Nuevamente venimos al Parlamento Europeo a hablar de la tragedia y de las muertes, de la falta de corredores humanitarios, de la falta de vías legales y seguras, de la falta de un pacto de migración y asilo, tan necesario.

Además, qué vergonzoso es escuchar a la derecha y la extrema derecha de esta Cámara —como la derecha y la extrema derecha italianas o la extrema derecha española— demonizando a las ONG, que son las únicas que están salvando vidas en los mares europeos, con discursos de odio, racistas y xenófobos, con discursos que no deberían ni siquiera ser aceptados en un Parlamento como este.

Porque, señorías, no hay muro que contenga la desesperación por salvar la vida, la desesperación de una huida por tener una vida mejor. Y a las personas hay que respetarlas, no como números ni como fotografías de muertos, sino por su condición humana, sean de donde sean.

Silvia Sardone (ID). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, siete degli ipocriti. I morti in mare sono solo responsabilità dell'Unione europea. Il buonismo e le politiche pro-immigrazione hanno portato a più partenze e quindi più morti in mare. I vostri patetici slogan per l'accoglienza sono un danno per i migranti e anche per i cittadini dell'Unione europea.

È imbarazzante il vostro atteggiamento sull'immigrazione: da una parte, parlate di umanità, poi lasciate l'Italia sola, con tutta la responsabilità dell'accoglienza. Avete dato 7 miliardi di euro ad Erdogan. Eppure dalla Turchia continuano a partire i barconi.

Parlate di solidarietà europea, ma i numeri sui ricollocamenti sono praticamente ridicoli, non c'è nessuna rotazione dei porti europea e nessuno vuole i migranti economici. Basta con la vostra propaganda solidale! L'immigrazione clandestina va fermata e gli scafisti vanno combattuti seriamente.

E poi, insomma, con tutta questa retorica e tutta la vostra ipocrisia, con tutte le morti in mare: ma voi come fate a guardarvi allo specchio al mattino?

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Mr President, we're talking about 26 000 lives lost in the Mediterranean, and that's just the number of bodies recovered. God knows what the real figure is. This is not just a tragedy; it is a preventable tragedy.

This humanitarian crisis has been created by neglectful and inhumane policies, Member State border pushbacks and the creation of Frontex who have carried out further illegal pushbacks and have been complicit in severe human rights violations. Migrants desperately need safe legal pathways, not arbitrary criminalisation for risking their lives in treacherous conditions for a better future.

Remember, many MEPs in here voted for these migrants to drown at sea. Has it dawned on them that maybe these migrants want to leave the jungle and go to the garden of Europe? Because we are doing untold damage to the jungle with our wars and our financial imperialism. Wake up.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Mr President, this debate is happening against the backdrop of the deaths of 74 people off the coast of Italy last month. Half of the dead were children, 30 are still missing.

It's against the backdrop of the ongoing criminal trials of rescue workers and innocent refugees for helping people to safety. It's against the backdrop of the new Italian regulations that tightened the noose around the civilian search and rescue operations who have stepped into the breach since the EU shamefully walked away from its legal obligations to save lives at sea. It's against the backdrop of illegal pushbacks, violence, torture and thousands of deaths. It's against the backdrop of Gary Lineker being suspended from his job as a broadcaster for expressing solidarity with refugees.

My God, what a grim backdrop. So can we please get real and change the narrative? The people coming to the EU from outside its borders are an asset, not a threat. Europe can wake up to that fact or stay in its savage and evermore authoritarian death trap. I hope for the first, but fear for the second.

Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana (Verts/ALE). – Monsieur le Président, l'assistance humanitaire fait l'objet d'une criminalisation. Le gouvernement italien a adopté une nouvelle loi qui restreint les activités de sauvetage. Il impose aux navires de sauvetage d'informer les autorités dès qu'une embarcation est secourue. Les ONG passent ainsi plus de temps à se rendre dans les ports qu'à sauver des gens en mer. Jusqu'à quand assisterons-nous à ces scènes tragiques de cadavres qui gisent sur nos plages, d'enfants qui disparaissent dans les flots? Des milliers de vies brisées aux frontières de l'Europe.

Cette situation nécessite des mesures concrètes de la part de l'Union européenne, comme accroître les capacités des autorités maritimes à patrouiller et détruire le rôle des passeurs. L'introduction de visas humanitaires permettrait aux demandeurs d'asile de se rendre dans l'Union européenne en toute sécurité. L'Europe doit être solidaire et sauver des vies, conformément à nos valeurs et à la dignité humaine.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Mairead McGuinness, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, good evening, colleagues. Really to just thank the Chamber for putting this debate on your agenda, and I speak obviously on behalf of Commissioner Johansson. I think, as we close this debate, we know that this discussion is far from over.

People get into small boats and embark on dangerous journeys because there are no legal ways for them to get to Europe. Many of you have expressed the need for safe legal pathways, and that is something that we support.

Let's look at the realities of the European Union today. We reckon that in the healthcare area, 2 million professionals are needed. We also know that by 2030 there will be 7 million vacancies in long-term care alone. MEP Daly mentioned that these people are assets. They're human beings with the capacity to contribute and those who get into boats do it, putting their lives at risk because they want something better.

I also recall that this is what we call the European Year of Skills, and to tell this House that we are making progress on talent partnerships with key partner countries. We're starting with Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Bangladesh and Pakistan, and we're looking at Nigeria in the near future. Our Member States are fully involved and this is really essential for success.

Our first round table took place with Bangladesh on 1 March, with strong interest from Italy and Germany to foster labour mobility, which should include skills development and skills certification. Today a round table meeting is taking place with Pakistan. Just last week, the first global jobs fair for refugee talent was organised in Amman. This work can provide safe avenues and lead to jobs and opportunities. For example, over 100 refugees have been interviewed by potential employers.

This is the future. It is in stark contrast to the terrible tragedies at sea. People smugglers – and we have to call them out – people smugglers are to blame for these tragedies. They exploit people's dreams. They turn them into nightmares. These people end up in shipwrecks on the high seas or in airtight vans on the highways. We think about the 18 people found dead in a lorry in Bulgaria, the people drowned near Calabria, left to die, abandoned by smugglers who save their own skins.

Colleagues, these tragedies should galvanise us, should forge our determination, steel our resolve to fight the smugglers relentlessly by air, by sea and by land. We have to fight these smugglers as Team Europe and with our partners to do what we can to prevent people from getting into the smugglers' boats, to prevent irregular departures, to work better together to save lives.

Next Monday, Commissioner Johansson will meet with African Union Commissioner Samate, High Commissioner for Refugees Grandi, and Director General of the IOM António Vitorino. This is done in our trilogue task force on Libya, and the idea behind this is to prepare our high-level dialogue with Libyan authorities.

We have three key objectives: protecting the most vulnerable people in detention centres, including women and children; fighting smuggling and protecting victims; stepping up on returns, evacuations through the Emergency Transit Mechanism, resettlement and reintegration of migrants.

I welcome the interventions today that called for swift progress and adoption of the Pact on Migration and Asylum. I agree it is high time to do that and I am encouraged by the good progress made by this House and by the Council. I very much welcome the mandates you will agree on next week. We have a roadmap and we are on the right track. We now need to stay on track.

There is a new mood in the Council, a strong will to move forward. So the momentum is there. The time is right for an agreement on this pact. And together, I think we should remember that the objectives are to save lives. The figure was mentioned – I think MEP Wallace mentioned a figure of several thousand human beings whose lives have been lost at sea and perhaps many more thousands that have not been counted. I think we can address that collectively: Parliament, Council and Commission.

IN THE CHAIR: DITA CHARANZOVÁ

Vice-President

Jessika Roswall, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Madam President, honourable Members, Commissioner, thank you for this debate. There is no doubt that the situation at our maritime borders must be dealt with in an effective and timely manner, in accordance with European and international law.

Let me be clear: our priority is to save lives at sea. In this regard, cooperation with third countries can help to prevent irregular departures. The EU has been working together with key partners in North Africa for many years with the aim to strengthen their border management, as well as their search and rescue capacities. This has helped to build up capacities for the international protection and migration management in the entire region.

These partnerships are also important to strengthen the operational framework in partner countries in response to migrant smugglers. Let me also say once again, and this is a clear message from this debate, that the reoccurring tragedies at sea remind us that a common European response is the only way forward. We must work together to ensure a functioning, coherent and predictable European migration policy and a whole government approach.

As I have already underlined, the Presidency intends to continue in facing a global approach to migration based on a balance between solidarity and responsibility. We have the firm will to find a common approach, and we are determined to pursue this commitment.

President. – The debate is closed.

Written statements (Rule 171)

Cyrus Engerer (S&D), bil-miktub. – Li kieku nafkom kont insemmikom b'isimkom. Imma ma nghatajtux çans. Ma nafu xejn fuqkom, hliel li ttammajtu fil-hajja avolja tatkom fuq wiççkom. U xorta nibqghu nsejhulkom illegali. Il-politika fallietkom – f'pajjizkom u anke fl-Ewropa. Il-politika qatlitkom, u xorta ssib min jibqa' jishaq fuq il-hitan. Però l-hitan qeghdin biss f'qalbhom. Ghax biex tasal titlaq fuq trağitt bla sigurtà bhalkom, mhux talli trid tissogra hajtek izda trid tafda fil-qlub ta' nies li ma tafx, hafna drabi sempliciment kemm jehdulkom il-flus u jitolukom ghal rihkom. Sfortunatament imma, ghalkemm hajt fiziku ma sibtux, xorta wahda fallietkom il-qalb Ewropea li tant tishaq fuq is-sbuhija tad-diversità. Kemm ha ndumu niġu hawn, plenarja wara l-oħra nishqu fuq l-importanza li nillegizlaw fuq l-immigrazzjoni? Kemm-il hajja trid tintilef? Kemm se ddumu ddawru wiççkom intom li m'intomx l-ewwel punt ta' tama ghal dawn in-nies li jaslu fl-Ewropa? Probabbilment, iddawruh, ghaliex mhux intom qed tqumu ghat-tfal mejtin fuq xtutkom. Hallejtu lill-pajjiżi tal-periferija wahedhom! Konna nitkellmu differenti li kieku nafuhom b'isimhom lil dawn in-nies, li kieku nistgħu nħossu l-biża' f'qalbhom. Imma issa ma nistawx ghax dak li kien, m'ghadux.

Janina Ochojska (PPE), na piśmie. – Panie Przewodniczący! Zwracam się do Pani Komisarz, której chciałabym pogratulować bardzo dobrego wystąpienia. W pełni zgadzam się, że obok działań mających na celu „pomaganie na miejscu”, rozwiązania problemu migracji powinniśmy szukać w kreowaniu bezpiecznych i legalnych ścieżek migracji oraz walce z przemytnikami, którzy napędzają ruchy migracyjne i narażają ludzi na utratę życia. Mam jednak pewien niedosyt, bo do tej pory wiele powiedzieliśmy na ten temat, a mało się wydarzyło. Wierzę jednak, że Pani zapowiedź przełoży się na podjęcie konkretnych kroków w kolejnych miesiącach.

Cieszę mnie wszelkie informacje na temat każdej udanej akcji poszukiwawczo-ratowniczej na Morzu Śródziemnym, ale nie możemy zapominać o ludziach, którzy umierają na innych odcinkach granicy UE w wyniku budowania murów i pushbacków. To trochę tak jakbyśmy przymykali oczy na cierpienie uchodźców przemierzających wschodnie szlaki migracyjne. Oni potrzebują pomocy tak samo jak ci uchodźcy, którzy docierają pontonami do wybrzeży UE.

Musimy być spójni w naszych działaniach, a przede wszystkim dbać o wdrażanie prawa międzynarodowego humanitarne w takim samym wymiarze i w każdym miejscu. Trzeba wyciągać konsekwencje wobec tych krajów członkowskich, które tego prawa nie przestrzegają. Nie może być w tej kwestii taryfy ulgowej, inaczej doprowadzamy do sytuacji w której wartościujemy życie ludzi a każde z nich jest jednakowo ważne!

15. Necesidad de reformar las normas internas de la Comisión con carácter inmediato para garantizar la transparencia y la rendición de cuentas a la luz de supuestos conflictos de intereses (debate)

President. – The next item is the debate on the Commission statement on the need for immediate reform of the internal rules of the Commission to ensure transparency and accountability in light of alleged conflicts of interests (2023/2610(RSP)).

Mairead McGuinness, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, honourable Members, the members of the Commission and its staff are expected to adhere to the highest standards of professional ethics and integrity, and they are expected to comply with their obligations set out in the code of conduct and the staff regulations respectively.

These high standards apply both to missions and to any gifts or hospitality offered. The Commission has an effective internal control system for ethics management. This was recognised by the Court of Auditors in its 2019 report and by the European Ombudsman in the 2021 report on the subject of outside activities.

Staff have to declare any actual or potential conflict of interest. Each declaration is assessed thoroughly by the line manager and, where necessary, based on the guidance by the Commission's central ethics service. Strict mitigating measures may be imposed. For example, the person concerned may be relieved of their duty to take a decision on a specific matter. Furthermore, above a certain threshold, authorisation is needed in order to accept gifts or hospitality. Mission costs are almost always covered entirely by the EU budget. In only 1.6% of all missions from 2019 to 2022 were there contributions by outside organisers. Acceptance of such contributions is mainly for diplomatic or courtesy purposes.

When staff are requested to carry out a mission, any planned contribution by the organisers has to be declared. Any actual or potential conflict of interest has to be assessed by the staff member concerned, as well as by their hierarchy, in full transparency, through a dedicated IT tool under the four eyes principle. If any conflict is detected, the mission is fully covered by the Commission budget. Directors-general are heads of service and responsible for their service budget. They are authorising officers delegated to do so by the College and they sign off on their own missions. In case of any potential conflict of interest, they are expected to seek the opinion of the political level or the Commission's central ethics service.

All members of the Commission and staff are well informed of their ethics obligations through numerous and regular trainings, from their entry into service until retirement, throughout their entire career. Last year, almost 9 000 staff participated in ethics training. In addition, Commissioners, members of their cabinet and directors-general can only meet interested representatives who are registered in the transparency register, and they must publish information on all such meetings. This applies to meetings with lobbyists in line with the interinstitutional rules on the transparency register. It does not apply to meetings with representatives of public authorities or the Commission's contractual partners.

Questions have been raised about missions to Qatar by the Commission's Director-General in charge of transport, mainly during the Commission's previous mandate. The Commission has, in full transparency, disclosed all information related to travel with Qatar. The purpose of these missions was to take forward the mobility and transport aspects of EU-Qatar and Gulf Cooperation Council relations, following up on the visit by former Commissioner Bulc to the Gulf region. The Director-General in charge of transport, as head of service and responsible for the mission budget of his service, signed off on his missions and he declared that there was no conflict of interest as regards certain mission costs being covered by third parties. This was based on his own assessment of the situation. The competent Commission services are currently looking at this and all other related elements in order to establish the facts. We note that there were also missions by the Director-General for transport to Qatar that were paid entirely by the EU budget.

Looking at the broader picture, since last year, the Commission has been revisiting its guide on missions. The main reason for this is to implement the Commission's ambitious greening targets and to take account of the increased use of online meetings during the pandemic.

We are also using this opportunity to streamline our authorisation procedures for missions and to tackle the issue of perception for contributions made by third parties. We decided on 7 March, with immediate effect, that we will apply the following. Directors-general will need to seek formal approval of the head of cabinet of their Commissioner for all missions with a third-party contribution. Now, the only contributions that could be accepted for any mission by a staff member would be from Member States, EEA or EFTA countries, international organisations like the UN or international forums like the G7 or G20, and universities.

We are confident that this approach will rule out even the slightest perception of conflicts of interest and that it will uphold the highest ethical standards the Commission operates under in the interests of European citizens. The Commission will cooperate fully and transparently with the European Ombudsman on her strategic initiative on missions of senior staff members with a third-party contribution. And we look forward to continuing the dialogue with the European Parliament. I look forward to the debate.

Monika Hohlmeier, *im Namen der PPE-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin! Ganz herzlichen Dank für Ihr Statement. Im ersten Moment, muss ich ehrlich sagen, war ich ein bisschen verblüfft des Guten, weil ich dachte, dass eigentlich das Budget der Europäischen Union ausreichen müsste, um Generaldirektoren, Direktoren oder Beamte der Europäischen Union, wenn sie zu Kongressen oder Konferenzen fahren sollen, die einen wesentlichen Mehrwert bringen – in den Verhandlungen, in den diplomatischen Beziehungen, in welcher offiziellen Funktion auch immer –, dann sollte dafür das Budget der Europäischen Union zur Verfügung stehen.

Es sollten keine Einladungen von dritter Seite erfolgen, die am Ende letztendlich auch einen Verdacht darauf lenken können, dass dadurch potenziell die Unvoreingenommenheit, die Neutralität und die Objektivität des zuständigen Generaldirektors oder des zuständigen Personals der Europäischen Kommission kompromittiert sein könnte. Ich halte es für zwingend erforderlich, Frau Kommissarin, dass es da diesbezüglich eine ganz klare Regelung gibt.

Dasselbe gilt für mich übrigens auch dann, wenn es zum Beispiel Kontrollen innerhalb der Mitgliedstaaten gibt. Da kann es nicht angehen, dass die Mitgliedstaaten einladen, sondern da muss das Budget der Europäischen Union entsprechend ausgestattet sein, dass Reisen von Beamten, die aus dienstlichen Gründen stattfinden, von diesem Budget abgedeckt werden, um jeden Zweifel einfach auszulöschen.

Man muss auch ehrlich zugeben, wenn man Reisen in ein Land hat, das besondere Interessen in Bezug auf Visaliberalisierung, in Bezug auf besondere Flug- und Landrechte hat, wo es auch innerhalb der Europäischen Union gegenüber diesem Land Proteste gibt, dass es einen unfairen Wettbewerb gibt, dass es unfaire Bedingungen in Bezug auf die Wettbewerbssituation gibt.

Wenn ich mir Qatar Airways anschau, wenn ich mir Diskussionen anschau mit Fluglinien, die Kerosin zu deutlich vergünstigten Preisen anbieten, und vieles andere, dann muss es gelten, das striktest jede Reise, die gemacht wird, wirklich dienstlichen Bezug hat und zweitens aus dienstlichem Interesse erfolgt und aus dem europäischen Budget bezahlt wird. Alles andere würde uns in eine falsche Situation bringen, in der auch das Vertrauen der Bevölkerung empfindlich gestört würde.

Pedro Marques, *em nome do Grupo S&D*. – Senhora Presidente, Senhora Comissária, Colegas Deputados, em julho de 2019, a Presidente von der Leyen, na altura candidata a Presidente da Comissão, apresentou as suas linhas de orientação política para o mandato da Comissão.

Muito se passou, entretanto, é certo, como a pandemia e a crise que ela originou, a guerra nas nossas fronteiras, as quais certamente consumiram muita da nossa energia. Mas, este é o momento de arregaçar novamente as mangas e fazer o que falta para cumprir o programa na altura apresentado.

Saudamos que a Comissão tenha aqui trazido a indicação de que começou a agir nesta situação crítica de ética que se colocou. Mas, é preciso concretizar, de uma vez por todas, a promessa de então de criar um organismo de ética independente e comum a todas as instituições, como este Parlamento já havia requerido outra vez em 2021, e reformar as regras de conflitos de interesses nos vários organismos, aumentando a transparência e a responsabilização por qualquer infração.

Os casos recentes vêm apenas reiterar esta necessidade. Esperamos que a Comissão tenha agora condições, finalmente, para apresentar as propostas que todos aguardamos há tempo demais, Senhora Comissária.

Gilles Boyer, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, mes chers collègues, l'image de nos institutions est abîmée par une succession d'irrégularités et de dysfonctionnements. Il ne s'agit pas ici de politiser ou de personnaliser ces affaires. Nous ne l'avons pas fait ici au Parlement européen et je n'ai pas l'intention de le faire pour la Commission européenne. Ma préoccupation, c'est que nous en tirions les leçons et les conséquences pour l'avenir, pour rétablir la confiance des citoyens de l'Union dans nos institutions.

Nous avons fait une proposition ici au Parlement, une proposition audacieuse pour tout organe législatif, c'est-à-dire de déléguer le contrôle sur nous-mêmes à une autorité extérieure. Ce n'est facile pour aucun Parlement. Pourtant, nous avons franchi ce pas en votant une résolution ambitieuse et en le réaffirmant dans une résolution le mois dernier.

Nous appelons la Commission à prendre l'initiative de faire de même pour mettre en place une haute autorité d'éthique européenne, qui serait commune à plusieurs institutions européennes et qui nous permettrait de ne pas nous contrôler nous-mêmes, en quelque sorte, ce qui est parfois la source de bien des problèmes.

Karima Delli, *au nom du groupe Verts/ALE*. – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, mes chers collègues, il y a une règle en démocratie: les citoyens nous font confiance, ils nous confient une partie de leur destin au nom d'un principe, la confiance. La confiance qu'on va servir leur intérêt commun et non pas des intérêts particuliers. On l'a vu avec le qatargate, nos institutions sont la cible de puissances étrangères. On l'a vu avec le dieselgate, nos institutions sont la cible d'intérêts privés et publics mélangés. Alors là, en cas d'attaque, on doit avoir des réponses appropriées.

Il me paraît pas approprié qu'un directeur de la Commission puisse voyager neuf fois tous frais payés au Qatar en pleine négociation d'accords aériens avec ce même pays. Il ne me paraît pas approprié que cette procédure ait été approuvée par lui-même. Il ne me paraît pas approprié que ces accords soient déjà en vigueur alors qu'ils n'ont pas été ni ratifiés par les États membres, ni adoptés par le Parlement.

Comment ne pas voir un conflit d'intérêts évident? Alors je demande deux choses, des explications. La Commission doit répondre à toutes nos interrogations. Celles des écologistes qui ont fait un courrier. Celles de la Médiatrice européenne qui s'est saisie du problème. Avant même de réviser les règles de transparence et de voyage de ses fonctionnaires, je demande réellement que soient gelés les accords aériens entre l'Union européenne et le Qatar tant que tout le conflit n'a pas été écarté.

Virginie Joron, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, chers collègues, ce n'est pas un qatargate, mais un Bruxellesgate. Quatre ans que madame von der Leyen a été nommée présidente et vous venez nous promettre une réforme des règles internes de la Commission à presque six mois avant la fin de ce mandat? Transparence et responsabilité. Comment vous croire? 71 milliards d'euros de contrats vaccins Covid, le plus gros contrat de l'histoire de l'Union européenne.

Qui cache les clauses, qui cache les SMS entre Ursula et le PDG de Pfizer, qui cache le prix des doses et jusqu'à quand? Que cachent les activités du mari de madame von der Leyen? J'attends votre réponse par écrit depuis novembre. Qui sous-estime les effets secondaires des vaccins covid? Qui pousse à l'injection des enfants? Qui censure Twitter? Qui refuse d'enquêter sur le pantouflage de fonctionnaires et les conférences à plus de 100 000 € à l'ancien président Barroso? Pourquoi le directeur condamné pour viol a-t-il toujours son bureau au huitième étage?

En septembre, je vous ai demandé quelles sanctions vous avez prévues à l'encontre des commissaires qui n'utiliseraient pas les téléphones professionnels lors de négociations. Ce matin, votre administration me répond qu'elle refuse de donner des téléphones professionnels à ses agents. Donc pas de transparence, pas de responsabilité, pas de sanction.

Leila Chaibi, *au nom du groupe The Left*. – Madame la Présidente, neuf voyages en classe affaires, tous frais payés par le Qatar, voilà le joli cadeau dont a bénéficié le plus haut fonctionnaire de la Commission européenne chargé des transports. Pendant que Monsieur profitait d'un repas cinq étoiles en plein ciel aux frais de la compagnie Qatar Airways, ses services négociaient un accord sur le transport aérien, accord qui s'est avéré être largement plus en faveur des Qataris que des Européens.

Le jour des révélations, la Commission européenne avait dit: «Ne vous inquiétez pas, on a bien vérifié. Non, non, non, on vous jure, il n'y a pas de conflit d'intérêts». Madame la Commissaire, des voyages de luxe payés par les pétrodollars du Qatar pendant qu'ont lieu au même moment des négociations pour un accord avec le Qatar, c'est un conflit d'intérêts. On ne peut pas se satisfaire d'un système dans lequel ce sont les hauts fonctionnaires qui contrôlent eux-mêmes si les cadeaux qu'ils reçoivent relèvent ou non d'un conflit d'intérêt.

C'est précisément pour cela que le Parlement vous demande un organisme d'éthique indépendant. Quand on est pris la main dans le sac, on arrête de tergiverser.

Balázs Hidvéghi (NI). – Tisztelt Elnök Asszony! A brüsszeli korrupciós botrány tovább gyűrűzik. A szocialista európai parlamenti alelnök után hétről hétre újabb brüsszeli politikusok kerülnek rács mögé, mert kenőpénzért cserébe külföldi érdekeket képviseltek. Most az Európai Bizottságról derült ki, hogy nyakig benne van a korrupciós botrányban. A közlekedésért felelős főigazgatója legalább kilenc alkalommal méregdrága luxus repülőjegyeket és ki tudja még mi mást fogadott el Katartól. Az eddig napvilágot látott adatok szerint ez több mint 54 ezer euró, 20 millió forintnyi összeg volt. Mindezt akkor, amikor egy Katar számára előnyös közlekedési megállapodásról tárgyaltak. Hát mi ez, kérem szépen, ha nem a vesztegetés iskolapéldája?

Képmutató és álságos, hogy miközben ez a Parlament és az Európai Bizottság Magyarországot mindenféle mondvacsinált jogállamisági váddal támadja, a brüsszeli bürokraták úsznak a rendszerszintű korrupcióban. Mindez teljes mértékben hitelteleníti a brüsszeli intézmények Magyarország elleni vizsgálódását. Felszólítom Önöket, hogy inkább a saját házuk táján söprögessenek, és hagyják békén Magyarországot!

Petri Sarvamaa (PPE). – Madam President, dear colleagues, I think it goes without saying that zero tolerance for political corruption, of course, needs to be our main goal. This is even more pronounced at a time when citizens' trust in the EU institutions is perhaps shaken a bit by previous corruption scandals that have been revealed.

Under no circumstances should a situation arise in which our officials are exposed to a possibility of corruption. But having said that, it also has to be stated very clearly that we don't have this kind of case with Commission at hand at the moment. This just has to be remembered.

On the other hand, Commission, I think, should by example, have funds to cover the travel expenses of its officials. So then we would not be in this situation to discuss this here if this was more clearly ruled. And so, all in all, I think that we in this Parliament really want to send a very clear message to the Commission and a call for the Commission to check their rules and procedures carefully.

Brando Benifei (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, tutte le istituzioni europee devono agire internamente con responsabilità per dotarsi di una struttura il più possibile trasparente e credibile. Rispetto all'indagine lanciata dal Mediatore europeo sui voli pagati a funzionari della Commissione, bisogna senz'altro indagare sino in fondo, perché non vi siano dubbi di alcun tipo su pressioni indebite o azioni illecite.

Servono nuove norme più chiare e stringenti per rendere anche la Commissione europea più resiliente. È necessario rafforzare le regole vigenti, ad esempio contro il meccanismo delle porte girevoli, che oggi è troppo spesso eluso e che riguarda anche il Parlamento europeo, come dimostrato dai recenti scandali.

Occorre poi istituire quanto prima il promesso organismo etico europeo indipendente, con un mandato di controllo sulle istituzioni e le agenzie dell'Unione europea. Questa è una richiesta che il Parlamento ha fatto da tempo. Non possiamo disattendere le aspettative dei nostri cittadini da tutte le istituzioni europee e ci aspettiamo un impegno all'altezza della sfida.

(L'oratore accetta di rispondere a un intervento «cartellino blu»)

Monika Hohlmeier (PPE), Wortmeldung nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“. – Ich habe nur eine kurze Frage an den Redner, Frau Präsidentin. Wir reden hier immer von einer Ethikbehörde. Das macht hier gar keinen Sinn. Wir müssen diese Praxis schlicht und einfach verbieten. Denn es macht auch keinen Sinn, wenn sie ethisch kontrolliert wird. Wir müssen die Praxis verbieten, dass Beamte auf Kosten von Drittstaaten zu Verhandlungen in diese Drittstaaten reisen. Das gehört einfach verboten. Darüber braucht man nicht mal ethisch zu verhandeln.

Brando Benifei (S&D), blue-card reply. – I will clarify better what I wanted to say, there are different issues. On one hand, we need to forbid what should not be happening already. At the same time, we also have a general interest – and the Parliament expressed itself already many times – to have an ethics body that is able to confront with these issues. We have different opinions in this room, but let's not mix different things. It's a series of actions that we need to take. Forbid what should be forbidden, clarify what should be clarified and also have a general ethics body. We will still debate about that, but it's just a legitimate opinion.

Ciarán Cuffe (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, Commissioner McGuinness, I think the question is *quid custodiet custodes*: who guards the guards? And that's why we need an ethics body.

Since Qatargate broke, we've seen the consequences of lax transparency and integrity rules, waste of public money, loss of trust in the institutions and undue influence. Recently, we learned from the Qatari Government that they paid for a DG MOVE official's flights while this official was overseeing negotiations on an air services agreement with Qatar. Was this a one-off? How can the Commission maintain that this case does not represent a conflict of interest?

A fortnight ago, we wrote to Commissioner Vălean seeking the rules, the meetings held, the rules in place and any other benefits or gifts provided to Commission officials that might represent conflicts of interest. We await a reply. Lobbying of the institutions by interest groups is a legitimate activity, but our work should always be guided by the public interest. We must establish an independent ethics body with real power to investigate abuses while strengthening transparency and integrity across all these institutions.

Sven Simon (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, sehr geehrte Frau Kommissarin! Zunächst einmal möchte ich mich ganz herzlich bei Ihnen bedanken für Ihre Transparenz und vor allen Dingen dafür, dass Sie uns auch mitgeteilt haben, dass man die Regeln jetzt geändert hat, dass Dienstreisen eben nur noch von Behörden, von internationalen Organisationen oder von Universitäten, wenn es um akademische Zwecke geht, bezahlt werden dürfen. Das ist schon wirklich sehr verwunderlich, dass sich Kommissionsbeamte von den Staaten Dienstreisen bezahlen lassen, mit denen sie verhandeln. Das geht natürlich auf keinen Fall!

Zweiter Punkt: Wir brauchen keine Ethikbehörde, wir brauchen auch keine Disziplinarkammer. Was wir brauchen, sind klare Regeln, und diese Regeln müssen natürlich eingehalten werden.

Der dritte Punkt, und da habe ich noch eine Frage, da würde ich mich, ehrlich gesagt, der Forderung von Frau Kollegin Daly anschließen: Wir müssen ja schon darüber nachdenken, ob das Luftverkehrsabkommen mit Katar eingeführt werden muss. Ich würde sogar fordern, wir müssen es suspendieren. Denn es ist jetzt der zweite Fall mit dem Staat Katar, und da bin ich schon der Meinung, dass wir das zumindest prüfen müssen. Dann wäre meine konkrete Frage, ob die Kommission solche Schritte unternommen hat oder ob Sie konkret prüfen, ob man dieses Luftverkehrsabkommen – insbesondere weil es ja auch eine Airline betrifft, die da einen irgendwie sehr unfairen Wettbewerb etabliert hat –, jetzt nicht einfriert, suspendiert oder zumindest mit den Vertragspartnern mal ernsthaft darüber redet, ob sie der Meinung sind, dass das hier faire Bedingungen sind?

Петър Витанов (S&D). – Г-жо Председател, последните няколко месеца доказаха, че никой не е имунизиран от корупция. Тя няма политически предпочитания, нито любима държава, нито пък любима институция. В тази ситуация обаче има. Аз виждам три проблема от гледна точка на европейския проект и две решения. Първо, не може да използваме Европейския парламент за прикритие на някой, който е злоупотребил със своите правомощия или със своята позиция. Второ, обаче не може да му вменяваме отговорност, която той не притежава. Европейският парламент не е нито разследващ орган, нито прокуратура, нито следствие. И трето, няма как да използваме Европейския парламент за трамплин, за политически популизъм, за евтини политически дивиденди, а цената да я платят хора от тази сграда. И затова решенията са прости – независимо разследване от компетентни органи да установят дали има проблем с тези пътувания веднъж. И втори път, изработване на ясни правила, които не се уповават на нравствени критерии. Ясно какво е позволено и какво не е позволено, за да не изпадаме в такива абсурдни ситуации.

Mairead McGuinness, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, dear colleagues, thank you for the debate. The Commission's internal procedures aim to ensure that the Commission and its staff cannot be unduly influenced by a third party. I agree with you that we need to operate under the highest ethical standards.

Whenever the assessment of these rules by individual staff members puts these standards into question, the Commission's competent services check whether the rules have, in fact, been respected. The changes that we put in place with immediate effect on 7 March that I've addressed in my opening remarks, I hope address the concerns that have been raised in this House. They aim to show that the Commission is ready to lead by example, and I very much thank you for this debate.

Many of you have addressed the issue of trust, and trust matters in all of our institutions, and that's why the Commission has responded very strongly with what I have outlined in my opening remarks. A question was raised with me by Mr Simon. I don't have an answer for you. I will only give answers when I have the information, and I think we will get back to you directly on the question you raised. Again, thank you, colleagues, for this important debate.

President. – The debate is closed.

16. Lucha contra la delincuencia organizada en la Unión (debate)

President. – The next item is the debate on the Council and Commission statements on combating organised crime in the EU (2023/2591(RSP)).

Jessika Roswall, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Madam President, honourable Members, Commissioner, security is one of the core priorities for the Swedish Presidency. The developments in connection with Russia's aggression against Ukraine will continue to have a major impact on the European agenda.

First and foremost, it is our responsibility to support Ukraine in all possible forms. Secondly, the war makes the connection between internal and external security increasingly clear. This is why the Presidency has initiated closer cooperation between the common security and defence policy and Justice and Home Affairs Council to improve efficiency, avoid overlaps and to increase coherence between these two fields.

Weapons from the Western Balkans still pose a problem more than 20 years later. We should learn from this. In February, the Presidency hosted a conference on the smuggling of firearms in the context of Russia's aggressions against Ukraine. When a new crisis appears, criminal organisations often use these situations to profit from the vulnerability of people in need. We can never accept that people fleeing war end up in exploitation and abuse.

The current situation has reminded us of the joint obligation to address the demands that foster trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Targeting all forms of sexual violence against women and children is a priority for the Swedish Presidency. The Presidency is therefore hosting a conference on prevention models to address the demands that foster trafficking for sexual purposes. Furthermore, we hope to make considerable progress on the Commission's proposals to amend the directive on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings.

Honourable Members, digital development is a game changer for our society, including for the law enforcement and judicial authorities. Ensuring their ability to function online and at the same time guaranteeing strong safeguards is essential to ensuring security. The political agreements on the e-evidence package is a great step in the right direction after mutual efforts from Parliament and the Council. It strikes a balance between new, efficient tools desperately needed and safeguards for fundamental rights.

But we see that more needs to be done. The Presidency had proposed to create a high-level expert group to propose concrete measures to ensure that lawful access to data remains possible.

One of the drivers behind organised crime is money. The Presidency committed to finalising the examination on the directive on assets recovery and confiscation so that a general approach can be approved in the Council before summer. We also want to finalise the negotiations on the revision of the Financial Information Directive regarding the access to bank account registers.

Honourable Members, the smuggling of drugs is a challenge to security and people's health. In this context, we greatly value the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addictions. Turning it to a fully-fledged EU agency will make it even more effective and forward-looking. We are committed to conclude the negotiation as soon as possible so that the new agency can become fully operational in 2024.

Last week at the Justice and Home Affairs Council, we organised the discussion with Belgium and the Netherlands on drug-related organised crime, since most of the cocaine in Europe is smuggled through ports such as Antwerp and Rotterdam. In many Member States, including Sweden, attempts by criminal organisations to threaten or influence public institutions make drug-related and organised crimes a systematic threat.

Criminals and terrorists operating in Europe are taking advantages of the free movement in the Schengen area. A reinforced and automatic exchange of information on criminals and suspects under the new Prüm scheme can contribute to fighting crime. I therefore encourage the Parliament to adopt its negotiations mandate as soon as possible, and I look forward to a constructive negotiation. Thank you for your attention, I am looking forward to this debate.

Helena Dalli, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, thank you for putting this debate on the agenda.

Not long ago, we discussed terrorism, and rightly so. Organised crime is a big threat to society, as is terrorism. When criminals kill lawyers, journalists and threaten politicians, they attack the heart of our democracies. When criminals kill our children, like 11-year-old Firdaous in Antwerp, they attack us in the heart. She was the innocent victim in a drugs war.

Sixty per cent of criminal groups use corruption to buy people, buy politicians and buy power and to cross borders, infiltrate airports and harbours. Criminals use violence to intimidate, torture, murder. Criminals undermine the economy. Eighty per cent of crime groups infiltrate the legal economy, investing in construction, restaurants and hotels, but also food, flowers and oil; buying properties and luxury goods to launder money; building up a parallel underground financial system.

One hundred and eighty nationalities are involved in organised crime in the EU. Seventy per cent of crime groups are active in more than three Member States. They are increasingly sophisticated, operating like multinational corporations with global supply lines in a global, organised network.

It takes a network to fight a network. If criminals work together, police must work better together, like last November, when Operation Desert Light brought down a 'super cartel' responsible for 30% of cocaine distribution in the EU. Supported by Europol, police from Spain, France and Belgium, the Netherlands and United Arab Emirates arrested nearly 50 suspects and captured 30 tonnes of cocaine. We want more success stories like these.

Police work together in EMPACT, the EU policy cycle against criminal threats. We proposed the first-ever strategies against organised crime and trafficking of human beings. We also proposed action plans against firearms and drugs, and police cooperation and information exchange is at the heart of all of them. We've adopted the police cooperation package, including the recommendation on operational cooperation and the Directive on police information exchange. We're updating the Prüm framework to make police information exchange more efficient.

We've boosted the mandate of Europol, so Europol can work with private parties and third countries. And we clarified that Europol can process big data and develop artificial intelligence because no one can process one billion messages by hand. That's how many messages police captured in the Sky ECC case alone, when they gained access to criminal encrypted communication with spectacular results. The Sky ECC and EncroChat and ANOM cases together sparked more than 7 000 operations, over 10 000 arrests, 500 tonnes of drugs captured and nearly EUR 1 billion in criminal cash.

Criminals are going dark, using encryption and other tools to hide their crimes. Police lag behind and we have fewer possibilities to enforce the law online than offline. But almost all crimes today have an online component, not only organised crimes. Police must have the legal and technical means to fight these crimes while fully upholding fundamental rights.

We need to go after criminal money. Now 99% remains in criminal hands. Only 1% is being confiscated. We have proposed a new law to freeze and seize assets before they slip across the borders, targeting the top criminal bosses by including confiscation of unexplained wealth. And soon we will propose a new law to criminalise all forms of corruption with unified definitions and harmonised penalties across the European Union.

Drug trafficking is the most profitable and most violent crime. Killings, shootings, bombings, arson, kidnapping, torture are sparked by gangland warfare over drugs. There is no such thing as fair-trade cocaine. My colleague Ylva Johansson told me how in Colombia she saw from a helicopter the gaps made in the rainforest for growing coca leaves, polluting the environment with chemicals. And she met villagers in the very same room where criminals murdered their mayor because he dared to cultivate sustainable crops rather than coca.

In our streets and cities, the violence and corruption is local, but the drug trade is intercontinental. This is why we agreed with Colombia to improve security of ports on both sides of the Atlantic and set up our intercontinental police cooperation. Here in the EU, we've made the fight against drugs the focus of a Schengen evaluation. This year, at the mid-term point of the organised crime and drug strategies, we'll assess progress and present new actions to fight organised crime and the drug trafficking.

It takes a network to fight a network. If criminals work together across borders, across continents, we must work together better. If criminals organise, we must organise better. That's at the heart of everything that we do.

Jeroen Lenaers, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, organised crime is a major threat to the internal security of the European Union and to the safety of our citizens, and it requires a common European response. More than 70% of criminal networks are active in more than three European countries and they are becoming increasingly more violent. According to Europol, organised crime within the EU has never posed such a major threat to citizens and our societies as it does today. We need to disrupt the business models of criminal networks and ensure that crime never pays: follow the money in order to freeze and confiscate assets and target criminal leadership.

For the EPP, the security of European citizens and the fight against organised crime is an absolute priority. Europe needs to show that we can deliver in real terms, and this is why last year we proposed 50 concrete measures to tackle crime and we will continue to put this high on Europe's agenda.

And we are happy to find in the Swedish Presidency a like-minded and a constructive partner in our mission to keep Europe safe. And we look forward to cooperate on our shared priorities: strengthening the role of agencies like Europol and Eurojust; better coordination of criminal investigations and prosecutions; implementation of the interoperability framework; further improving existing crucial legislation like the Prüm Framework; advanced passenger information; making e-evidence work in practice. We have to make use of all available instruments in order to fight crime, and we cannot expect law enforcement authorities to do this alone. Local authorities, tax authorities, labour inspectorates, can all play a major role in addressing certain challenges, but they face huge obstacles in cross-border cooperation.

We have worked very hard to remove those cross-border obstacles for police and judicial cooperation. We need to do the same for the administrative approach to organised crime by denying criminals the use of the legal administrative infrastructure.

More intense monitoring, better screening and proper cross-border exchange of administrative information to complement police cooperation and strengthen the law enforcement system should also be a European priority. Borders often still create obstacles for authorities, while criminals use them to their advantage. This needs to end right now.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señora presidenta, señora presidenta en ejercicio del Consejo, señora comisaria, el crimen organizado es el crimen de nuestro tiempo. Más del 75 % de la delincuencia que tiene lugar en la Unión Europea es organizada y transfronteriza. Y, por eso, celebramos que el Consejo haya establecido con claridad sus diez prioridades en la evaluación de esta amenaza, que incluyen, por supuesto, el terrorismo, el tráfico de drogas, la delincuencia económica y medioambiental y el tráfico de armas de fuego. Pero, como socialistas, nos importa particularmente el combate frontal contra el tráfico de seres humanos y la explotación sexual y laboral de personas especialmente vulnerables, como las mujeres y los niños, y el abominable tráfico de órganos.

Pero, además, como presidente de la Comisión de Libertades Civiles, Justicia y Asuntos de Interior, subrayo en este debate que estamos tramitando la propuesta de Directiva sobre recuperación y decomiso de activos y el paquete contra el lavado de dinero procedente de negocios ilícitos, o blanqueo de capitales. Es imprescindible completarlo y establecer, además, la Autoridad de Lucha contra el Blanqueo de Capitales y la Financiación del Terrorismo.

Pero concluyo diciendo que es importante que todo esto se haga preservando el activo máspreciado de la construcción europea, la libre circulación de personas. De modo que no lo hagamos introduciendo restricciones innecesarias o desproporcionadas a la libre circulación y, por ende, erosionando o dañando el espacio Schengen que es, sin duda, el activo más precioso. Respetémoslo en la lucha contra el crimen organizado.

Ramona Strugariu, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Madam President, ‘Organised crime continues to pose a significant threat to the safety and security of our citizens. Our collective response must involve law enforcement agencies, judicial authorities, intelligence services and civil society. We must enhance our capabilities in areas such as information sharing, intelligence analysis and cross-border cooperation to disrupt the activities of criminal networks’. This is, dear colleagues, a speech written by an AI tool, and I agree with it.

Basically, everyone can speak brilliantly about countering organised crime; people, politicians, machines, it sounds great. The difference between us and an AI tool is that we need to act on it. We need to make it reality. We need to adopt strong legislative proposals. We need to enforce them in the Member States. This is the difference.

We have an anti-money laundering package coming soon and I hope that this House will have a very powerful position on countering money laundering. We need a strong AMLA, we need FIUs that can work with each other. We need access to information for journalists and for the civil society. This is what we need to produce as decision makers. Otherwise we can kindly ask AI to produce nice speeches and this is it.

Sergey Lagodinsky, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, when it comes to criminal organisations, criminals have one goal in mind: profit. The same is true for corrupt oligarchs from Russia or elsewhere hiding their wealth in the EU. So the most effective response is, to put it simply, to take away their stuff. And this is precisely what we will do.

The Commission introduced the directive on assets confiscations and we are working together now to make this proposal fit for reality, fit for times when a war at our doorsteps is being supported and financed by money that was never clean. We will enable Member States to confiscate property linked to serious organised crimes and we cannot show any mercy in this.

Handing over the criminal assets to a family member is the oldest trick in the book and I am determined to close this loophole and it must be possible to confiscate unexplained wealth – also unexplained wealth connected to corrupt state structures, also outside of the EU and yes, to use it to compensate victims, also states that were damaged by this money and its wars.

Crime is not just about injustice, it is also about profits. Let us work together to take away this motivation from criminals.

Beata Kempa, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Zwalczenie przestępczości zorganizowanej wciąż stanowi wyzwanie dla wielu państw europejskich. Przestępczość nie zna granic. Widzimy, co dzieje się w Belgii w zakresie przestępczości narkotykowej. Widzimy, co dzieje się w Szwecji, gdzie trwa krwawa wojna gangów na ulicach Malmö i Sztokholmu.

W mojej ojczyźnie, w Polsce, w ostatnich latach poczyniono olbrzymie postępy w zwalczaniu przestępczości zorganizowanej, szczególnie w kontekście mafii VAT-owskich oraz grup przestępczych produkujących, rozprowadzających narkotyki czy mafii paliwowych. Kluczowe okazały się zmiany wprowadzone przez rząd Zjednoczonej Prawicy, wzmacniające organizacyjnie prokuraturę oraz policję, i poprawa współpracy między obiema instytucjami.

Bardzo ważnym elementem podjętych działań było wprowadzenie konfiskaty rozszerzonej mienia przestępców, pozwalające uderzyć w finansowe podstawy gangów. Niestety niektórzy przestępcy znaleźli sobie nieoczywistych sojuszników. Z niewiadomych przyczyn pewne państwa członkowskie nie wykonują europejskich nakazów aresztowania i nie przesyłają przestępców do Polski, aby można było ich skazać. Szczególnie niezrozumiała jest postawa Holandii, która odmawiając ekstradycji, staje się wręcz *safe haven* dla członków zorganizowanych grup przestępczych. Warto skorzystać z naszych rozwiązań.

Susanna Ceccardi, a nome del gruppo ID. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, due mesi fa è stato arrestato uno dei boss più pericolosi della mafia italiana, Matteo Messina Denaro. Un risultato importante che è necessario dedicare alla memoria delle forze dell'ordine che hanno perso la vita per combattere il crimine. Due su tutti: Falcone e Borsellino, martiri delle stragi di mafia.

Oggi la criminalità organizzata agisce in modo sempre più ramificato e utilizza le nuove tecnologie. Ma come sempre fa affari sfruttando i più deboli: gli immigrati, vulnerabili e ricattabili, sono quelli che più spesso vengono impiegati come manovalanza nelle città europee.

La criminalità prima gli chiede 8 000 o 9 000 euro per arrivare in Europa e poi continua la propria catena di sfruttamento. Molti di loro finiscono a fare lavori a basso costo, senza contratto e nelle ipotesi peggiori finiscono sulle nostre strade ad elemosinare, rubare, spacciare o prostituirsi. È per questo che il governo italiano ha deciso recentemente di innalzare le pene per gli scafisti fino a 30 anni di reclusione.

Chi lucra sulla pelle dei più deboli non merita indulgenza. Per combattere la criminalità dobbiamo avere fiducia nella legge e soprattutto in chi è deputato a farla rispettare. Basta criminalizzare le nostre forze di polizia, come ha fatto la sinistra negli ultimi anni. I nostri poliziotti hanno bisogno di sostegno e risorse.

Clare Daly, on behalf of The Left Group. – Madam President, organised crime, terrorism, migration: the monsters that lurk under every right-winger's bed; the catch-all justification for every attack on our fundamental rights. Our rights and civil liberties are being relentlessly eroded in an endemic securitarian obsession that does almost nothing to deal with the problems it's supposed to, but does everything to make our societies more fearful and authoritarian.

It doesn't actually have to be like this. If you really want to tackle organised crime in the EU, there are ways of doing it without implementing mass surveillance, without eroding civil liberties, without fattening the pockets of the arms and security companies, and without creating a pervasive climate of fear and suspicion.

First step: if you are really serious, drug decriminalisation as a first step towards full legalisation. At the same time, you'd provide safe and legal pathways for people to come to Europe, work here in the regular economy. It might sound simple, but I can guarantee you it would be effective.

Sabrina Pignedoli (NI). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, se vogliamo veramente combattere la criminalità organizzata, dobbiamo tenere presente che per queste organizzazioni è vitale avere appoggi e coperture nel mondo economico, finanziario, politico e istituzionale.

Possiamo tagliare i rami visibili incarcerando i boss e la manovalanza: doveroso e giusto. Ma la vera sfida è estirpare le radici di queste organizzazioni: colpire imprenditori compiacenti, funzionari o politici corrotti, scoprire come vengono reinvestiti i capitali illeciti nelle società quotate in borsa e nelle banche, sequestrare i beni che sono frutto di riciclaggio.

Inoltre, i Paesi europei preferiscono far finta di non vedere certe organizzazioni criminali, come quelle che si occupano del traffico dei rifiuti verso i Paesi più poveri, un traffico strettamente legato a quello delle armi, spesso coperto dalla cooperazione internazionale o da associazioni che fingono scopi umanitari. Un'ultima parola sulle mafie: serve un contrasto specifico perché le mafie si sono radicate in tutti gli Stati membri, nessuno escluso.

Paulo Rangel (PPE). – Senhora Presidente, a luta contra o crime organizado é uma luta que não conhece fronteiras. O problema do crime organizado é hoje um problema europeu. 70 % das redes criminosas ativas na Europa já operam em mais de três países em simultâneo e mais de metade delas usa a violência, a par do comércio ilegal de drogas, que não só mantém milhares de milhões de euros ocultos nas nossas economias, como destrói a vida de milhares e milhares de cidadãos.

O pacote de medidas da Comissão para a cooperação policial na União Europeia estabeleceu aquele que é o modelo certo, que tanto o Parlamento como o Conselho devem continuar a seguir, ou seja, aprovar ferramentas para que as autoridades nacionais, as polícias nacionais, possam cumprir a sua missão de combate ao crime organizado, cada vez mais sofisticado.

Num espaço de liberdade, segurança e justiça, temos de dar prioridade ao tráfico de pessoas e, em particular, ao tráfico de menores, ao tráfico de droga e também, claramente, àquilo que nós chamaríamos a corrupção e o crime económico, pois nós sabemos que 60% destas redes estão intrinsecamente ligadas à corrupção, ao crime económico e à fraude, nomeadamente ao branqueamento de capitais.

Meus Caros Colegas, não há liberdade sem segurança e é isto que, aqui, os Verdes e a esquerda deveriam saber. Uma sociedade que tem medo não é uma sociedade onde haja direitos fundamentais e onde haja liberdade. E, por isso, o direito à liberdade é também o direito à segurança.

Caterina Chinnici (S&D). – Signor Presidente, signora Ministro, signora Commissaria, onorevoli colleghi, 139: sono 139 i miliardi di euro che, secondo stime per difetto, le organizzazioni criminali accumulano ogni anno attraverso la loro attività illecita in Europa e che poi riciclano con mezzi sempre più sofisticati.

Questo riguarda tutta l'Unione e tutti i suoi Stati membri e pertanto accogliamo con favore l'inserimento della lotta alla criminalità organizzata tra le priorità della Presidenza del Consiglio. E le nuove proposte della Commissione su scambio di informazioni fra autorità di contrasto, antiriciclaggio e confisca sono senz'altro passi decisivi perché, come insegna l'esperienza italiana, cooperazione e contrasto patrimoniale sono essenziali.

Ora però, come più volte richiesto, dobbiamo essere ancora più ambiziosi e superare la decisione quadro 2008/841, che rischia di essere già un'arma spuntata, in quanto non più adeguata alle caratteristiche delle moderne organizzazioni criminali che si manifestano ormai come veri e propri operatori economici globali con spiccata vocazione imprenditoriale.

Lo dobbiamo a tutti i cittadini onesti e a quanti, nella lotta alla criminalità organizzata, hanno sacrificato la propria vita, come Rocco Chinnici, mio padre.

Moritz Körner (Renew). – Frau Präsidentin! Das Geschäftsmodell der organisierten Kriminalität nutzt unseren Binnenmarkt ganz hervorragend, es nutzt unsere Freiheiten, und deswegen muss Europa auch entsprechend koordiniert handeln. Clan-Kriminalität, organisierte Kriminalität, achtet unseren Rechtsstaat nicht; sie nutzt jede Möglichkeit, sie nutzt unsere Freiheiten.

Aber der Rechtsstaat muss überall in Europa konsequent durchgesetzt werden, und dazu ist Europa die Lösung: bessere Ermittlungen durch Zusammenarbeit von Europol, aber auch eine Stärkung von Eurojust, unserer justiziellen Zusammenarbeit, denn es geht auch darum, dass Strafverfolger Verbrecher auch wirklich verurteilen und hinter Gitter bringen können. Das müssen wir mehr tun, mehr Austausch auch der entsprechenden Informationen.

Das ist wirklich schwierig, hier mehr Ressourcen zu schaffen, tatsächlich besseren Informationsaustausch zu schaffen. Das ist tatsächlich schwierig. Einfacher ist es, immer nur mehr Massenüberwachung und neue Gesetze zu beschließen. Aber nicht neue Gesetze oder Überwachung fangen Kriminelle, sondern besser ausgestattete Polizisten und mehr europäische Zusammenarbeit. Das ist der Weg, den wir gehen sollten, damit wir konsequent organisierte Kriminalität in Europa bekämpfen.

Saskia Bricmont (Verts/ALE). – Madame la Présidente, cybercriminalité, fraude aux investissements, corruption, trafic des êtres humains, le crime organisé touche énormément de secteurs, dont celui de la criminalité environnementale, qui s'est hissée à la troisième place des activités criminelles dans le monde. La criminalité environnementale est multifacette. Trafic de déchets d'espèces sauvages, rejets illégal de substances, et a souvent des conséquences à très long terme pour la santé humaine, l'environnement, les écosystèmes, mais aussi nos économies, notre sécurité.

Et là, c'est le paradoxe. Alors qu'elle génère autant de profits que le trafic de drogue, les sanctions sont faibles et l'impunité est souvent de mise. La justice et les autorités compétentes, y compris le parquet européen, doivent se voir octroyer les moyens humains et financiers pour mener à bien la lutte contre la criminalité environnementale. Et si la droite conservatrice veut réellement en faire une priorité dans le cadre de la lutte contre le crime organisé, pourquoi a-t-elle voté contre toutes les opinions des commissions renforçant la directive sur la criminalité environnementale?

Cette directive est pourtant clé. Un peu de cohérence ne ferait pas de mal et nous comptons sur l'ensemble des groupes politiques, mais aussi sur l'ensemble des gouvernements pour la soutenir et l'accompagner des moyens nécessaires.

Joachim Stanisław Brudziński (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Szanowni Państwo! Przestępczość zorganizowana jest poważnym zagrożeniem dla wszystkich obywateli Unii Europejskiej. W jednym tylko 2019 roku dochody z przestępczości zorganizowanej osiągnęły 139 mld euro. To tyle co 1% PKB Wspólnoty.

Dodatkowe zagrożenia pojawiły się w związku z napaścią Rosji na Ukrainę. Napaść ta stanowi wyjątkową okazję dla przestępczości zorganizowanej. Wojna sprzyja handlowi ludźmi, oszustwom internetowym, cyberatakami, handlowi bronią czy kradzieży pieniędzy przeznaczonych na pomoc uchodźcom.

Handel ludźmi, wykorzystywanie dzieci i przemyt migrantów to grupa szczególnie groźnych przestępstw przeciwko życiu i wolności. W ponad połowie przypadków handel ludźmi wiąże się z wykorzystywaniem seksualnym, w 20% z wyzyskiem pracowników, a w 10% ze zmuszaniem do przestępstw.

Część z tych przestępstw szczególnie rozpowszechniła się w czasie pandemii COVID-19. Przymyś migrantów – dosłownie kilkadziesiąt minut temu rozmawialiśmy na ten temat w tej Izbie. A jak jest to lukratywny biznes dla grup przestępczych, to wystarczy powiedzieć, że ponad 90% migrantów płaci przemytnikom. Tylko na morskich szlakach do Unii Europejskiej we wspomnianym 2019 roku przemytnicy zarobili ponad 200 mln euro.

Dlatego powtórzę po raz kolejny: nie wspierajmy tych, którzy tak naprawdę idą ręką w rękę z przestępcami organizującymi nielegalną imigrację do Europy.

Gunnar Beck (ID). – Frau Präsidentin! In einigen Ländern vor allem Süd- und Osteuropas machen EU-Subventionen, einschließlich der Coronafonds-Mittel, bis zu 20 % des Bruttoinlandsprodukts aus. Der 800 Milliarden schwere Corona-Aufbaufonds hat zu organisiertem Betrug geradezu eingeladen – bei Lieferung und Abrechnung von mangelhaften Schutzmasken, Selbsttests, Impfdosen und medizinischer Ausrüstung, bei grünen Investitionen, illegaler Abfallentsorgung und Migrantenschleppern.

Das Europäische Amt für Betrugsbekämpfung OLAF, der EU-Rechnungshof und Europol warnen seit Langem vor solchen Betrugsrisiken. Dennoch bleibt die Mittelvergabe in Händen der begünstigten nationalen Regierungen und von den EU-Kontrollmechanismen ausgenommen. Uns als Abgeordneten bleiben viele Informationen vorenthalten – sogar wer die Endbegünstigten der Gelder sind. Mit Intransparenz und fehlender Kontrolle erkaufte sich die EU politische Willfähigkeit. Nicht so anders als Katar.

Ivan Vilibor Sinčić (NI). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, u Hrvatskoj narod kaže sve države imaju mafiju, ali u Hrvatskoj mafija je preotela našu državu. Shvatila je da ima profitabilnijih stvari od reketa i šverca, povezala se s politikom.

Što je to drugo nego organizirani kriminal kada stavite svoje operativce u državne institucije i javna poduzeća, kada vršite sistematsku pljačku svega? Kada pokradete svoje autoceste, kada pokradete svoju poštu, svoju naftnu kompaniju, svoja brodogradilišta, svoje željeznice. Kada instalirate svoje ljude u pravosuđe, tužiteljstvo, policiju, sudstvo, u zdravstvo i obranu i sve gledate kao na plijen i koristite za svoju kliku urušavajući sve te sustave.

Što je to nego organizirani kriminal kada donosite poseban zakon da preotmete najveću kompaniju u zemlji? To je oteta država. To je vladavina organiziranog kriminala. To je ono što imamo danas u Hrvatskoj s vladom HDZ-a i Andreja Plenkovića.

I sve to im nije dosta. Nije im dosta pa sada ta zločinačka organizacija krade iz europskih fondova. S otvorene 23 istrage teške 313 milijuna eura kod Ureda europskog javnog tužitelja. Koruptivni slučaji idu do same Vlade iz koje je nekoliko desetaka ministara moralo otići zbog korupcije.

Moram odavde čestitati građanima na građanskoj hrabrosti, na svima onima koji su ih prokazali i pozivam ih da nastavimo i završimo tu borbu zajedno.

Tomas Tobé (PPE). – Fru talman! Kommissionär, minister! Kriminella nätverk och den organiserade brottsligheten är närvarande och aktiv i flera medlemsstater samtidigt över hela Europa. Detta hotar människors trygghet. Europol pekar nu på att den organiserade brottsligheten aldrig har utgjort ett så stort hot mot människors trygghet som nu.

I Sverige känner vi tyvärr mycket väl till detta. Vi har stora problem. Vi har nu fått en ny, moderatledd regering som totalt lägger om vår kriminalpolitik. Vi har ett svenskt ordförandeskap som nu äntligen också prioriterar dessa frågor.

Jag vill dock från EPP-gruppens sida säga till både det svenska ordförandeskapet och till kommissionen: Alla de åtgärder och initiativ som nu diskuteras är bra och välkomna, men mer kommer att behöva göras. Vi måste förstärka Europol. Vi måste göra Europol mer operativt. Vi måste konfiskera de kriminellas tillgångar. Vi måste mer effektivt stoppa smuggling av vapen och narkotika in i vår union. Vi behöver få kontroll över vår yttre gräns. Om vi gör detta och fortsätter att ta initiativ, då kan vi återigen se till att både Sverige och Europa blir tryggare.

Vlad Gheorghe (Renew). – Doamna președintă, cetățenii europeni sunt furăți zilnic de grupuri infracționale organizate, de corupți, de evazionști, de rețele de traficanți, de hoții de lemne, de poluatori, de braconieri.

Ce face Uniunea Europeană? În general dezbate.

Ideea Parchetului European a apărut în 2007. Abia în 2021 a devenit operațional.

Prejudiciul din dosarele anchetate în 18 luni depășește 14 miliarde de euro, dar există totuși partide și grupuri parlamentare aici, în Parlament, care se opun extinderii atribuțiilor Parchetului European. Nu vor să crească bugetul Parchetului sau numărul de angajați. Mesajul este dat infractorilor: Europa e slabă și poate fi furată, nu-i așa?

Nu avem reguli unitare anticorupție, nu dăm polițiștilor și procurorilor europeni resursele să pedepsească infractorii transfrontalieri. Averile uriașe ale corupților rămân neconfiscate, așa că vorbim prea mult și facem mult prea puțin împotriva crimei organizate. Iar cetățenii europeni văd asta și noi o vom vedea și o vom simți la alegeri, dragi colegi!

Balázs Hidvéghi (NI). – Madam President, the fight against organised crime is a typical area where EU cooperation is a necessary and a good thing. I particularly welcome joint actions and the work of EU agencies in the field of police cooperation. We in Hungary are proud to host CEPOL, the training agency for police officers, which has been doing an excellent job.

When it comes to organised crime, illegal migration is undeniably a big part of the problem. First, it includes international human smuggling networks that organise illegal migration into the EU. Secondly, we also see how dangerous criminals and terrorists take advantage of the lack of border controls very often to enter Europe. And, of course, there is another consequence of uncontrolled and illegal migration: the deteriorating public security situation in many European cities, no-go zones and the like, with attacks on women and Jews being the most common examples.

We must ensure respect for law and order, effective police cooperation against serious crimes – be it human smuggling, drugs trafficking, fraud or anything else – shall remain a top priority on the agenda.

Javier Zarzalejos (PPE). – Señora presidenta, los análisis de Europol son concluyentes sobre la dimensión del desafío para la seguridad que plantea la delincuencia organizada: cinco mil grupos de delincuencia organizada bajo investigación en la Unión Europea. Una delincuencia que utiliza tecnología sofisticada, que se organiza en redes con mayor capacidad de penetración en el tejido social y económico y que amplía sus actividades: tráfico ilegal de armas, delitos en línea, fraudes de diversa naturaleza, lavado de dinero y conexiones con tramas terroristas. Una delincuencia que además está incrementando el uso de la violencia.

Quiero hacer referencia, en particular, al agravamiento de la producción y el tráfico de drogas, que tiene una enorme capacidad de corrupción de todo el sistema institucional y su impacto en la salud pública —también la salud mental—, así como a la creciente capacidad de producción de Europa, no sólo de drogas sintéticas, sino también de cultivos ilegales.

Sería conveniente también que nos fijáramos en la entrada de la delincuencia organizada en el ámbito de los delitos medioambientales: un terreno en el que los delincuentes ven oportunidades de negocio. La Unión Europea tiene recursos para dar respuesta a este desafío y, para ello, tiene que movilizar esos recursos. La clave es relativamente sencilla: denuncia, cooperación y tecnología dentro de nuestro sistema de libertades al servicio de la lucha contra la delincuencia.

Por eso, tenemos que celebrar la mejora de los instrumentos de cooperación con, por ejemplo, la propuesta de Directiva relativa al intercambio de información entre las autoridades policiales de los Estados miembros, y apelar a que sigamos fortaleciendo el marco normativo y la práctica de nuestra cooperación judicial y policial.

Nuno Melo (PPE). – Senhora Presidente, Membros da Comissão e do Conselho, para se combater o crime organizado é preciso dar meios à justiça. E, eu pergunto: o que é que pode levar um governo a permitir a prescrição de crimes e a anulação de processos que beneficiam eventuais criminosos, em vez de atribuir aos tribunais os meios que lhes permitam fazer justiça? É o que está a acontecer em Portugal enquanto falo.

Há inúmeros processos que estão a ser anulados, porque o governo socialista insistiu numa lei de recolha de meios de prova com recurso a metadados que, sabia, assentava numa diretiva de 2006, que o Tribunal de Justiça da União Europeia julgara inválida, e depois, previsivelmente, foi julgada inconstitucional no país. Há inúmeros outros processos que estão a ser objeto de recursos, porque uma lei de nomeação de juízes aprovada em 2021, que teria de ser regulamentada pelo governo num prazo de 30 dias, passado um ano e sete meses só teve do governo coisa nenhuma.

Em consequência, noticia-se que as falhas do governo paralisam o julgamento que envolve um ex-primeiro-ministro socialista em casos de corrupção e há crimes que começam a prescrever em 2024. Por seu lado, o diretor do gabinete que coordena a atividade do Ministério Público na área de cibercriminalidade informou que já foram destruídos dezenas de casos de pornografia infantil, tanto durante a investigação, como na fase de julgamento, e fica em causa a investigação de burlas ou *bullying* feitos através da Internet.

Há milhares de crimes neste momento em risco de prescrever em Portugal. Lamento dizer, mas quando isto acontece é o Estado de direito que está em causa. Tudo isto se sabia. Tudo isto foi antecipado.

A propósito, já pedi por escrito a intervenção da Comissão Europeia. Espero bem que a Comissão Europeia, e já agora o Conselho, possam ao caso estar atentos e, se possível, intervir.

Lukas Mandl (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Es ist wichtig, dass wir hier im Plenum, im Europäischen Parlament, die Bekämpfung der organisierten Kriminalität debattieren, denn organisierte Kriminalität ist noch schlimmer als die einfache Kriminalität. Es ist nicht nur eine Straftat hier, eine Straftat dort. Organisierte Kriminalität bedeutet Vernetzung, und organisierte Kriminalität bedeutet, dass immer noch mehr zerstört wird als durch die unmittelbare einzelne Straftat, sondern es wird Vertrauen in unserer Gesellschaft zerstört, und es werden Lebenschancen von Menschen zerstört durch die organisierte Kriminalität.

Die organisierte Kriminalität steht nicht allein. Sie ist nicht nur lokal, regional, national, sie ist nicht einmal nur europäisch, sie ist global, sie hängt in unseren Gesellschaften zusammen mit Korruption, und sie hängt von außerhalb zusammen mit dem, was Expertinnen und Experten hybride Kriegsführung nennen. Kräfte der Welt, die Europa schwächen wollen, die freie Gesellschaften schwächen wollen, bedienen sich der organisierten Kriminalität. Deshalb ist auch der globale Kampf gegen organisierte Kriminalität mit einem starken Beitrag der Europäischen Union so wichtig.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, Commissioner, the EU strategy to tackle organised crime in 2021-2025 document opens with the introductory remark that, 'hidden from public view, due to the opaque nature of its activities, organised crime is a significant threat to European citizens, business, and state institutions, as well as to the economy as a whole'. I'd also argue that hidden in plain sight to all Member States of the European Union is significant financial and white-collar crime perpetrated not by organised criminal gangs but by big business and unfortunately at times by state institutions.

Take, for example, in Ireland, the bad bank NAMA, the National Asset Management Agency established by the Irish Government in 2009 following the financial crash to manage over 70 billion worth of loans and property. Now, NAMA, instead of managing these loans and property, sold them at fire-sale prices and engaged in corruption to the highest degree in some of their transactions. Maybe the Commission should tackle the financial crimes of state institutions in their next strategy document.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Helena Dalli, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, Minister, honourable Members, victims of organised crime are local. The fight against organised crime is continental and even global. It takes a network to fight a network. But that idea is at the foundation of our fight against organised crime.

Police cooperation and information exchange are at the very heart of this struggle: in day-to-day police cooperation via EMPACT, the EU framework for police cooperation, which has the disruption of organised crime as one of its priorities, or in police operations supported by Europol, like Operation Desert Light, which took down a super cartel and top criminal bosses.

Since day one of this mandate, we put forward strategies and proposals: to boost police cooperation and information exchange; to follow the money and take it from the criminals to counter drug crime; to take guns out of our streets and out of criminal hands; and to fight trafficking of human beings and organised crime, a gendered crime and a very evil crime, where mostly men targeted especially women and girls, mainly for sexual exploitation, treating them as products to be bought and sold.

Through coordinated EU action, we have very forcefully countered trafficking of Ukrainian women and girls following the exodus of millions of Ukrainian women last year as a result of Russia's war of aggression, and successfully with very few concrete cases so far.

Thank you for all that you have said today, and thank you for supporting the fight against organised crime. Everyone deserves to feel safe and thank you for helping make that happen.

Jessika Roswall, President-in-Office of the Council. – Madam President, Commissioner, honourable Members, we are grateful for this opportunity to discuss how we can step up the fight against organised crime in the EU. Many files and different views have been put forward. Clearly there is no silver bullet, no single solution which would put the Union one step ahead of the organised crime groups and organisations. The only way to fight organised crime is to work closely together, coordinating and sharing information between Member States.

On this note, let me highlight some important files in addition to my opening remarks. First, the recently presented revision of the so-called Advanced Passenger Information Directive, API. API data is an important complement to PNR data because it helps law enforcement authorities to confirm the identity of passengers. The Presidency has started discussions, but it is still too early to say if it is possible to reach a general approach at the Council meeting in June.

Secondly, interoperability of justice and home affairs databases will contribute to improving border management and internal security in Europe. The set deadlines to implement each of these databases are very ambitious and had to be postponed on several occasions following the Commission's and eu-LISA's assessment. The Presidency is monitoring the latest developments in view of preparing for upcoming decisions on the way forward for this important programme. A conference on interoperability is taking place in Stockholm this week.

Thirdly, to ensure the effective prosecution of crime linked to several Member States, it is important that criminal investigations and prosecutions can be more easily coordinated to single Member States. This requires clear rules. The Presidency will therefore also prioritise the forthcoming proposal for a directive on the transfer of criminal proceedings, which could be particularly valuable in the fight against organised crime.

Finally, as a lot of speakers have said, organised crime is a cross-border problem requiring common solutions, cooperation and joint actions at the European level. Thank you very much for this debate and thank you for your attention.

Puhetta johti HEIDI HAUTALA

varapuhemies

Puhemies. – Keskustelu on päättynyt.

Kirjalliset lausumat (171 artikla)

Waldemar Tomaszewski (ECR), raštu. – Ponia Pirmininke, organizuoto nusikalstamumo reiškinys yra ypač pavojinga valstybei ir piliečiams nusikaltimo forma, nes kovai su juo reikia panaudoti didelius žmogiškuosius ir finansinius išteklius. Tai taip pat didėjanti problema ES lygmeniu. Visuomenė turi teisę tikėtis efektyvių veiksmų prieš tarptautinį nusikalstamumą Europos Sąjungoje ir teisėkūros sprendimų siekiant geriau su juo kovoti. Visų pirma, reikėtų stiprinti konstruktyvų bendradarbiavimą tarp įvairių institucijų ir valstybių narių įstatymų leidybos sistemų. Nacionalinės policijos ir muitinės tarnybos kartu su ES institucijomis turi atlikti pagrindinį vaidmenį veiksmingoje kovoje su tarptautiniu organizuotu nusikalstamumu. Tačiau nepamirškime, kad šis veiksmingumas reikalauja suderintų veiksmų ir gero bendradarbiavimo tarp valstybių narių ir daugelio trečiųjų šalių. Taip pat reikia programos, apimančios keletą veiklų, skirtų žinių, standartų ir gerosios patirties perdavimui ES šalyse. Toks visapusiškas bendradarbiavimas prisidės prie kovos su organizuotu nusikalstamumu, kuris labai dažnai yra tarpvalstybinio pobūdžio.

17. Activismo de las mujeres: defensoras de los derechos humanos relacionados con la salud sexual y reproductiva y derechos conexos (debate)

Puhemies. — Esityslistalla ovat seuraavana neuvoston ja komission julkilausumat aiheesta naisaktivismi – seksuaali- ja lisääntymisterveyteen ja -oikeuksiin liittyvien ihmisoikeuksien puolustajat [2023/2574(RSP)].

Jessika Roswall, President-in-Office of the Council. – Madam President, honourable Members, Commissioner, thank you for inviting the Presidency of the Council to intervene on this topic.

Let me start by recalling that the Union is based on a set of common values, which all Member States are obliged to respect. The protection of common values is a top political priority for the Swedish Presidency. The rule of law guarantees that these values are well protected, and as such, it must be fully respected by all Member States and the EU.

I also wish to underline the key role of civil society organisations and human rights defenders in our democratic societies, as they keep institutions accountable and contribute decisively to the political debate and the upholding of the advancement of the rights.

With regard to sexual and reproductive health and rights, it is the foundation upon which women's rights and participation in society is advanced. Although I do not speak here today in my own personal capacity, for me, these are fundamental values. Timely access to affordable, preventive and corrective healthcare of good quality is a right.

As you all know, the European Court of Human Rights has consistently ruled that Member States have a wide margin of appreciation as to whether and under what circumstances abortion is permitted. As you also know, as far as the European Union is concerned, primary law confirms that Union law does not interfere with constitutional provisions and national legislation of EU Member States relating to abortion.

In accordance with the Treaties, Union action in the field of public health should respect the responsibilities of the Member States when it comes to defining and organising delivery of health services and medical care.

Finally, let me conclude by repeating the EU's commitment to ensure that each individual is able to decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality and sexual and reproductive health. This implies universal access to quality and affordable sexual and reproductive health information and education, as well as to a reliable healthcare service. Thank you very much for your attention, I am looking forward to the debate.

Helena Dalli, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Minister, dear Members, last week, on International Women's Day, we commended the resilience and strength of women around the world, their resolve to stand up against injustice and their dedication to protect others.

A vibrant civil society is essential to protect our democracies, human rights, including women's rights and the rule of law. In a year that marks the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, women's human rights defenders and activists are indispensable in protecting the rights of all of us. The Gender Action Plan III encourages the enhanced participation and voices of women's rights activists.

The role of women human rights defenders is all the more important, given the growing oppression globally against women and girls and the alarming attacks on their human rights. We have witnessed this recently in Iran, where women's rights continue to be blatantly eroded, and in Afghanistan, where the Taliban increasingly erase women from the education system, the labour market and the public sphere.

I therefore welcome last week's Council decision to impose restrictive measures on nine individuals and three entities in view of their role in committing serious human rights violations and abuses, particularly sexual and gender-based violence.

We are also deeply concerned about the reports that Russian armed forces use sexual violence, including rape, against women and children, as a weapon of war in the context of the unprovoked, unjustified and illegal Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. While we continue to work with our international partners to hold Russia accountable for these crimes, we are also supporting the victims. For instance, we contributed 1.5 million to the United Nations Population Fund to ensure access to sexual and reproductive health services for women and girls in Ukraine. This includes the provision of dignity kits and specialised services for survivors. We also continue to support women activists in Ukraine and their relentless work to support and protect women victims of conflict-related sexual violence.

Standing up for women's rights and gender equality is a core value of the EU and the priority of EU policy. The EU notably remains committed to promote globally sexual and reproductive health and rights as an essential part of realising human rights. Our ambition is clearly set out in the EU Gender Action Plan III and the European Consensus on Development.

At the UN Commission on the Status of Women that is taking place in New York, the EU has been a staunch supporter of sexual and reproductive health and rights. We have also been engaging with human rights defenders ahead of the annual sessions.

In December, the EU and African partners launched a Team Europe initiative to strengthen women's sexual and reproductive health and rights in Africa. We have allocated EUR 60 million in new funding from our budget to this effort. EU Member States also contribute to this initiative.

Additionally, last year we gave an additional EUR 45 million to the UNFPA Supplies Partnership that delivers modern contraceptives and life-saving maternal health medicines to the women and young people who need them the most.

In addition, the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative is combating gender-based violence worldwide, with a total funding of EUR 500 million. Of this amount, EUR 100 million was earmarked for sexual and reproductive health and rights. Also, this initiative has actively engaged with human rights defenders in this area.

Also in the EU, women's activism promoting and enhancing women's rights and gender equality is of course essential. With the Gender Equality Strategy, we have committed to achieve a gender-equal Europe, where all women and girls are free of gender-based violence, sex discrimination and structural inequalities and can lead and thrive. This is why we provide support to women's organisations and services that make a difference for women across Europe, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Under the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme, we are funding organisations and projects in the area of gender equality, including those promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights. Apart from women's rights organisations, we support projects aimed to offer assistance to the specific needs of gender-based violence-affected girls, women and children. We also support regular exchanges of good practices between Member States and stakeholders on gender equality and health, including on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

According to the Treaty, Union action shall respect the responsibilities of all Member States for the definition of their health policy and for the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care. The legislative powers on sexual and reproductive health and rights lie within the Member States, but when exercising their competences, Member States must respect fundamental rights which bind them by virtue of their national constitutions and commitments under international law.

I would like to recall that when Member States are implementing Union law, they have to fully respect the provisions of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, including Article 7 of the charter on respect for private life.

I thank this House for its continued support to women's rights and women's activism. Strong women's rights are an asset for the EU as a whole in keeping our societies vibrant, competitive, democratic and equal.

Frances Fitzgerald, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, human rights defenders should never be a target. Their work day in and day out is integral to our democracies, and it should be understood as such. Nobody should fear for their lives when they are defending human rights. Too many human rights defenders have lost their lives around the world.

In my own country, in Ireland, we know the work that human rights defenders have done over the years when Irish women could not get their rights and sexual and reproductive health and helped them to deal with many difficult and tragic situations. We are still seeing human rights defenders doing this work in Europe, in places where the right to sexual and reproductive health and rights are under threat. We see places like Poland, where women's rights to abortion was taken away, and where women fleeing from Ukraine who were raped cannot get the help that they need. Working in these most difficult conditions, we must applaud human rights defenders. Indeed, around the world, in places like Colombia, Kenya, Argentina, we see human rights defenders working in extraordinarily tough situations.

That's why, in my current work on the directive combating violence against women and domestic violence, my co-rapporteur Evin Incir and I have proposed that in the context of violence against women, violence against a human rights defender should be an aggravating circumstance. Today I call on the Council to agree to this proposal and to send a clear message that violence against human rights defenders is unacceptable. We must see this in the directive and we have to support those who stand up for democracy. Because what human rights defenders around the world are doing is, they are standing up for democracy. In many instances, of course, they are also standing up for gender inequality, they are fighting against the gender inequality that they see around the world, and we all know we have unfinished democracies and unfinished economies and human rights defenders are playing a pivotal role.

Maria Noichl, *im Namen der S&D-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen, liebe Kollegen! Obwohl es weltweit natürlich eine Vielzahl von Staaten gibt, in denen Aktivistinnen für die Rechte der Frauen, auch für das Recht des Schwangerschaftsabbruchs, eintreten, blicken wir heute ganz besonders nach Polen. Denn dort ist es passiert, dass Aktivistinnen verurteilt wurden, Aktivistinnen, die Frauen in ihrer Not, eine Schwangerschaft nicht gegen ihren Willen austragen zu müssen, mit Medikamenten geholfen haben. Eine Frau wurde zu acht Monaten sozialer Arbeit verurteilt von einem Staat, der die Arbeit dieser Frau nicht schätzt, nicht wertschätzt, dass sie tagtäglich für das Leben eintritt, nämlich für das Frauenleben.

Heute Morgen hatten wir zusammen mit Frauen aus Polen, mit Justyna und mit Marta, eine Pressekonferenz, und sie haben uns gesagt, sie werden weitermachen. Sie werden weiter für die Rechte der Frauen eintreten, sie lassen sich nicht entmutigen. Sie schließen eine Lücke. Diese mutigen Frauen schließen eine Lücke, die die polnische Regierung ins Land gerissen hat, eine Lücke des Misstrauens und eine Lücke der Gewalt gegen Frauen. Denn wer Frauen das Recht über den eigenen Körper vorenthält, übt Gewalt gegen Frauen aus.

Wir sagen danke zu Justyna, danke zu Marta, danke zu allen Frauenrechtsaktivistinnen weltweit. Wir stehen an ihrer Seite. Die EU-Frauen und ein Teil der EU-Männer stehen an ihrer Seite.

María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, *en nombre del Grupo Renew*. – Señora presidenta, sinceramente, no me puedo creer que ni el Consejo ni la Comisión hayan condenado lo que sucedió ayer aquí, en la Unión Europea: se condenó por primera vez en décadas en Europa a una activista por ayudar a una mujer a ejercer su derecho al aborto.

Es insoportable, señora comisaria. «Quieren silenciarnos, invisibilizarnos, asustarnos para que dejemos nuestra actividad»: estas son las palabras de Justyna. El silencio es el mayor cómplice de la violencia.

Hoy un Estado miembro quiere amordazar a sus ciudadanas para que no denuncien la vulneración de sus derechos. Polonia necesita una reacción clara que hoy no ha tenido ni del Consejo ni de la Comisión, pero la tendrá de este Parlamento. No hay democracia vibrante, no hay posibilidad de democracia con ciudadanos amordazados. Esto no es posible, señora comisaria.

Sylvia Spurek, *w imieniu grupy Verts/ALE*. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Justyna Wydrzyńska to obrończyni praw człowieka. Pomogła innej kobiecie, Annie, która znalazła się w trudnej sytuacji. Wczoraj Justyna została skazana za udzielenie Ani pomocy. Ale nie będę komentować tego wyroku.

Przeczytam Państwu słowa, które do Justyny skierowała Ania: „Pani Justyno, dziękuję Pani za to, że w najtrudniejszym momencie mojego życia, kiedy osoby najbliższe, bliskie, a także lekarki i lekarze zawiedli, Pani, jako jedna z nielicznych, udzieliła mi pomocy. To był wyraz człowieczeństwa, bo w sytuacji, gdy osoby, na których ciąży moralny, a na części z nich także prawny obowiązek udzielenia mi pomocy, stały z boku, umywając ręce, Pani podała mi swoją dłoń. I dziś, po upływie trzech lat od tamtych wydarzeń, najbardziej wzruszają mnie Pani słowa, że pomimo tego, co Panią spotkało, nie żałuje Pani i zrobiłaby Pani to samo jeszcze raz. To są jedne z najważniejszych słów, jakie ja kiedykolwiek w życiu usłyszałam od drugiego człowieka. Dziękuję”.

Wszyscy powinniśmy podziękować Justynie. Takie aktywistki jak Justyna w takich państwach jak Polska są jedyną gwarancją realizacji praw człowieka. Bo aborcja to kwestia praw człowieka. I niestety takie osoby będą jedyną gwarancją tak długo, jak długo Unia Europejska będzie odmawiać zajęcia się kwestią dostępu do aborcji.

Margarita de la Pisa Carrión, *en nombre del Grupo ECR*. – Señora presidenta, señorías, casi la mitad de este Parlamento se siente incómodo con el título de este debate, porque lo natural es entender que la vida es un regalo que celebrar.

¿Qué puede pasar en el corazón de alguien para que no se estremezca ante el inicio de una vida? Aquí se ha dicho que es cruel e inhumano ofrecer escuchar el latido de su corazón. Eso significa que ese sonido les dice algo. Es una vida irrepetible, que solo espera ser amada.

Con su activismo, con los gritos, se impide que las mujeres se escuchen, se escuchen a sí mismas. Se les oculta la verdad. Se les transmiten dudas, miedos y se les vende una falsa libertad que las encadena a un vacío existencial. Saben a la perfección el desgarrar que supone el aborto. Es un drama, un drama que nadie puede desear.

Es temerario para nuestra sociedad hablar de defensa de los derechos humanos cuando esta es una práctica contraria a los mismos. Estoy segura de que sus corazones ya les dicen que es así. Les animo a que acojan la vida, a que se atrevan a amar.

Christine Anderson, im Namen der ID-Fraktion. – Frau Präsidentin! Diese Aktivistinnen – ich würde sie als Fanatiker bezeichnen – verteidigen weder Opfer von Menschenhandel, Frauen, die von Genitalverstümmelung bedroht werden, Vergewaltigungsopfer, Opfer häuslicher Gewalt noch Kinder, die missbraucht werden. Ganz im Gegenteil: Als Lobbyisten der Abtreibungsindustrie verweigern sie Millionen von Ungeborenen das allumfassendste Menschenrecht überhaupt: das Recht auf Leben.

Und noch etwas: Wer Abtreibung zu einem gesellschaftlich akzeptierten Verhütungsmittel nach dem Akt erhebt, spricht Frauen ab, grundsätzlich verantwortungsbewusste Entscheidungsträger zu sein. Das, meine Damen und Herren, ist Frauenfeindlichkeit *par excellence*. Sie sollten sich etwas schämen.

Und ich spreche im Übrigen vor exakt 19 Abgeordneten von 705. Auch dafür sollten wir uns schämen.

Malin Björk, on behalf of The Left Group. – Madam President, Justyna Wydrzyńska was just yesterday convicted in a Polish court for helping another woman to access a safe abortion. It is dramatic. It's a shameful first case in Europe. Helping another woman can never be a crime. And still there was not one single word from any of the EU's highest responsible representatives at the formal sitting marking International Women's Day this morning. Not a word from Ursula von der Leyen, not a word from Charles Michel, and not a word from our own Roberta Metsola.

And their silence is unbearable. It is unacceptable. There is a war on women's bodies. We are the battleground for conservative and religious fundamentalist forces, dogmatic forces. And concretely, we need to see more action now. We need you to recognise the connection between dismantling of democracy and the rule of law, and attacks on SRHR, women's rights defenders and LGBTI defenders in Europe, today.

And we need you to sanction countries like Poland for breaching the rule of law. And we need you – the Commission – to launch a strategy to defend sexual and reproductive health and rights defenders and women's rights activists and LGBTI activists in Europe, today. Not outside Europe: in Europe, today. The time for solidarity is now.

Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Szanowni Państwo! Smutne, że kolejny raz z tego miejsca musimy mówić, przypominać i nawoływać do obrony praw człowieka w obszarze praw seksualnych, reprodukcyjnych i w obszarze zdrowia. Wczoraj Justyna Wydrzyńska została skazana przez polski sąd na 8 miesięcy prac społecznych i uznana za winną pomocy w aborcji farmakologicznej, do której nie doszło.

Można odnieść wrażenie, że ten proces miał wymiar polityczny, uderzający w aktywistki i obrońców praw człowieka. I kolejny raz zadaję pytanie: jak bardzo trzeba nienawidzić kobiety, aby skazywać je na traumę, cierpienie, zagrożenie życia, a często na rezygnację z zajścia w ciążę w obliczu konsekwencji prawnych i braku wyboru?

Pytam, dlaczego tak wielu polityków chce być sumieniem kobiet i dlaczego tak wielu z nich rości sobie prawo do podejmowania za nas decyzji? I dlaczego tych polityków wspiera tak wiele innych kobiet? Nie rozumiem tego.

Mam nadzieję, że nasza praca tu, w Parlamencie Europejskim, nad rozwiązaniami mającymi chronić kobiety przed szeroko rozumianą przemocą pozwoli zakończyć cierpienia wielu kobiet i osądzić sprawców. Wierzę też, że przy wielkim wsparciu kobiet uda się zmienić te rządy, które nie tylko nie wspierają naszych praw, ale wręcz je lekceważą. Z tego miejsca chcę podziękować wszystkim aktywistkom i aktywistom, szczególnie w moim kraju, którzy walczą o demokrację, wolność i prawa człowieka i prawa kobiet.

Robert Biedroń (S&D). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Fundamentalisci rządzący Polską wiedzą, że dla Polek wolność i prawo do decydowania o swoim życiu i zdrowiu jest jak powietrze. Dlatego zrobią wszystko, żeby im to powietrze odciąć. Atakują, dociskają kolanem, szykanują. W wyniku ich działań zmarło co najmniej 6 kobiet: Iza, Anna, Justyna, Dominika, Agnieszka, Marta. Ale wiemy, że ofiar barbarzyńskiego zakazu może być więcej.

Wczorajszy pokazowy proces wobec Justyny Wydrzyńskiej, obrończyni praw człowieka, która udzieliła pomocy drugiej kobiecie, to pokazówka na miarę białoruskiego Łukaszenki. Justyna jest pierwszą osobą w Europie skazaną za pomoc w aborcji. Ale Justyna nie jest kryminalistką. Justyna to bohaterka, która stanie się symbolem walki o prawa kobiet. Justyna jest jak miliony Polek. Jest niezłomna i będzie walczyć dalej. Jest nie do zatrzymania.

Jednak Polki nie mogą iść same. Ponownie apeluję do wszystkich instytucji europejskich o solidarność. Polki muszą w końcu mieć te same prawa, jak Finki, Hiszpanki i Francuzki. I jeszcze jedno. Prokurator oskarżający Iżę powiedział, że podawanie tego numeru telefonu to przestępstwo pomocnictwa. Z dumą zatem wezmę udział w tym przestępstwie i podam numer, który ratuje życie i zdrowie milionów Polek. Jeszcze Polka nie zginęła.

Samira Rafaela (Renew). – Voorzitter, blijkbaar leven we nu in een continent waar vrouwen bestraft kunnen worden omdat ze elkaar willen helpen en een veilige en legale abortus mogelijk willen maken. Is dit het vrije Europa voor vrouwen? Dat is nu de vraag waar we voor staan. Deze zaak had nooit voor de rechter mogen komen. En wat lees ik dan tot mijn grote verbazing vandaag in de media? Dat de Europese Commissie niet op individuele gevallen wenst te reageren. Ook de voorzitter van het Europees Parlement doet geen uitspraak hierover. Dat kan toch gewoon niet waar zijn! Want dit was nooit gebeurd als we op tijd en stevig hadden opgetreden tegen de Poolse regering, tegen de rechtstaat die zij niet respecteert.

Dus ik vraag mij heel erg af – ik heb een concrete vraag voor voorzitter Von der Leyen met name – wat zij nu gaat doen om Polen ter verantwoording te roepen, om te zorgen dat zich niet nog meer voorbeelden voordoen zoals we hebben gezien bij Justyna. Want ik zeg het u, dit gaat niet alleen bij haar gebeuren. Dit gaat bij meer vrouwen gebeuren. Dus treed op, zeg er wat van. Vrouwen zijn niet veilig in Polen en misschien ook nog weleens niet in andere Europese lidstaten die dit voorbeeld kunnen volgen.

Monika Vana (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, Council, Commissioner, today, during the ceremony of the International Women's Day, we had the honour to listen to honourable and great Shirin Ebadi, an inspiration for us all. But equal to so many that stand up and fight for women's rights, for sexual and reproductive health and rights, she lives in exile. And this week, as it was already mentioned, the Polish women's rights defender, Justyna Wydrzyńska, was sentenced to eight months' community service for having helped a fellow woman to access abortion care. Dear all, we must be very clear on that: we, as the European Union, have to protect women who are being prosecuted for helping to carry out or even just advocating the right to abortion care and other sexual and reproductive health and rights. And the number of those that are threatened is rising.

And following the recent mission of the FEMM Committee to the US and the CSW, where I see many colleagues here, after the many talks we had on SRHR with NGOs, with experts, it's so crystal clear: the European Union must be a front fighter in defending women's rights and the free access to abortion all over the world – a fight where we have to be at the forefront, that women and girls worldwide can rely on us.

Beata Mazurek (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Szanowni Państwo! Naród, który zabija własne dzieci, staje się narodem bez przyszłości. To słowa Papieża Polaka, Jana Pawła II.

Podczas tej debaty próbuje się włączyć do katalogu praw człowieka tzw. prawa seksualne i reprodukcyjne. A ja pytam: czy dzieci nienarodzone nie mają żadnych praw? Kto w tym parlamencie będzie bronił tych dzieci? Tych, które same siebie nie mogą bronić? Kto będzie walczył o ich prawo do życia?

Art. 2 Karty praw podstawowych stanowi, że każdy ma prawo do życia. Natomiast w Konwencji o prawach dziecka podkreśla się, że dziecko z powodu niedojrzałości wymaga szczególnej opieki i troski, zarówno przed urodzeniem, jak i po urodzeniu.

W imię jakiej sprawiedliwości poddaje się osoby dyskryminacji, uznając niektóre z nich za godne obrony, a odmawia się tej obrony innym? Jest to ideologiczna walka przeciw życiu i rodzinie, walka, w której zabijanie nienarodzonych dzieci sprowadza się do zwykłego zabiegu medycznego.

Troska o dziecko powinna być pierwszym i podstawowym sprawdzianem stosunku człowieka do drugiego człowieka. Pamiętajmy o tym.

(Mówczynie zgodziła się odpowiedzieć na wystąpienie zasygnalizowane przez podniesienie niebieskiej kartki)

Evin Incir (S&D), blue-card speech. – I would like to ask a question that concerns Izabela, who died last summer in Poland. Let's talk about who is defending who. What would you say to the family of Izabela who lost her life? She knew that the child that she was carrying would not make it. But even if they all knew, there in the healthcare system, that the child that she was caring would not make it, they were not allowed to give her the access to abortion, which led to her being deprived of her life. So my question is, what's your message to her, her family and all those going through the same violations, and to all those who are not having access to what should be a fundamental right – abortion and the right to their own body?

Beata Mazurek (ECR). – I am sorry, because I was not at my place I did not hear the translation of the question. Once again please.

Evin Incir (S&D), blue-card speech. – My question concerns Izabela, who was deprived of her life last summer in Poland because of no access to abortion. She was pregnant, but everybody in the healthcare system knew that the child that she was carrying would not make it. But even if they knew that, the legislation in Poland didn't allow them to help her, didn't allow them to save her life. My question is to you, as talking so harshly against the women's right to our own bodies, what's your message to the family of Izabela and all those women in Poland that are being deprived of what should be a human right – the right to their own body?

Beata Mazurek (ECR), odpowiedź na wystąpienie zasygnalizowane przez podniesienie niebieskiej kartki. – Absolutnie nie ma Pani racji. W Polsce jest możliwość przerywania ciąży ze względu na utratę zdrowia i życia kobiety. Powtarza Pani bzdury, które tutejsza opozycja serwuje wam nieustannie przy okazji każdych debat takich jak ta i takich jak ta dotycząca praworządności. Są dwa przypadki w ustawodawstwie polskim, które dają możliwość przerywania ciąży. Nie jest tak, jak opowiadacie tutaj te brednie, że zakaz aborcji obowiązuje w Polsce. To kłamstwo.

Mathilde Androuët (ID). – Madame la Présidente, cette citation de Simone de Beauvoir, «On ne naît pas femme, on le devient», a longtemps guidé le militantisme féministe. Elle est pourtant un leurre qui éclate au grand jour des violences exercées contre les femmes qui refusent qu'on les singe ou qu'on les nie. Car la réalité est celle-ci: on est femme et on l'assume ou pas.

Le militantisme féministe est gangréné par le concept fumeux de convergence des luttes. Cette idée selon laquelle toutes les minorités, parce que minorités, auraient des intérêts communs, peu importe que les objectifs soient contradictoires. C'est pourtant de ces contradictions qu'est en train de mourir le militantisme féministe. La convergence des luttes explose dans la collision des luttes.

En effet, quelle féministe peut marcher aux côtés d'islamistes voulant invisibiliser le corps des femmes? Quelle féministe peut accepter la GPA qui n'est autre que la location d'utérus? Quelle avocate peut plaider pour un violeur en transition pour qu'il intègre une prison de femmes? Quelle sportive peut célébrer les victoires de transsexuels balayant toutes les chances des compétitrices? Quelle pubère peut ne pas rire à l'évocation des menstruations et des grossesses d'hommes?

Les fractures du militantisme sont béantes et nombreuses. Et pire, elles génèrent désormais des menaces de mort, comme contre J.K. Rowling ou Dora Moutot. Donc oui, redisons-le, on est femme et on l'assume, ou pas.

(L'oratrice accepte de répondre à une intervention «carton bleu»)

Karen Melchior (Renew), blue-card speech. – I think your intervention, dear colleague, is a clear example of the push-back against the fundamental ...

Votre intervention est un exemple clair de la campagne contre les droits fondamentaux. Oui, nous sommes des femmes. Toutes les femmes sont diverses, comme les femmes trans. Et donc, il n'y a pas seulement la définition des femmes de J. K. Rowling. Au Danemark, il y a un événement dans une bibliothèque cette semaine qui a suscité des menaces de mort pour les drag queens qui vont y participer. C'est une campagne mortelle que vous êtes en train de mener et je vais vous demander d'arrêter d'avoir ce langage haineux.

Mathilde Androuët (ID), réponse «carton bleu». – En l'occurrence, les menaces de mort s'exercent contre les personnes qui parlent comme moi. En l'occurrence, aujourd'hui, J.K. Rowling et Dora Moutot. Oui, des menaces de mort, Madame. Donc on ne va peut-être pas inverser la charge accusatoire, parce qu'en l'occurrence, les gens qui sont menacés, c'est juste ceux qui disent qu'une femme est une femme et un homme, un homme.

Eugenia Rodríguez Palop (The Left). – Señora presidenta, Justyna, en Polonia, Vanessa, en Andorra, y muchas otras, a las que aún no hemos puesto nombre, sufren una persecución penal y judicial por ayudar a otras mujeres a abortar. No importa cuál sea la condena finalmente, no importa si hablamos de cárcel, de multas o de trabajos en beneficio de la comunidad. Son mujeres que viven amenazadas por defender los derechos sexuales y reproductivos de otras mujeres.

Todas ellas son víctimas de castigos ejemplarizantes, porque con la criminalización de la solidaridad y la compasión lo que se busca es atemorizarnos, adoctrinarnos y domesticarnos como si fuéramos niñas. Todas ellas son víctimas de acoso, violencia y discriminación sin que se las haya protegido nunca legalmente. La sororidad no es un delito y el aborto es un derecho.

Hace unos años, el Consejo Constitucional francés consagró el principio de la fraternidad, entre otras cosas, porque lo que sí constituye un delito es la omisión de socorro. Queremos educación sexual para decidir, anticonceptivos para no abortar y aborto legal para no morir.

Heléne Fritzon (S&D). – Fru talman! Kommissionen och rådet! Tänk er att söka vård och bli nekad. Tänk er att ni inte får fatta beslut som rör er egen kropp. Tänk er att ni hjälper en medmänniska med råd och stöd som de faktiskt har rätt till – men ni riskerar fängelse. Det är en brutal verklighet på många platser runtom i världen, också i vår union, nu senast i Polen.

Vi som tillsammans deltog vid FN:s kvinnokommission i förra veckan fick alla höra samma besked, oavsett vem vi pratade med. Det var FN, det var civilsamhället, det var människorättskämpar – alla sa samma sak: Vi måste stärka sexuell och reproduktiv hälsa och rättigheter.

EU kan och måste göra mer. Vi får inte tillåta att personer med makt begränsar kvinnors och flickors grundläggande rättigheter. Jag tycker vårt besked och vårt budskap är tydligt här i kvällens debatt: Alla flickor och kvinnor ska ha mänskliga rättigheter.

Karen Melchior (Renew). – Madam President, today, we have a debate about human rights defenders because this is what we're talking about: we're talking about men and women campaigning for human rights. Abortions are part of health care. Abortions happen. You can only ban safe abortions.

We had a discussion earlier about Isabella, who died because she was denied the health care that she needed. This is happening in Poland. And no matter how much certain Polish politicians are trying to deny it, women in Poland are not getting the health care they need because of Polish politicians. There is a dedicated misinformation campaign about gender, women's rights and abortion. It is unacceptable that this misinformation campaign is running without being pushed back.

We need to unite and make sure that sexual and reproductive health rights are maintained. The debate about trans rights is part of this. It is a unified campaign across Spain, across Poland, across France, trying to deny fundamental rights for queer people, for women across the world, and we need to step up and push back.

Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana (Verts/ALE). – Madame la Présidente, la situation des défenseurs des droits reproductifs et sexuels est grave en Pologne. Hier, le 14 mars, la militante Justyna Wydrzyńska a comparu devant le tribunal. Elle est accusée d'avoir aidé illégalement une femme à avorter. Justyna a été condamnée à huit mois de travaux d'intérêt général pour assistance illégale à l'avortement par le tribunal polonais.

Les défenseurs des droits humains réclament le droit à l'avortement et le droit de disposer de son propre corps. Or, elles sont victimes de violences et de stigmatisation. Elles font face à des défis de tout genre. Harcèlement en ligne et dans les médias. Un tel climat rend leur travail et leur engagement très difficile.

L'Union européenne a l'obligation morale de s'élever contre de telles exactions. Son silence assourdissant s'oppose aux valeurs de solidarité que nous prônons. C'est notre devoir de dénoncer une telle sanction. Comme nous l'avons dit à New York, nous devons protéger les femmes qui luttent pour leurs droits.

Predrag Fred Matić (S&D). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, upravo svjedočimo šokantnoj i sramotnoj presudi koja može imati dalekosežne posljedice za prava žena, demokraciju, vladavinu prava i budućnost Europe.

Justyna Wydrzyńska, poljska aktivistkinja, koja se već godinama neumorno bori za prava žena, osuđena je jučer zato što je, zamislite, pomagala ženama čija su prava uskraćena, dostojanstvo oduzeto, a sigurnost ugrožena.

Aktualna bešćutna vlast i poljski sudovi orkestrirali su proces u kojem su na najgori mogući način, koristeći pravosuđe, osuđeni oni koji stoje na braniku slobodne i ravnopravne Europe.

Poručujem svima vama koji u ovoj dvorani neumorno branite ovakve napade, uznemiravanja i nasilje protiv braniteljica ljudskih prava pod krinkom argumenta nacionalne nadležnosti: sramite se!

Kolegice i kolege, izgleda kao da nam nije dovoljno da žene u Europi umiru, već sada sudski procesuiramo i osuđujemo one koji ih pokušavaju spasiti od smrti. I što je najgore, Poljska tu nije sama, a Justyna nije jedina.

Volim Europsku uniju, ali ne želim živjeti u Europi koje se moram sramiti. Dignimo glas i zaustavimo zlo!

President. – I have a blue card from Karen Melchior, but with your kind cooperation I think we are running very late, so thank you very much for your understanding. It is of course an important debate, there's no doubt about that, and the need for debate is there.

Irène Tolleret (Renew). – Madame la présidente, Madame la Commissaire et Madame la Ministre, chers collègues, il y a deux ans, le 8 mars, j'étais en Pologne. La loi sur l'avortement n'était pas encore votée, mais j'ai pu voir la pression sur les activistes qui étaient au service des femmes. Elles n'avaient plus de fenêtres dans leurs bureaux tellement elles étaient caillassées, c'étaient des planches en bois. Elles subissaient cette pression alors que la loi n'était pas encore passée. Et déjà à l'époque, elles nous avaient dit, et les parlementaires nous avaient dit: il va falloir défendre les personnes qui vont aider les femmes à avorter en Pologne quand l'avortement sera illégal.

Parce que la réalité, c'est ce dont on parle, c'est que quand on interdit l'avortement, on interdit l'avortement sûr et légal, on met en danger la vie des femmes. Et après il y a d'autres femmes qui font leur travail de solidarité et qui les aident. Justyna, parlons-en, qu'est-ce qu'elle a fait? Une pilule abortive pour une femme victime de violences. Et pour cela elle est condamnée.

Alors non seulement j'appelle d'urgence le gouvernement polonais à revenir sur sa décision et à mettre fin à cette chasse aux sorcières, mais surtout, j'appelle la Commission et le Conseil à mettre en place un système de protection des activistes, de protection des droits, à reconnaître leur travail légitime et à doter cet outil de budgets suffisants.

Diana Riba i Giner (Verts/ALE). – Señora presidenta, señora comisaria, señora representante en ejercicio del Consejo, nuestras compañeras argentinas, mientras estaban en campaña, ya decían: «educación sexual para decidir, anticonceptivos para no abortar y aborto legal para no morir».

Es un derecho humano poder decidir sobre nuestros cuerpos, nuestra sexualidad y nuestra salud, pero decidir libres de discriminación, de violencia y de coerción. En Europa, como en otras partes del mundo, vemos cómo no solo no se respetan los derechos sexuales y reproductivos, especialmente de las mujeres, en toda su diversidad, sino que, además, aquellas que valientemente los defienden son perseguidas, acusadas y reprimidas.

Basta de acosarnos a la salida de las clínicas, basta de enviarnos a los tribunales por ejercer nuestro derecho a abortar o incluso por ayudar a otra mujer a ello. Basta de promover políticas antiaborto como hacernos escuchar el latido del feto. *Prou ja.*

Lo repito, por si no hemos escuchado la primera vez: educación sexual para decidir, anticonceptivos para no abortar y aborto legal, seguro y gratuito, para no morir.

Lina Gálvez Muñoz (S&D). – Señora presidenta, el derecho a defender y promover los derechos humanos es una actividad de riesgo en muchos lugares del mundo, como hemos oído aquí esta misma mañana, de la mano de Shirin Ebadi, Premio Nobel de la Paz. Pero es que también es una actividad de riesgo en Europa, en Polonia, y no ha pasado nada.

Desde 2020 hay una grave escalada de persecución judicial a defensoras de los derechos sexuales y reproductivos como Justyna Wydrzyńska, condenada por un tribunal polaco por defender el derecho al aborto. Y no es la única. Son ellas, defensoras, como Justyna y las que la precedieron, nos precedieron, las que hacen realidad y consiguen que el resto, nosotras, disfrutemos de derechos reconocidos en el derecho internacional, como el derecho al acceso al aborto seguro y legal. Y son ellos los que hostigan, intimidan, amenazan y encarcelan a las y los defensores de los derechos sexuales y reproductivos en Europ, y quienes callan y lo toleran, los que en el fondo buscan controlar a las mujeres, disciplinarnos, controlar nuestra voz, nuestro cuerpo, nuestra capacidad reproductiva.

Europa no lo puede tolerar. No nos callarán, no nos disciplinarán, porque su voz es nuestra voz.

Maria-Manuel Leitão-Marques (S&D). – Senhora Presidente, em 1916, Emma Goldman foi presa em Nova Iorque por dar palestras e distribuir informação sobre métodos contraceptivos. Passados mais de 100 anos, muitas mulheres ainda têm de colocar em risco a sua liberdade pela defesa de direitos básicos.

Na Polónia, Justyna Wydrzyńska foi condenada ontem a oito meses de trabalho comunitário apenas por ajudar outra mulher no exercício do seu direito ao aborto, num país onde é quase impossível uma mulher ter acesso a esse procedimento de forma legal. Em muitos outros países do mundo, as mulheres têm travado duras lutas para verem os seus direitos sexuais e reprodutivos reconhecidos. Por vezes com sucesso, como foi o caso de Portugal há duas décadas e à segunda vez, ou, mais recentemente, o caso da Argentina, outras vezes acabando presas.

Este caso merece o protesto de todas as instituições europeias, como hoje estamos aqui a fazer no Parlamento. E a luta destas mulheres é também a nossa luta com a qual estaremos sempre solidárias.

Radka Maxová (S&D). – Paní předsedající, paní komisařko, žijeme v 21. století, a přesto se zdá, že v některých zemích se vracíme v čase. Včera v Polsku odsoudili Justynu Wydrzyńską za to, že pomohla k potratovým pilulkám ženě, která čekala dítě a nechtěla ho se svým násilným manželem. Jak sama Justyna řekla: „Tento proces se snaží zastavit aktivisty.“ Ale statečné ženy jako Justyna budou nadále podporovat a pomáhat a bránit lidská práva všech.

Proto musíme chránit ty, co bojují za základní ženská práva. Potřebujeme nevládní organizace a aktivisty. V zemích, které nedodrží základní lidská práva, jsou to jediné tyto lidi, kteří pomáhají ženám a dívkám a zastávají služby, které by měl obstarat stát. Nejsou to jen aktivisté, ale jsou to už i lékaři, kteří se obávají poskytovat ženám přístup k přerušení těhotenství s vidinou trestního stíhání. Tato středověká politika už má na svědomí nejméně šest životů polských žen a nepatří do Evropy. Obhajoba práva na přístup k bezpečným a legálním interrupcím a pomoc nemůže být trestným činem, a to ani v Polsku, ani nikde v Evropské unii. A právo na bezpečné a dostupné přerušování těhotenství musí být jasně stanoveno jako základní lidské právo.

Evin Incir (S&D). – Madam President, colleagues, banning abortion is not saving anyone, as the ultra-conservatives here in Parliament are claiming. It is rather depriving women and girls their lives. Sexual reproductive health and rights are an essential part of ensuring women's emancipation. Women are literally dying because of lack of access to sexual reproductive health and rights right now, even in our own Union.

Imagine you are fleeing a war, being a victim of rape also, coming to a country that claims that they will help you and there not having access to abortion after being raped. This is the reality that Ukrainian women are facing in Poland. Women are once again literally dying in our own Union. Those brave women, however, that every day dedicate their life to fight for these essential rights are subjected to threats, harassment, violence and stigma. Also, once again, in our own Union: Poland yesterday.

We must politically, legislative-wise and economically support human rights defenders working on SRHR. Let's ensure all women and girls have the right to their own bodies. Let's defend human rights defenders. My body, my choice. It's not harder than that.

Pyynnöstä myönnettävät puheenvuorot

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señora presidenta, cuando se ve la rúbrica de este debate, «Activismo de las mujeres: defensoras de los derechos humanos relacionados con la salud sexual y reproductiva y derechos conexos», parece abstracto, pero no lo es.

Está hablando de ciudadanas europeas de carne y hueso: Justyna, en Polonia, amenazada con una pena de hasta tres años de cárcel por un fiscal sometido directamente al fiscal general, que resulta ser el mismo ministro de Justicia que solicitó al Tribunal Constitucional polaco, intervenido políticamente, que declarase que Polonia ya no está sujeta a la primacía del Derecho europeo. El mismo Tribunal Constitucional que restringió gravísimamente la libre determinación de las mujeres polacas a la hora de decidir libremente sobre su embarazo.

Por lo tanto, es el momento de recordar que los derechos sexuales y reproductivos son derechos humanos vinculados a derechos fundamentales preciosísimos, como la privacidad, como el libre desarrollo de la personalidad y, por supuesto, la integridad física y moral de las mujeres.

Por ello, este Parlamento Europeo hace bien en lanzar un mensaje no solamente de preocupación, sino de rechazo de cualquier persecución penal contra mujeres que decidan libremente sobre su embarazo y, por tanto, sobre sus propias vidas.

Łukasz Kohut (S&D). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Banda hipokrytów z PiS-u, która odebrała naszym kobietom wolność i bezpieczeństwo, dziś beczelnie kłamie o robakach, o zabieraniu swobód przez Unię.

Na przykład taki Patryk Jaki. To przez niego i przez jego koleśki kobiety w Polsce są prześladowane. Tak, to przez was są prześladowane. Jedną z nich jest Justyna Wydrzyńska, ukarana za pomaganie. Nikt mi nie wmówi, że ściganie za przekazanie tabletek „dzień po” jest normalne.

Mieszkam tuż przy granicy z Czechami, 22 kilometry. Tam tabletki „dzień po” są dostępne nie tylko w aptece, ale i w drogerii. Mieszkanki Polski są zastraszone przez władze. Dzietność spada przez politykę rządu PiS. Najwyższe wskaźniki urodzeń – Francja i Czechy, ponad 1,8 urodzeń na kobietę. Tam aborcja jest legalna. Polska daleko, daleko w tyle – współczynnik 1,3.

Unia musi interweniować, gdy państwo zawodzi! W moim sprawozdaniu o konwencji stambulskiej wzywamy do zapewnienia wsparcia organizacjom zajmującym się prawami kobiet. Konwencja stambulska – dla całej Unii, jak najszybciej!

(Pyynnöstä myönnettävät puheenvuorot päättyvät)

Helena Dalli, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, Minister, thank you, honourable Members, for your contributions to this debate. I hear you and I hear you very well.

As you know, the Commission cannot comment on individual cases, particularly with reference to cases where the EU has no competence. I am, of course, as you know, very concerned with the rollback of women's rights and will, with you, continue to work hard for women's rights and gender equality.

We can only achieve a Union of equality if all women in Europe have equal access to high-quality healthcare services and treatments, and if their fundamental rights are guaranteed and respected. Beyond our borders, the EU will continue to use all its diplomatic tools, including negotiations in the multilateral fora and political and human rights dialogue, to counter the backlash on women's rights.

We will continue to support women's human rights defenders at risk. We will continue to lend our full support. Only with strong women's rights movements can we reach our goals and build a world of equality.

Jessika Roswall, President-in-Office of the Council. – Madam President, Commissioner, honourable Members, I know that this topic means so much to many of you and including myself.

Let me show you once again that the Presidency attaches great importance to the protection of fundamental rights and in particular, the rights of women and the protection of women who are in a vulnerable situation. And as I also said, this is my deepest personal conviction. Rule of law remains the bedrock of our Union, and it is essential for the protection of fundamental rights and the very function of our democracy.

The Presidency remains committed to ensure that human rights are protected in the Member States, to protect those who fight for their rights, we are advancing work with strategic laws, such as on the Public Participation Directive actively, and also examining the proposal for a media freedom act, which aims to create a safe working environment for journalists and ensure a sound and plural media ecosystem, to cite some examples.

Especially in this difficult period, the Union as a whole needs to be vigilant on the respect for the rule of law and for our common values. We should all join forces to ensure robust legal protection for women throughout the EU. Thank you very much for this for holding this important debate and I agree EU can do more.

Puhemies. – Keskustelu on päättynyt.

Kirjalliset lausumat (171 artikla)

Isabel García Muñoz (S&D), *por escrito.* – Con motivo del Día Internacional de la Mujer 2023, rendimos homenaje a todas aquellas mujeres valientes que luchan por los derechos humanos fundamentales.

La salud y los derechos sexuales y reproductivos (SRHR) están siendo atacados y desmantelados por las fuerzas ultraconservadoras en todo el mundo y en varios Estados miembro de la UE, como Polonia. La legislación polaca no criminaliza a las mujeres que abortan, pero sí a quienes las ayudan directamente, entre ellas a las activistas. El Gobierno y los grupos ultraconservadores de derechas quieren castigos más severos para dichas activistas de ese país que está viviendo una escalada de persecución judicial que ha culminado con el primer caso de procesamiento y condena en Europa de Justyna W., activista polaca.

Los socialistas consideramos intolerable esta condena y apoyamos firmemente a las personas defensoras de los derechos de las mujeres, puesto que defienden no solo los derechos de las mujeres, sino la democracia como tal.

Cristina Maestre Martín De Almagro (S&D), *por escrito.* – Con motivo del Día Internacional de la Mujer 2023, rendimos homenaje a todas aquellas mujeres valientes que luchan por los derechos humanos fundamentales.

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18. Directrices de la UE sobre Defensores de los Derechos Humanos (debate)

Puhemies. – Esityslistalla on seuraavana Hannah Neumannin ulkoasiainvaliokunnan puolesta laatima mietintö aiheesta ihmisoikeuksien puolustajia koskevat EU:n suuntaviivat [2021/2204(INI)] (A9-0034/2023).

Hannah Neumann, rapporteur. – Madam President, ‘all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.’ This is the first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and if we are serious about this article, human rights defenders are our closest allies.

They do not fight with weapons. They use the power of words, of compassion, of persistence. They are not the enemy of the state but a force of good. This is why 25 years ago, the United Nations adopted a groundbreaking declaration on human rights defenders recognising their important contribution to peace, to sustainable development and human rights, and requesting states to protect them and support them. The EU guidelines on the protection of human rights defenders are based on this declaration, and today we assess how EU institutions and Member States implement these guidelines.

Why is it important? Well, all around the world, human rights defenders are more and more under attack. They are threatened. They are persecuted. They are sometimes even murdered for doing things that we in here have the privilege to take for granted: to fight corruption, to protect local forests, or sometimes even to just dance in the streets. In 2020 alone, 358 human rights defenders were killed. Each and every one of them is a voice that has been silenced, a person that dared to stand up, that dared to believe that change is possible so much that they were willing to give their life for it.

‘You are the only ones who still care.’ That is what a woman’s rights defender told me about a year ago in Kabul, and by ‘you’, she meant the EU, and yes, she’s right. We still make human rights a priority. And at the same time, I was ashamed to hear this from her after we had failed so miserably in Afghanistan.

So how can we, the EU, better live up to our ambitions? And that here, my report, our report, has many concrete suggestions. Maybe the main one: if we, EU and Member States, act together, we can save lives and change structures. Yet often enough we just don’t do that. So more consistency from country strategy to regular coordination of actions would be a big step forward.

There is more, just a few short examples. We have to work on prevention and become more flexible in our funding. We need to extend our focus to the networks and family of defenders because often suppressive regimes often deliberately target the families to silence defenders. Visas could be a key tool of support, yet rarely we make use of it, so defenders need easier access to visas.

We have to speak more about the many different kinds in which you can defend human rights, about those who support women’s rights, about LGBTI activists, about environmental defenders, as well as those who protect the rights of migrants and asylum seekers. They all deserve our protection.

Finally, we should be more proud about the support we offer, about the great work our delegations do in the field, because often those who need our support are not aware of the guidelines or of tools such as ProtectDefenders, and this needs to change.

Dear colleagues, too often we shrug our shoulders when we hear about the challenges human rights defenders face, as if the risks they take simply come with the job. But that’s not true. People being harassed, imprisoned, even killed only for defending human rights is something we should never accept. This is the line we need to hold. I’m confident that this report can guide us, the European Union and Member States, to become better allies to our allies on the ground.

Helena Dalli, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, honourable Members, in the year that marks the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the 25th anniversary of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, we need to pay tribute to the essential role human rights defenders play in defending the human rights of all of us.

Courageous human rights defenders, including women, youth, LGBTI persons or environmental defenders, are at the forefront of long-standing and emerging human rights battles by standing up against corruption, speaking out against the impact of climate change, combating Internet shutdowns or documenting war crimes. They are being threatened, attacked and in some cases they pay the ultimate price with their lives. Many of these incidents remain unknown to a larger public while human rights defenders continue to be killed, for instance, in Honduras and Cameroon or Eswatini.

The EU condemns these assassinations and asks for impartial and in fact and effective investigations. The report of rapporteur Neumann is a timely reminder of the need to constantly adapt our tools and policies to new challenges. We share the concern about the proliferation of threats and challenges against human rights defenders, such as transnational repression, digital surveillance, reprisals or attacks from non-state actors.

Protection of human rights defenders is and will remain an essential priority for us. We deliver results through public and private diplomacy, human rights dialogues, trial observation, visits and detention, or by delivering emergency grants. Over the past two weeks, for example, we have been vocal in condemning arbitrary detention or attacks on human rights in Azerbaijan and Nicaragua.

In our recent EU-China human rights dialogue, we raised a list of individual cases. It is essential to enhance the visibility and legitimacy of human rights defenders, and we will continue to carry out public campaigns showcasing their work and reaffirm the need for all states to protect human rights defenders. We will match our actions and our words with funding.

Between 2022 and 2027 we are spending EUR 30 million for ProtectDefenders.eu, the EU's human rights defender mechanism, which allows us to support with emergency relocation, legal support or cash injections for human rights defenders at risk and their relatives. Through this flagship programme, we have already provided assistance to more than 58 000 human rights defenders.

Janina Ochojska, *w imieniu grupy PPE*. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Szanowne Koleżanki i Koledzy! Cieszę się, że mogłam pracować nad tym kluczowym dla obrońców praw człowieka sprawozdaniem. I dziękuję Hannie Neumann, sprawozdawczyni, oraz moim kolegom i koleżankom sprawozdawcom za dobrą współpracę. Jak pokazują wydarzenia ostatnich dni, niezłomna postawa obrońców praw człowieka oraz ciągła praca na rzecz obrony innych wymagają większej uwagi i zaangażowania, a także lepszej koordynacji działań ze strony instytucji i państw członkowskich.

Zdecydowanie popieram zapisane w sprawozdaniu propozycje aktualizacji i rozszerzenia wytycznych dla obrońców praw człowieka, tak aby obejmowały szerszy zakres grup i bardziej innowacyjne podejścia, jak również poprawę komunikacji i przejrzystości na temat ich realizacji. Sprawozdanie zwraca uwagę na rosnące zagrożenia, na jakie niewątpliwie narażeni są obrońcy praw człowieka ze strony władz krajowych lub pełnomocników krajów trzecich w państwach członkowskich Unii Europejskiej.

Sprawozdanie wzywa również Komisję Europejską i państwa członkowskie do priorytetowego traktowania, identyfikacji i zwalczania tych zagrożeń w ramach wytycznych. Mam nadzieję, że te wytyczne będą drogowskazem dla zaangażowanych podmiotów i że zostaną wdrożone w działania na rzecz tej grupy, a ich efekty zobaczymy już wkrótce.

Na zakończenie dziękuję wszystkim obrońcom praw człowieka za ich pracę. Dziękuję, że jesteście tam, gdzie są prześladowani i represjonowani, że bronicie tych, których bronąć nikt nie chce, że ratujecie tych, którzy wymagają pomocy, i że upominacie się o tych, o których wielu już zapomniało.

Udo Bullmann, *im Namen der S&D-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin, werde Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Verteidiger der Menschenrechte, die mutigen Frauen und Männer, die an der Seite derer stehen, deren Rechte unterdrückt werden – sie brauchen unseren Schutz. Der Auswärtige Dienst, die EU-Kommission, aber auch die Mitgliedstaaten der EU haben allen Grund zu überprüfen, wo wir mit unserer Politik stehen und wo wir besser werden müssen. Kollegin Hannah Neumann hat ausdrücklich recht, wenn sie in ihrem exzellenten Bericht fordert, dass die Silos aufgebrochen werden müssen, dass die einseitigen Betrachtungen nicht mehr tragen und dass wir eine neue Politik, neue Initiativen brauchen.

Wenn Menschen ihr Leben riskieren, weil sie gegen Krieg und Gewalt, gegen die Einschränkungen der demokratischen Freiheiten und, ja, immer mehr auch gegen die Vernichtung der Lebensgrundlagen, unser aller Lebensgrundlagen in der Natur zu Felde ziehen, dann ist das Grund genug, nicht nur unsere Menschenrechtspolitik zu überprüfen, sondern auch unsere Handelspolitik, unsere Wirtschaftspolitik, unsere gesamte Außenpolitik. Deswegen begrüßen wir den Bericht und hoffen, dass er möglichst viel Wirkung erzeugen wird.

Katalin Cseh, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Madam President, dear colleagues, I would like to thank the rapporteur and all the shadows for the set of bold proposals that we can be really proud of, because human rights defenders are facing increased pressure around the world and it is our responsibility to protect them.

We need to defend the defenders. These brave individuals often put their lives on the line to fight for justice, freedom and equality. We often think about them in idealistic terms, but we shouldn't forget that their work is incredibly hard. Threats, harassment and violence are their everyday reality, and women human rights defenders face even greater challenges. They are subjected to gender-based violence and discrimination, and they often feel alone, getting little recognition or support.

As we all know, the EU guidelines on human rights defenders have been in place since 2004, but it's evident that they are not enough. We need to better implement our existing guidelines and we need to go further. And this is what this report is all about. Because autocrats are becoming more and more sophisticated. They have taken on with the digital age, for example, they use online harassment and surveillance.

We need to catch up to them and we need to finally get ahead of them. And let's not shy away from bold action. I know that one of the proposals, the provision of multi-entry visa schemes, is sensitive for some colleagues because far-right populists stoke fear and hatred against it. But we are talking about human rights defenders who need to be able to get to a safe place when they are facing harassment and then return to their countries to do their vital work. They need to be able to use the European Union as a safe haven.

So I urge you to support this report and do our utmost to make these proposals a reality throughout the EU.

Cristian Terheş, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – Madam President, dear colleagues, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that the people of the United Nations have reaffirmed their faith in human rights, in the dignity and worth of human person, in the equal rights of men and women. In other words, a human person can be either a man or a woman.

But what is a woman? A candidate to the US Supreme Court, when asked, could not answer. This raises serious questions about how the actual rights of women could be defended, since more and more in our society cannot define any more what a woman is. This is the biggest threat to human rights, especially to women's rights, since a woman is more and more considered to be a feeling, not an ontological reality which differs from a man.

Men who feel being a woman are allowed to compete in women's sports, even contact or power-lifting sports, which clearly creates a disadvantage for the actual women.

Supporting human rights defenders is a duty that we have in order to defend humanity. And this starts from acknowledging the fact that men and women, despite being genetically and biologically different, are equal in dignity and rights.

President. – This is a debate about human rights defenders.

Thierry Mariani, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Madame la Présidente, défendre les droits de l'homme, oui. Utiliser cette cause pour ériger une nouvelle classe de citoyens, non. C'est ainsi que je pourrais résumer notre position sur un texte qui instrumentalise les bons sentiments pour promouvoir une politique discutable. Vous poussez même la provocation jusqu'à féliciter les travaux de la commission DROI alors que cette dernière est éclaboussée par le qatargate, qui révèle quasiment une décennie d'alignement sur ces travaux au niveau des intérêts du Qatar.

Trop souvent, dans les textes du Parlement européen, nous voyons une même ambiguïté. Est-ce la défense des droits de l'homme qui vous préoccupe vraiment ou bien le déploiement d'un agenda idéologique? Prenons un exemple. Vous proposez dans votre texte toujours plus de sanctions contre les pays qui ne correspondent pas à votre politique. Or, les régimes de sanctions sont souvent la cause des pires atteintes aux droits de l'homme possibles. La famine, l'impossibilité de se soigner. En Syrie, par exemple, les sanctions de la communauté internationale ont conduit 90 % de la population sous le seuil de pauvreté, par exemple, alors que la guerre est finie depuis plusieurs années.

Les droits de l'homme ne poussent ni dans les ruines ni dans les cimetières. Tout au contraire, votre texte passe extrêmement rapidement sur les droits fondamentaux des êtres humains: se nourrir, se loger, se soigner. Ce qui vous intéresse, c'est de soutenir les défenseurs de la théorie du genre, ceux qui nous proposent une *woke* culture, d'octroyer des visas à toute catégorie affirmant qu'elle est discriminée, de créer sans cesse de nouveaux droits à défendre.

Toutes les revendications politiques minoritaires ne sont pas forcément bonnes à défendre et surtout, il n'est pas systématiquement souhaitable que l'Union européenne s'y associe.

Miguel Urbán Crespo, *en nombre del Grupo The Left*. – Señora presidenta, la verdad es que nos solemos llenar la boca con el respeto a los derechos humanos, pero la aplicación de las Directrices de la UE sobre los defensores de los derechos humanos suele dejar de ser una prioridad cuando hablamos de negocios. La Unión Europea refuerza inversiones que, a menudo, tienen un impacto negativo sobre el territorio, el medio ambiente, los derechos de las comunidades y, en particular, sobre las organizaciones defensoras de los derechos humanos.

El 17 de enero desaparecieron Antonio Díaz Valencia y Ricardo Arturo Lagunes, dos defensores ambientales mexicanos que brindaban apoyo jurídico a una comunidad afectada por un proyecto minero propiedad de una empresa europea. A pesar de la gravedad del caso, la Unión Europea no ha emitido ninguna condena pública al respecto. También en enero, dos líderes de Guapinol fueron asesinados, y actualmente otros seis están siendo víctimas de un segundo intento de persecución judicial. Este Parlamento ha negado que tengamos una urgencia de derechos humanos sobre el caso; y, por desgracia, no son casos aislados.

La aplicación de este tipo de instrumentos debería ser obligatoria y las políticas comerciales y de cooperación deberían estar estrictamente condicionadas a mecanismos vinculantes en materia de derechos humanos, porque, de lo contrario, al final lo que hacemos es llenar documentos con buenas palabras, que solo cumplimos si nuestros intereses comerciales o geoestratégicos no se ven afectados. Y eso, señoría, se llama hipocresía. Esperemos que este informe empiece a cambiar esta situación.

Carles Puigdemont i Casamajó (NI). – Madam President, I would like to thank the rapporteur, Hannah Neumann, for her excellent report. It was needed, vital and principled, in its analysis and recommendations.

But the proposed Team Europe will have to know how to answer uncomfortable questions that might be addressed to them. For example: how can there be a guarantee for human rights defenders if states like Spain disobey the European Court of Human Rights and do not apply 61% of its court rulings? How can there be a guarantee if states like Spain commit arbitrary detentions? How can there be a guarantee if activists from organisations that defend human rights are illegally spied on in European states, including Spain?

So ending double standards will be also a very effective way to support, protect and strengthen human rights defenders.

Isabel Wiseler-Lima (PPE). – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, chère rapporteure, dans un monde où les régimes autoritaires se développent de manière inquiétante, les défenseurs des droits de l'homme jouent un rôle absolument essentiel dans la promotion des droits de l'homme, de la démocratie, de l'état de droit. Ils sont dans ce sens de vrais alliés de l'Union européenne. Nous avons la responsabilité de les protéger et de les soutenir dans leurs activités de défense de la démocratie.

Il est difficile de concevoir ce qu'endurent de nombreux défenseurs des droits de l'homme, mais aussi leurs proches, familles et amis, harcelés, emprisonnés, torturés, parfois même assassinés. Ces avocats, journalistes, politiques, membres d'organisations, mais aussi simples citoyens mettent souvent leur sécurité, quand ce n'est pas leur vie, en jeu pour défendre les valeurs auxquelles nous croyons. Aussi, quand ils risquent l'emprisonnement, quand leur vie est menacée, nous leur devons de faciliter leur relocalisation urgente et l'accès à un visa.

Au-delà, il faut aussi combattre l'impunité de ceux qui persécutent les défenseurs des droits de l'homme. Car on ne peut tolérer que des personnes engagées qui organisent des manifestations ou défendent leurs terres ancestrales ou simplement documentent les violations des droits de l'homme soient persécutées. Le régime mondial des sanctions de l'Union européenne en matière des droits de l'homme, notre Magnitsky Act, nous permet de cibler les graves violations et atteintes aux droits de l'homme dans le monde entier. Il faut l'utiliser à l'encontre des coupables.

Je voudrais, pour conclure, répéter que ces hommes et femmes luttent pour les plus élémentaires des droits: les droits humains. Ils s'opposent à une injustice. Leur situation est inacceptable et nous, nous leur devons énormément. Nous leur devons vraiment beaucoup.

Nacho Sánchez Amor (S&D). – Señora presidenta, en los trabajos preparatorios de este informe, que ha llevado con eficacia y flexibilidad la colega Neumann, se han detectado algunas tendencias perniciosas que conviene subrayar. Una es el tópico de la llamada diplomacia silenciosa: una práctica que, en materia de derechos humanos, no puede ser una actitud general, sino un instrumento para utilizar muy excepcionalmente —como en el caso de la negociación de la liberación de un preso político—, pero no puede ser la forma en la que nuestras embajadas se expresen en los países que tienen problemas de derechos humanos. El contacto con las ONG de derechos humanos tiene que ser constante y sistemático, y las declaraciones públicas tienen que ser frecuentes y expresivas.

Otra tendencia es un implícito y perverso reparto de papeles entre las Delegaciones de la Unión y las embajadas de los países miembros. Así, las Delegaciones de la Unión Europea asumen el papel —menos simpático— de enfrentar a las autoridades con sus problemas de derechos humanos, y las embajadas de los países miembros se dedican a la diplomacia económica, que siempre es amable y gratificante.

La obligación de poner los derechos humanos en el centro de nuestra política exterior se deriva de los Tratados y es una obligación de la Unión Europea y de los Estados miembros. Eso sí sería un buen Equipo Europa.

Salima Yenbou (Renew). – Madame la Présidente, merci à vous, défenseurs des droits humains qui œuvrez partout dans le monde pour défendre les droits fondamentaux de tous et qui êtes absolument indispensables pour l'avenir commun.

En première ligne, vous, les défenseurs des droits humains, faites face à la répression, aux agressions et aux actes d'intimidation, au harcèlement, au chantage ou encore à la surveillance numérique. Le contexte international de ces derniers mois témoigne de la répression de plus en plus violente.

L'UE s'est activée pour consolider la coopération et apporter un soutien plus fort et une plus grande protection aux défenseurs des droits humains. Mais le constat est le suivant: notre engagement peut et doit encore être renforcé à tous les niveaux, tant à l'échelle européenne qu'au niveau des États membres, notamment en poursuivant l'aide financière et en défendant la crédibilité des ONG et des défenseurs des droits humains face à tous ceux qui essaient de les déstabiliser.

Nous devons donc impérativement placer véritablement, une fois pour toutes, les droits humains au cœur de nos relations avec les pays tiers, à travers les accords d'association, de commerce ou de coopération. Les valeurs que l'UE défend et protège, et non les intérêts politiques, doivent être les véritables principes directeurs de nos relations internationales.

Sunčana Glavak (PPE). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, poštovana povjerenice, kolegice i kolege, zahvaljujem izvjestiteljici na ovom izvješću.

Pridružujem se svim kolegicama i kolegama koji su zapravo s ove govornice izrazili zabrinutost zbog kontinuiranog nasilja nad borcima za ljudska prava koje se bilježi diljem svijeta, a posebno u autoritarnim režimima.

Europske institucije i države članice trebaju pojačati svoje napore kako bi zaštitile one koji rade na obrani ljudskih prava. Prema podacima platforme ProtectDefenders i u 2022. godini gotovo svaki dan prijavljen je jedan slučaj kršenja prava boraca za ljudska prava.

Od 2016. godine na platformi je evidentirano preko 4600 takvih slučajeva, od kojih se većina odnosi na represiju pojedinaca. Velik broj njih bio je izložen kršenju svojih ljudskih prava. Bili su meta pogubljenja, mučenja, premlaćivanja, zastrašivanja, proizvoljnog uhićenja i pritvaranja, prijetnji smrću, uznemiravanja i klevete, udruživanja, okupljanja.

U većini slučajeva moramo reći da djela počinjena protiv branitelja ljudskih prava krše i međunarodno i nacionalna prava. Međutim, u nekim se zemljama borci za ljudska prava koriste, odnosno protiv njih se koriste zakoni koji su i sami u suprotnosti s međunarodnim pravom o ljudskim pravima.

Uspostavljanje učinkovitog normativnog okvira za djelovanje u odnosima s državama u kojima se krše prava boraca moraju biti preduvjet za suradnju.

Završit ću, dostojanstvom se ne trguje, ono je temelj socijalnih odnosa i ljudskosti i predstavlja odraz naših društava i našeg napretka.

Isabel Santos (S&D). – Senhora Presidente, passaram ontem cinco anos desde o assassinato de Marielle Franco, uma jovem ativista brasileira, defensora dos direitos das minorias e dos mais pobres.

Em todo o mundo, os defensores de direitos humanos enfrentam detenções arbitrárias, tortura, campanhas de desinformação e estima-se que, entre 2012 e 2022, tenham sido assassinados mais de 1700.

A proliferação dos regimes autoritários e o facto de, no último ano, 75% da população mundial ter vivido uma deterioração da situação dos direitos humanos no seu país inquieta-nos e mostra que a proteção dos ativistas exige respostas cada vez mais abrangentes, concertadas a nível multilateral.

Mais do que nunca, estas linhas orientadoras são necessárias. A União Europeia não pode alienar o seu papel global e a sua presença no mundo e as suas delegações devem ser agentes ativos nesta matéria. Os diálogos de direitos humanos têm que deixar de ser meros soliloquios para registo diplomático. Temos que ser mais efetivos e abordar estes casos.

Karin Karlsbro (Renew). – Madam President, Commissioner, colleagues, without human rights defenders, there are no human rights. That's why it's so crucial that we follow up the implementation of the guidelines for the European External Action Service. Human rights defenders are harassed, detained, tortured and killed all around the world, only because they stand up for the most basic values on this planet.

Today's global decline of democracy and freedom and the rebound of gender equality makes it even more difficult and dangerous for activists and organisations to work. This makes the EU's role as guardian of human rights defenders more urgent and important than ever. The implementation must make a difference in practice.

Pyynnöstä myönnettävät puheenvuorot

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señora presidenta, en el orden del día defendíamos una enérgica posición de la Unión Europea en favor de los activistas de los derechos fundamentales en la Unión Europea —en el caso de una activista por los derechos al libre desarrollo de la personalidad y los derechos sexuales y reproductivos, perseguida precisamente por proporcionar una píldora abortiva de interrupción del embarazo en Polonia—. ¿Cómo no vamos a trasladar esos criterios, como propone con claridad el informe de nuestra colega Neumann, a la política exterior, cuando deben estar exactamente en el mismo eje?

Pero previniendo dos tentaciones: la primera, hacer pasar por un debate sobre derechos humanos lo que es un debate sobre objetivos políticos, que pueden ser discutibles y legítimos, pero que no tienen nada que ver con los derechos humanos como eje conductor de la política exterior de la Unión Europea. Y la segunda, acabar con este debate sobre la naturaleza de la política exterior de la Unión Europea con actores terceros cuyos estándares de derechos fundamentales son incomparablemente peores que los de la Unión Europea, mediante la defensa enérgica, decidida y determinada de la Unión Europea de los derechos humanos.

Margarita de la Pisa Carrión (ECR). – Señora presidenta, señorías, una mujer embarazada, en una situación complicada —por motivos económicos, por soledad—, se ve empujada a abortar por falta de recursos. Hay personas que, de manera solidaria, se ofrecen a ayudarle. Son muchos los casos en los que las mujeres cambian de opinión: aceptan el apoyo y pueden recibir felizmente a su bebé. Hoy, en España, ofrecer esta ayuda puede considerarse acoso. No solo eso: en este Parlamento se ha planteado impedir la entrada a las organizaciones de la sociedad civil que llevan a cabo este tipo de acciones, por ir contra los derechos humanos.

Yo denuncio aquí esta grave incoherencia de defender el aborto como un derecho humano. Es una temeridad porque acaba con el espíritu con el que los derechos humanos fueron declarados.

(Pyynnöstä myönnettävät puheenvuorot päättyvät)

Helena Dalli, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, I thank the honourable Members for this debate.

Despite our actions, too many human rights defenders remain at risk. We all need to work together – the EEAS, the Commission, the Parliament and the EU Member States – with a sense of urgency to adapt our actions to today's challenges. We will continue our unwavering efforts to promote a safe and enabling environment for civil society and HRDs, including those active in exile, and continue to condemn any threats or attacks against them.

Hannah Neumann, *rapporteur*. – Madam President, dear colleagues, that is more than a year of work that's coming to an end right now and it's the first ever implementation report the Human Rights Committee has done, so it's also time for me just to say thank you because I wouldn't have been able to get there alone.

Thank you to the EEAS and the Commission, which supported with a lot of insights, to the delegations in Colombia and Afghanistan that facilitated fieldwork, to the special representative Eamon Gilmore, but also to Mary Lawlor and Michel Forst, who supported in the project, to the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, which protect defenders, to the many NGOs working on that, and to my shadow rapporteurs. This file is really a good example of what we can achieve if we work together across party lines. Thank you, Janina Ochojska, Raphaël Glucksmann, Katalin Cseh, Miguel Urbán Crespo and Assita Kanko. It was a very good experience and I think 25 years after the adoption of the UN resolution on the protection of human rights defenders is a good moment to review where we are, to improve our implementation, to bring a lot of political will behind it. And I count on all of you to make sure that the recommendations we make in this report will actually make it into a change of policy on the ground.

Then there is one last group of people I want to thank. I know no one more dedicated and courageous in fighting for justice and peaceful societies than human rights defenders. You all are crucial to making your communities, your countries, our world a better place. None of this is easy, so just from all of us, thank you for the work you do.

Puhemies. – Paljon kiitoksia esittelijä Hannah Neumannille ja kaikille tästä tärkeästä keskustelusta. Keskustelu on päättynyt.

19. Adopciones transfronterizas desde terceros países (debate)

Puhemies. – Esityslistalla on seuraavana komission julkilausuma aiheesta rajatylittävät adoptiot kolmansista maista (2023/2517(RSP)).

Helena Dalli, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members. The European Commission is committed to putting children and their best interests at the heart of EU policies through its internal and external action. This engagement is developed in line with the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child.

Currently, there is No EU legislation on international adoptions. This field is regulated by the Hague Convention of 1993 on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption and by national laws. All EU Member States are party to this Convention, which is aimed at ensuring that inter-country adoptions take place in the best interests of the child and with respect to the child's fundamental rights.

However, this Convention is not open to ratification by international organisations, such as the European Union. Nevertheless, the Commission supports the accession of third countries to the Hague Convention and contributes to its correct implementation by participating, notably in the meetings of the contracting parties.

The EU strongly supports this Convention, which aims to respond to the complex legal problems that can arise in the context of inter-country adoptions. It gives effect to Article 21 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child by adding substantive safeguards and procedures to the principles and norms laid down in the UN Convention.

By setting out clear procedures and by prohibiting improper financial or other gain, the Hague Convention provides for security, predictability and transparency for all parties to an international adoption. It also aims to prevent illicit practices, including the abduction, sale or trafficking of children.

As regards trafficking, at the EU level, the EU anti-trafficking directive criminalises the offence of trafficking in human beings. In December 2022, the Commission proposed a revision of this Directive which includes the addition of illegal adoption for exploitation purposes to the list of the forms of exploitation to be criminalised.

Overall, the 1993 Hague Convention is a successful instrument which now has 105 contracting parties. It establishes a system of cooperation between authorities in countries of origin and receiving countries designed to ensure that inter-country adoptions take place under proper conditions. However, there is no obligation for state parties to the Hague Conventions to prohibit independent or private adoptions. It is estimated that 50% of international adoptions are not carried out under the Hague Convention. The lack of safeguards in such cases could lead to abusive practices. Therefore, it is important for receiving countries that have ratified the 1993 Hague Convention to extend the same guarantees and protections to adoptions involving children coming from states which have not ratified the Convention.

Under the auspices of the Hague Conference on Private International Law, of which the European Union is a full member, initiatives such as practice guides and specific training aim to ensure that international adoptions are carried out in the best interests of the child.

Karlo Ressler, u ime kluba PPE. – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, poštovana povjerenice, kolegice i kolege, djeca, zasnivanje obitelji, roditeljstvo, ali i želja za roditeljstvom neka su od najosjetljivijih područja čovjekovog života, a posvajanje djece vjerojatno i najplemenitiji čin odraslog ljudskog bića.

Nažalost, ono što nekome može biti čin ispunjenja, za nekoga drugoga, prije svega trgovca ljudima, može biti prilika za stjecanje koristi, a za samo dijete, ako nisu ispunjeni minimalni civilizacijski uvjeti, primjerice upoznavanja s posvojiteljima, životna trauma.

Zato imamo odgovornost u potpunosti i do posljednjeg detalja učiniti proces posvojenja djeteta iz druge države transparentnijim i pravno besprijekornim. U procesu moraju biti eliminirane sve nepoznanice, svi strahovi, prije svega za samo dijete.

Posvajanje djeteta ne smije u sebi imati financijsku motivaciju za bilo koju stranu. Posvajanje djeteta ne smije djecu uzimati, ne smije djecu tretirati kao objekt. Posvajanje djece nije i ne može biti kulturološki ili ideološki eksperiment.

Imamo pravo pomoći djeci kojoj je pomoć potrebna, no nemamo pravo oduzimati ih od njihovih roditelja. Imamo pravo posvojiti potrebito dijete i iz strane države, no nemamo pravo iskorištavati institucionalne slabosti stranih država.

Imamo pravo nastojati biti roditelji, posvojitelji, no nemamo pravo djecu tretirati kao objekt. Zaštitimo one najranjivije među nama, djecu, ma u kojoj se državi nalazili, jer njihova prava daleko nadilaze sva naša prava i sva naša htijenja.

René Repasi, im Namen der S&D-Fraktion. – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Trennung von Kindern von ihren Eltern, um sie anderen Menschen zur Adoption zu überlassen, ist ein Verbrechen an allen Beteiligten: an den Kindern, die aus ihren Familien gerissen werden, an den Eltern, denen das Kind weggenommen wird, und letztlich auch an den Adoptiveltern.

Um das international zu verhindern, haben wir – Frau Kommissarin sagte das – das Haager Übereinkommen über den Schutz von Kindern und die Zusammenarbeit auf dem Gebiet der internationalen Adoption, dem alle EU-Mitgliedstaaten angehören. Es sprechen gute Gründe dafür, internationale Adoptionen nur in Bezug auf solche Länder zuzulassen, die das Haager Übereinkommen ratifiziert haben. Diesen Weg haben viele Mitgliedstaaten auch bereits beschritten.

Es wäre aber zugleich falsch, alle internationalen Adoptionen einem Generalverdacht zu unterstellen, wenn es gleichsam besser für das Kindeswohl ist, statt in einem Waisenheim in einer Familie mit sie liebenden Kindern aufzuwachsen. Zugleich gibt es berechtigte Kinderwünsche bei Menschen, die sie aus unterschiedlichsten Gründen nicht erfüllen können. Rechtsordnungen erlauben Adoptionen nur für verheiratete Paare. Rechtsordnungen erlauben Adoptionen nur für Eltern unterschiedlichen Geschlechts. Ich erinnere nur an die Baby-Sara-Saga. Deswegen brauchen wir klares Recht in der EU, das solche Adoptionen anerkennt, damit hier einem Kinderhandel das Wasser abgegraben wird.

Barry Andrews, *thar ceann an Ghrúpa Renew*. – A Uachtaráin, ba mhaith liom buíochas a ghabháil leis an gCoimisiún as ucht na díospóireachta seo a eagrú. Is ábhar tábhachtach é seo.

Nuair a bhí ról an Aire Leanaí agam i rialtas na hÉireann, chaith mé an-chuid ama ar an ábhar seo. Sa bhliain 2010, ar son Rialtas na hÉireann, thiontaigh mé Coinbhinsiún na Háige i ndlí na hÉireann. Bhí áthas ar an-chuid daoine nuair a tharla sé seo. De réir go leor teaghlach, ba mhodh tábhachtach é an uchtáil chun leanaí i mbaol a chosaint.

Cuirim fáilte roimh an togra seo ón gCoimisiún, mar más tuismitheoir thú i dtír amháin, is tuismitheoir thú i ngach tír. Is céim riachtanach é i dtreo cearta an linbh a chomhlíonadh, deireadh a chur le hidirdhealú agus saoirse gluaiseachta a bhaint amach san Aontas Eorpach. Mholfaínn do chuile duine a bheith cúramach easaontas dlíthe a sheachaint idir an togra seo agus Coinbhinsiún na Háige.

Ar deireadh, tá níos mó fós le déanamh. Caithfidh an tAontas Eorpach comhar idirnáisiúnta a chur in ord tosaíochta, chun deireadh a chur le gáinneáil ar leanaí go deo.

Sergey Lagodinsky, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, Commissioner, colleagues, we all agree that more transparency and international cooperation is needed from legal and also practical perspective. Let's not lose sight of a different view. International adoptions are complicated and expensive. They take a long time and the outcome is uncertain. So, for parents-to-be this is a nerve-wracking exercise and this is also not in the children's best interest.

There is, of course, the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption from 1993, but many countries in and outside the EU have paused or banned international adoptions due to scandals, abuses and corruptions. This is the point that we want to make. We call on the EU, together with the Hague Conference on Private International Law, to take the lead and reinforce and modernise the legal framework on international adoptions and do it not just on paper. Build a strong global network with expertise and capacity to facilitate international adoptions, always keeping the rights of the children and the best interest of the child as the binding guideline. This is our wish.

Ladislav Ilčić, *u ime kluba ECR*. – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, poštovani kolege, hvala što ste prepoznali važnost ove teme i podržali moj prijedlog da se uvrsti na dnevni red plenarne sjednice, pogotovo zato što nam uskoro dolazi Direktiva o sprečavanju trgovanja ljudima koja konačno nelegalna posvojenja svrstava u trgovinu ljudima.

Moram odmah reći da su neki kolege u dijelu govora otišli u pogrešnom smjeru. Dakle, tema ove točke je vrlo jasna, to su posvajanja iz trećih država i molim vas da ni u jednom dijelu ne opterećujete ovu temu sa svojom ideološkom agendom. Tko bi trebao biti roditelj unutar Europske unije, to je druga tema.

Dakle, ovo je tema u kojoj bismo trebali biti zajedno, bez obzira na naše svjetonazore su sva djeca, a pogotovo ona iz trećih zemalja, pogotovo ona koja su žrtve krijumčara, svakako važniji od tih naših razlika. Dakle, govorimo o međunarodnom posvajanju.

Ljubav koju su ljudi spremni dati nezbrinutoj djeci i samo posvajanje su nešto jako plemenito. Ali samo kad je interes djeteta u prvom planu. Naizgled mala promjena u kojoj se želja za roditeljstvom stavlja u prvi plan, pa su ljudi spremni pribaviti dijete bilo od koga i bilo na koji način, vrlo se često svede na kupovanje djeteta kao neke robe s različitim cijenama.

I tada se posvajanje djece spaja s trgovinom ljudima i zato su nelegalna posvojenja prema Haškoj konvenciji dio trgovine ljudima, o čemu govori i nova direktiva, a prema UNICEF-u preko milijun djece godišnje se zloupotrebljava za dječju prostituciju, pornografiju, robovski rad i za trgovinu organima. Zločin i bol koji vrište do neba.

Stavite se samo u ulogu roditelja kojima je dijete oteto ili majke kojoj je nakon poroda rečeno da je dijete umrlo, a ustvari je dano na posvojenje.

Zato smo danas ovdje i zato moram reći da mi je jako drago što je Komisija kojoj sam poslao pitanje dalo ovakvu izjavu da se fokusiramo na ovu temu. Pozivam vas da osiguramo bolju međunarodnu suradnju i bolji nadzor nad posrednicima i u konačnici da motiviramo sve zemlje i kroz ... (*predsjedavajuća je govorniku oduzela riječ*)

Christine Anderson, im Namen der ID-Fraktion. – Frau Präsidentin! Kriminelle nutzen die Armut in Entwicklungsländern aus, um Kinder als menschliche Handelsware in die EU zu bringen, nicht selten zum Zweck der sexuellen Ausbeutung oder des Organhandels.

Adoptionsverordnungen müssen zum Ziel haben, tatsächlich fürsorgliche Adoptiveltern für diese Kinder zu finden, rechtliche Schlupflöcher zu schließen, um das Verschwinden tausender Kinder in der EU zu unterbinden.

Kinder vor Pädophilen und sexueller Ausbeutung zu schützen – das und nur das kann und muss ihr Ziel sein. Sollte es jedoch der Versuch sein, der Regenbogenmafia den Kindernachschub zu sichern, dann wäre der letzte Beweis für die abgrundtiefe Bösartigkeit dieses Hauses erbracht.

Mislav Kolakušić (NI). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, komercijalno surogat majčinstvo industrija je u procvatu. Istospolni parovi i samci podigli su potražnju za bebama, naslovi su koji vrište u naslovima Deutsche Welle-a, američkog CNBS-a, New York Times-a, engleskog BBC-ja, Euronews-a i brojnih drugih *mainstream* medija.

Što je surogat majčinstvo nego trgovina djecom? Što su takozvana posvojenja iz država u kojima vlada korupcija i djeca se otimaju ili kupuju od roditelja za par dolara naknade nego trgovina djecom?

Svjedočimo brutalnim kampanjama uskrate prava na nastavak života nerođene djece i promoviranja industrije proizvodnje i trgovine djecom. Živimo u doba koje nije normalno.

Ελένη Σταύρου (PPE). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, γνωρίζουμε όλοι πως τα θέματα υιοθεσίας αποτελούν εθνική αρμοδιότητα για τα κράτη μέλη. Ωστόσο, αυτό που συμβαίνει με την εμπορία παιδιών από δίκτυα που δραστηριοποιούνται στις παράνομες υιοθεσίες εκτός Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, αναγκάζουν αυτό το Κοινοβούλιο να αναλάβει δράση. Εξίσου σημαντικό είναι πως υπάρχουν πολλές οικογένειες που θα ήθελαν να προσφέρουν αγάπη στα παιδιά αυτά που βρίσκονται σε ορφανοτροφεία και συστήματα πρόνοιας και ευημερίας εντός της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Δυστυχώς, αυτές οι οικογένειες απογοητεύονται από τα τρομερά γραφειοκρατικά εμπόδια και τις περίπλοκες και μακροχρόνιες διαδικασίες. Ως εκ τούτου, υπάρχουν ζευγάρια που προσεγγίζουν τρίτες χώρες και στην προσπάθειά τους να επιταχύνουν τα πράγματα, διαλέγουν τη λάθος υπηρεσία υιοθεσίας και καταλήγουν μαζί με τα παιδιά αυτά να είναι θύματα των κυκλωμάτων εμπορίας παιδιών. Συνεπώς, αν γινόταν ευκολότερη υιοθεσία μεταξύ κρατών μελών, θα μειώναμε κατά πολύ τους κινδύνους αυτούς.

Η υιοθεσία είναι ένα ζήτημα κοντά στην καρδιά μου για προσωπικούς λόγους. Ως μέλος του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου νιώθω ότι η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, η οικογένειά μας, χρειάζεται να λάβει κάποιες πρωτοβουλίες μαζί με την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή. Χρειάζεται διαφάνεια γύρω από τις υιοθεσίες που γίνονται εκτός συνόρων, να μειώσουμε τη γραφειοκρατία, να εξαλείψουμε τη σύγκρουση νόμων και να προωθήσουμε μια ομαλή διαδικασία αναγνώρισης των υιοθεσιών μεταξύ των κρατών μελών.

Caterina Chinnici (S&D). – Signora Presidente, signora Commissaria, onorevoli colleghi, in tutti i Paesi che versano in situazioni di crisi, siano esse causate da catastrofi naturali, come di recente il disastroso terremoto in Turchia e Siria, o da guerre, a pagare il prezzo più alto sono sempre i bambini, bambini spesso rimasti soli, che rischiano di finire nelle maglie di organizzazioni criminali senza scrupoli che approfittano di tali situazioni per alimentare il loro ignobile traffico e favorire le adozioni illegali.

In materia di adozioni transfrontaliere da Paesi terzi, l'Unione europea, nel quadro della sua azione esterna, deve pertanto farsi garante affinché ogni decisione che riguardi un minore sia sempre adottata nel rispetto del principio del suo superiore interesse e secondo i criteri stabiliti dalla Convenzione dell'Aja del 1993.

È necessario quindi fornire mezzi per rafforzare i controlli, garantire il processo di identificazione dei minori separati dalle famiglie, facilitare il rintracciamento dei parenti più prossimi ed assicurare, sempre nelle adozioni transfrontaliere, che questi bambini particolarmente vulnerabili siano pienamente tutelati.

PRESEDA: MICHAL ŠIMEČKA

podpredseda

Irena Joveva (Renew). – Gospod predsednik! Otroci so naša prihodnost. Vem, sliši se klišejsko, ampak v resnici je tako preprosto. Hkrati pa so ti otroci, kot najranljivejši del družbe, prepuščeni našim odločitvam sprejemanja ukrepov za zagotavljanje njihove varnosti.

Meddržavne posvojitve so nedvomno zelo plemenite in prav je, da zagotovimo ustrezne pogoje zanje. Če tega ni – dopuščamo možnost za nezakonitosti, posledično za kratenje človekovih pravic, predvsem pa za huda kazniva dejanja z uničujočimi posledicami v življenjih žrtev.

Kljub temu na ravni Unije nimamo enotnega zakonodajnega okvira ali mehanizma, ki bi naslavljal preprečevanje potencialnega trgovanja z ljudmi pri meddržavnih posvojitvah. Kdo bi vedel, koliko takšnih primerov se je že zgodilo, neopaženih.

Medtem Komisija že leta pomanjkanje zakonodajne ureditve prenaša na države članice, dovolj je izgovorov, kdo je pristojen in kdo ni. Sprejmimo odgovornost, vsi, in ukrepajmo, če ne, ne bomo mi plačali cene. Plačali jo bodo otroci. Naša prihodnost. Se še vedno sliši klišejsko? Tako preprosto je.

Elżbieta Kruk (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Dobro dziećka musi mieć nadrzędne znaczenie we wszystkich decyzjach adopcyjnych. Minimalne standardy dotyczące adopcji powinny być dla wszystkich oczywiste. Cel adopcji to zapewnienie dziecku otoczenia, w którym będzie dorastać w atmosferze miłości oraz zrozumienia i harmonijnie się rozwijać. Dziecko powinno dorastać w środowisku rodzinnym.

I tu nie sposób nie nawiązać do tragedii dzieci ukraińskich. Trzeba bowiem rozpowszechnić informacje o tym, że Rosja deportuje z Ukrainy tysiące dzieci, by oddać je do adopcji rosyjskim rodzinom i zrusyfikować. Propaganda rosyjska twierdzi cynicznie, że dzieci te uratowano. Nie jest znana liczba uprowadzonych dzieci. Organizacje pozarządowe twierdzą, że może to być nawet kilkaset tysięcy. W nowym pakiecie sankcji wobec Rosji na czarną listę wpisano już kilkanaście osób odpowiedzialnych za nielegalne deportacje, w tym, co charakterystyczne, rosyjską rzecznik praw dziecka, która sama adoptowała chłopca z Mariupola. Pilnie potrzebne są więc działania dla zwiększenia świadomości tej sytuacji i wsparcia Ukrainy w odzyskiwaniu dzieci.

Gilles Lebreton (ID). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, huit Croates ont été accusés le mois dernier de trafic d'enfants en Zambie. Ils ont été interpellés alors qu'ils tentaient de quitter le pays avec quatre enfants africains qu'ils prétendaient avoir adoptés légalement au Congo.

Cette affaire met en lumière les dérives potentielles de l'adoption internationale. Certes, l'adoption internationale doit continuer à être admise car elle permet à un enfant sans famille d'en trouver une, ce qui correspond à son intérêt supérieur. Mais sa reconnaissance doit, à mon sens, être subordonnée à deux conditions. D'abord, elle ne doit porter que sur des enfants réellement isolés et non sur des enfants arrachés ou achetés à leur famille. Cette exigence est posée par la Convention de La Haye du 29 mai 1993, qui distingue l'adoption internationale du trafic d'enfants.

D'autre part, la reconnaissance de l'adoption ne devrait être possible que si elle respecte le droit national de l'État d'accueil. J'estime par exemple que nul ne devrait contraindre un État à reconnaître une adoption consécutive à une gestation pour autrui si cet État prohibe la gestation pour autrui sur son territoire. Or, c'est ce que veut faire la Commission à travers son projet de certificat européen de parentalité.

C'est pourquoi je suis totalement opposé à ce projet. La détermination des choix anthropologiques sur lesquels repose le droit de la famille doit rester une compétence nationale.

Ernő Schaller-Baross (NI). – Tisztelt Elnök úr! Tisztelt Képviselőtársaim! Az európai szülői bizonyítványról szóló vita egyszerre jogkérdés és ideológiai állásfoglalás. Jogkérdés, mert a családjog az egyes tagállamok történelmében, kultúrájában és társadalmi értékrendjében gyökerezik. Éppen ezért szigorúan a nemzetállamok hatáskörébe tartozik bármely olyan javaslat, amit kötelezővé tenné a szülői státusz tagállamok közötti elismerését súlyos visszaélés az uniós hatáskörrel. Ideológiai állásfoglalás, mert az uniós intézmények a szerződések megkerülésével világnézeti hadviselést indítanak a hagyományos európai keresztény családmódel ellen.

A mi állásfoglalásunk, amely a magyar Alaptörvény rendelkezésein alapszik, jogi és ideológiai szempontból is egyértelmű. Az anya nő, az apa férfi, a család fogalma pedig nemzetállami hatáskör. Kérem, tartsák ezt tiszteletben!

Miriam Lexmann (PPE). – Vážený pán predsedajúci, spomínané prípady z Chorvátska nás varujú, že prax cezhraničných adopcií nemusí byť vždy vykonávaná s dobrým úmyslom. Namiesto toho, aby dieťa bez rodiny našlo domov, môže sa stať obeťou zneužívania jeho zraniteľnosti alebo trestných činov vrátane obchodovania s ľuďmi. Ja by som ale chcela upozorniť ešte na iný problematický aspekt. Cezhraničné adopcie môžu slúžiť aj na zakrývanie praxe tzv. náhradného materstva. Táto prax, ktorá je v rozpore s ľudskými právami, de facto umožňuje, aby deti boli objednávané a získavané ako tovar. Okrem porušovania práv detí podkopáva tiež práva žien, ktoré pochádzajú častokrát z chudobných krajín či znevýhodneného prostredia. Zneužívanie ich situácie monitorizuje materstvo. Všetko sú to hrozby, ktoré musíme pri téme cezhraničných adopcií vziať do úvahy a rozhodne ich nepodceňovať.

Beata Kempa (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Adopcje z krajów trzecich. Jakże pięknie to brzmi. Tymczasem za tym hasłem kryje się niestety nic innego jak często biznes adopcyjny oraz niestety surogacyjny. To przecież, jak donosi prasa w Brukseli, pary homoseksualne mogły kupić na targach dla mniejszości seksualnych potomstwo pochodzące z surrogacji na Ukrainie. To milionowy biznes, który Komisja Europejska chce zalegalizować na terenie Wspólnoty, świetnie wiedząc, że nie ma kompetencji traktatowych w tej sprawie.

Marzy się narzucenie państwu członkowskim związków homoseksualnych, a w kolejnym kroku umożliwienie im adopcji dzieci. Normalne społeczeństwa, które opierają swoje funkcjonowanie na wartościach, nigdy tego nie zaakceptują. Ta debata nie powinna mieć w ogóle miejsca, a to, co chcecie państwo przeprowadzić, to nieakceptowana przez obywateli inżynieria społeczna.

Tomislav Sokol (PPE). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, povjerenice, kolegice i kolege, slučaj hrvatskih državljana koji su početkom prosinca uhićeni u Zambiji pokazao je da kod međunarodnih posvajanja djece iz država koje nisu potpisnice Haške konvencije iz 1993. postoji velik prostor za manipulacije raznih vrsta, a dodatan problem predstavlja ograničena mogućnost provjere vjerodostojnosti izdanih dokumenata o posvojenju.

Zbog toga hitno treba zabraniti posvojenje iz takvih država. Naime, u državama koje nisu stranke Haške konvencije nerijetka su posvojenja u čijoj je pozadini kriminal koji može obuhvaćati korupciju, otmicu i prodaju djece.

Zato je važno poslati snažnu poruku da postupanja koja ostavljaju prostora za kriminal ne trebaju biti dopuštena.

105 država stranke su Haške konvencije pa stoga ostaje nejasno zašto bi se netko uopće odlučio na posvojenje upravo iz države koja nije potpisnica Konvencije. Ključno je stoga da oni koji se odluče za međunarodno posvojenje ulože posebnu pažnju da bi se uvjerili u zakonitost posvojenja jer njihova želja za roditeljstvom nikako ne može biti ispred najboljeg interesa djeteta.

Vystúpenia podľa postupu prihlásenia sa o slovo zdvihnutím ruky

Seán Kelly (PPE). – Mr President, I think this is a very important discussion. I enjoyed listening to the debates, and everybody is united that we must do everything we can to have proper, legitimate adoption procedures and, above all, to give support to those who want to adopt.

I believe that there are thousands of prospective parents, adoptive parents, in Europe who would do so if they were given the guidance and if we got rid of some of the regulations and the long procedures. But it has to be done, of course, in accordance with the Hague Convention, as has been mentioned, so that children are going into good, happy homes. I have friends of mine who have adopted children from abroad. They have grown up in very happy homes and some of them are very successful.

I think if we had the right campaign and particularly giving information to prospective adoptive parents across Europe, we could do an awful lot for children who otherwise would finish up in very vulnerable, exploitative situations.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señor presidente, señora comisaria Dalli, es cierto que el debate sobre las adopciones transfronterizas a nivel global debe reflejar algunas preocupaciones, particularmente en un contexto en el que tiene lugar el incremento de delitos contra los menores, incluso el tráfico de niños y el tráfico de órganos.

Pero en la Unión Europea, el hecho de que haya Derechos sustantivos y Derechos procesales muy diferentes entre sí en todos los Estados miembros no puede dar lugar a ninguna discriminación de la filiación adoptiva, que debe hacerse con igualdad de derechos y sin discriminación. Se trata de un derecho fundamental en la Unión Europea, recogido en los artículos 24 y 32 de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea, que protegen a los menores sin discriminación, haciendo prevaler, en todo caso, su interés superior.

Por tanto, hay que saludar la iniciativa de la Comisión de una nueva legislación europea en materia de filiación parental que cumpla la jurisprudencia del Tribunal de Justicia de reconocimiento mutuo, basada en la confianza mutua entre los Estados miembros y sus respectivos sistemas judiciales de la filiación adoptiva sin discriminación.

Creo, por tanto, que esto concierne de manera muy particular a las situaciones especialmente vulnerables, no solamente los menores, sino también de los propios padres adoptivos, independientemente de su orientación sexual y de su género.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Mr President, it's a mark of our skewed priorities that we can rush through things like spending billions of public money on arms, but something as simple and essential as dealing with the cross-border aspects of adoption sits on the backburner for years. The Commission and Parliament started to address this over ten years ago and nothing substantive has happened.

And why is it that the rights of adopted children are never a priority? In my own country, Ireland, thousands of people were illegally adopted. They had to wait decades for our government to give them even the smallest bit of information about where they came from. Successive governments had to be dragged screaming and kicking to a place where they'd even begin to address this. And they still haven't got answers. Most recently, being insulted with an offer of EUR 3 000 compensation for being illegally adopted and in a mother and baby home.

The scale of abuse is appalling. If we talk about values, we have to address this issue.

Marc Angel (S&D). – Mr President, just before you started chairing, the German MEP Christine Anderson from the ID Group, she talked about 'Regenbogen Mafia', 'Rainbow Mafia'.

And let me call let me recall the definition of 'Mafia'. Mafia stands for an organised international body of criminals. And I think that people who defend the rights of rainbow families, people who defend LGBTI rights, they are not criminals. They are just human rights defenders, they defend fundamental rights.

And I think that kind of talk is totally inappropriate for this Parliament. And it equals to me to hate speech. And hate speech has no place in this house.

(Ukončenie vystúpení podľa postupu prihlásenia sa o slovo zdvihnutím ruky)

Helena Dalli, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, as I expressed earlier, there is No - European Union legislation on international adoptions, and the matter is regulated by the 1993 Hague Convention, which is widely ratified and notably by all EU Member States.

The Commission remains committed to put children at the heart of all its policies. This is also what drives the proposal which we presented last year on the cross-border recognition of parenthood.

Predsedajúci. – Rozprava sa skončila.

Písomné vyhlásenia (článok 171)

Gunnar Beck (ID), *schriftlich*. – Es gibt einen alarmierenden Anstieg internationaler Adoptionsfälle, bei denen sich die adoptierten Kinder als Opfer von Menschenhandel herausstellen, hauptsächlich aus sub-Sahara afrikanischen Ländern. Mehrere EU-Bürger, die Kinder adoptieren wollten, werden derzeit in Afrika wegen des Verdachts der Ausbeutung von Kindern inhaftiert. Ihnen drohen bis zu 20 Jahre Haft. Internationale Adoptionen, insbesondere aus afrikanischen und bestimmten asiatischen Ländern, werden zunehmend mit organisierter Kriminalität, einschließlich Prostitution, Pädophilie und Organhandel, in Verbindung gebracht. Dies macht Kinder extrem anfällig und werdende Eltern zu nützlichen Werkzeugen für Kriminelle.

Internationale Adoption ist einer der vielen Exzesse des Globalismus. Sie missbraucht den legitimen Kinderwunsch europäischer Eltern, um ein vielfältiges Europa zu fördern. Durch die Erleichterung internationaler Adoptionen und damit das Überspringen des Schwangerschaftsurlaubs versucht die EU, Frauen davon zu überzeugen, im Hamsterrad unserer wettbewerbsintensiven Marktwirtschaft nicht der Kinder wegen auszusteigen. Die europäische Demographie befindet sich in einer beispiellosen Krise. Wir brauchen eine Politik, die europäische Familien dabei unterstützt, sich auf natürliche Weise fortzupflanzen. Dies erfordert steuerliche Anreize wie in Ungarn, sowie einen verbesserten Sozialschutz für schwangere Europäerinnen und junge europäische Mütter. Wir brauchen eine Politik, die die natürliche Fortpflanzung fördert, nicht politisch motivierte internationale Adoptionen vorantreibt.

Ewa Kopacz (PPE), *na piśmie*. – Adopcja zmienia cały świat dziecka. Dlatego obowiązkiem tworzących regulacje prawne urzędników, służb społecznych, wszelkich pośredniczących organizacji i przyszłych rodziców jest dopilnowanie, by ten mały świat zmienił się na lepsze.

Trzeba jasno powiedzieć: nielegalne adopcje są po prostu częścią zjawiska handlu ludźmi. Tym obrzydliwszym, że dotyczącym dzieci.

Po pierwsze, przy adopcji dzieci, szczególnie z bardzo odległego i odrębnego kulturowo kraju, wszystkie zaangażowane strony powinny zachować jak największą ostrożność i staranność w przeprowadzaniu tej procedury. Tym bardziej, jeśli dany kraj nie współpracuje w ramach Konwencji Haskiej z 1993r.

Po drugie, tak, jest wielu wspaniałych ludzi, którzy szczerze otwierają swoje serca i domy dla dzieci potrzebujących opieki i miłości. Nie bądźmy jednak naiwni. Są przecież źli ludzie, którzy pod przykrywką adopcji, realizują najgorsze z możliwych zbrodni. Dlatego cieszę się, że Komisja proponuje włączenie nielegalnych adopcji w katalog przestępstw pod dyktando o zwalczaniu handlu ludźmi.

Uważam też, że Komisja Europejska i państwa członkowskie powinny wspólnie działać na rzecz przygotowania i udostępniania rzetelnej informacji nt. adopcji międzynarodowych i przeprowadzać regularną ocenę tych krajów i regionów świata, z których adopcja obarczona jest szczególnym ryzykiem.

Tworząc prawo dotyczące adopcji poruszamy się między „cudem kochającego domu” a piekłem dziecięcej niewoli. Pamiętajmy, że dobro dziecka jest najwyższym prawem.

20. Lucha contra la discriminación en la Unión: la esperada Directiva horizontal contra la discriminación (debate)

Predsedajúci. – Ďalším bodom programu je rozprava o týchto bodoch:

— otázka na ústne zodpovedanie pre Radu o boji proti diskriminácii v EÚ – dlhoočakávaná horizontálna antidiskriminačná smernica, ktorú predkladá Juan Fernando López Aguilar v mene Výboru pre občianske slobody, spravodlivosť a vnútorné veci (O-000010/2023 – B9-0013/23) (2023/2582(RSP)), a

— otázka na ústne zodpovedanie pre Komisiu o boji proti diskriminácii v EÚ – dlhoočakávaná horizontálna antidiskriminačná smernica, ktorú predkladá Juan Fernando López Aguilar v mene Výboru pre občianske slobody, spravodlivosť a vnútorné veci (O-000011/2023 – B9-0013/23) (2023/2582(RSP)).

Juan Fernando López Aguilar, author. – Mr President. Good evening, Council. Swedish Presidency, good evening. Again, Commissioner Dalli, good evening. Dear colleagues, it is my honour to present before you this oral question on behalf of the Committee. I am also honoured to chair the Committee on Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs. This is an oral question on equality: anti-discrimination horizontal directive.

On good reason, on good grounds, the European Commission published a proposal for a directive on equal treatment of persons irrespective of religion, belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, the so-called horizontal anti-discrimination directive, in the summer 2008. So it is going to be soon 15 years now. It was 15 years ago. This European Parliament adopted its position 14 years ago. That's been a long time throughout which the European law has happened to change substantially.

The Lisbon Treaty entered into force, along with the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and the legislative procedure has moved from consultation on this matter to consent, which takes a positive vote of this European Parliament. But, however, this long time has not allowed the Council so far to reach its agreement on the matter and allow that European Commission initiative to finally become effective law, enforceable law, which was the whole point of it. And that's why we cared so much about it.

It is not only a question of legislative procedure stuck in discussions, never-ending discussions, not seeming to find any sort of conclusive way out of its tunnel. We are also witnessing here an incapacity of the whole European decision-making, a law-making process to bring an EU answer to sort out a major political issue, which is discrimination on the rise all over the place in the Member States and across the European Union.

Those 15 years, our social fabric have not overcome the debate on the discrimination. On the contrary, it is been always on the rise against categories, entire categories of people. Of course, women, women's rights, we've talked about them today, just today, recalling that women's rights matter in every society and, of course, in the European Union. But it also goes to disabled people, LGBTIQ minorities, Roma, Jewish communities, phobias all around the place.

So highlighting the importance of not only having enforceable law, respecting the case law of the European Court of Justice in every Member State and across the European Union, that is a purpose today, with the two oral questions we are submitting to the attention of this European Parliament, focusing on avenues for action at EU level to unlock this legislative work for good.

That is why the European Parliament, which has not received so far any position on the Council on the matter, and that's not a chance to actually fulfil its role as co-legislator with the Council on this relevant matter, has this mandate of the European Parliament getting started 2019 appointed a new rapporteur on the file, our colleague Alice Kuhnke, and along with the shadow rapporteurs on the file, we are just waiting and waiting for a resolution which is to be adopted next plenary session here in Strasbourg.

The next session we are adopting a resolution sending a message. So it is more than enough. It is more than time for the European Union to act here. The Parliament has resolved to come up with two questions. First, to the Commission: does it intend to unlock the adoption of the anti-discrimination directive and finally adopt a legal framework for citizens, respecting their rights against all forms of discrimination, that has been awaiting for all too long? And the same question goes for sure to the Council, to the Swedish Presidency.

We are not talking here about procedures from consultation to consent. We are talking about full responsibility, 15 years of our inability to conclude this most relevant file really matters. Actually, some Member States have taken initiative following the lead of the European initiative, though inconclusive so far, have brought about legislation, anti-discriminatory legislation and horizontal anti-discrimination legislation in some Member States, including mine, Spain.

We are waiting for the European Union legal framework. So that is why we are expecting to hear the response from both the Commission and the Council on this most relevant pending file for nothing less than 15 years now.

Jessika Roswall, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, honourable Members, Commissioner, may I begin by thanking you all for the efforts to keep this issue of equal treatment high on our political agenda. The Council strongly supports the principle of equal treatment, an integral part of our common values. This being so, we of course recognise the importance of the proposed horizontal equal treatment directive. It has been on the table for far too long, as Mr López Aguilar said, and we hope to advance the discussion as much as possible during our term.

Beginning with your question regarding the state of play, I will be straightforward and say that almost every single presidency has placed a proposal on its agenda since 2008. And the ministers of the EPSCO Council have been informed at every step of the way, most recently in December.

As you are aware, for this file, unanimity is required in the Council, and the Presidency analysis is that a decisive breakthrough is unlikely in the near future. I realise that this message is not the preferred one, but it is in fact the situation.

Coming to the timetable and the next concrete steps, the Swedish Presidency intends to place the proposal on the agenda for a technical-level discussion in the coming weeks and with a view to present a progress report at the EPSCO Council in June.

You also raised the issue of respect for the right of non-discrimination and equal treatment in the Member States. Here, I am of course very pleased to recall all the legislation at EU level that is already in place. As you know, European equality legislation is especially strong in the field of employment. Member States are responsible for implementing such legislation, and it is the Commission, not the Council, that monitors this process.

The Presidency also attaches importance to the continued exchange between Member States and we are organising several conferences to this end, including our own matter of gender equality, racism, antisemitism and LGBTIQ equality.

Finally, you also raised the question of involving case-law and how it must be implemented by the Member States and the EU. Here, it is important to bear in mind that it is the Commission who is monitoring the implementation of EU law. Thank you for this opportunity to address this subject and thank you for your attention. I am looking forward to the debate.

Helena Dalli, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, Minister, honourable Members. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to address this Chamber on the important topic of the proposal for an equal treatment directive. The adoption of the 2008 proposal for an equal treatment directive remains a priority for the Commission. The proposal is among the priority legislative files requiring swift action in the Commission's 2023 work programme.

The proposed directive aims to fill an important gap in the EU's non-discrimination legislation by extending protection against discrimination on the basis of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation to the fields of social protection, education and access to goods and services, including housing. Under Article 19 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the proposal requires unanimity in order to be adopted in the Council. As you are well aware, it has therefore been blocked in the Council since the very beginning.

The Commission thanks the previous Presidencies of the Council of the EU in charge of the file that have, time and again, relaunched work in the Council to make progress on this file. In particular, we welcome that certain progress could be achieved under the Portuguese and more recently under the Czech Presidencies. We also welcome the support of the Swedish Presidency, which would allow us to make progress in case such an opportunity arises.

Throughout the Council negotiations, the Commission has always actively supported the Council Presidencies and the Member States in finding possible ways to advance the file. This includes concrete support in technical and legal questions, and we will continue to offer our support in the future.

Let me recall that, overall, the Commission is engaged in achieving a Union of Equality. As Commissioner for Equality, I have been entrusted by President von der Leyen with strengthening Europe's commitment to inclusion and equality and with actively raising awareness and promoting equality across the Union.

In order to mainstream equality in all policy areas, we have been putting in place mechanisms, policies and actions that challenge structural discrimination and stereotypes that are often present in our societies. The Anti-racism Action Plan, the Gender Equality Strategy, the EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, The Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the LGBTIQ Equality Strategy have all been put forward during the mandate of this Commission, with the aim to build a Union of Equality. They all stress the importance of preventing and tackling discrimination, enforcing EU law and principles in this field, and improving data collection.

In December, the European Commission proposed legislative initiatives on binding standards for equality bodies to strengthen the role, independence and resources of these bodies. We also want to provide equality bodies with strong powers to effectively assist victims of discrimination and to help enforce anti-discrimination rules on the grounds of age, religion or belief, disability and sexual orientation in employment.

Finally, as the guardian of the Treaties, the Commission makes sure that, when implementing EU law and EU-funded projects, the principle of non-discrimination is fully respected. Coming back to the proposal for an equal treatment directive, its adoption lies in the hands of the 27 Member States and the Council.

When it comes to concrete options to unblock the negotiations in the Council, the Commission has explored several, including enhanced cooperation and the general bridging clause – the so-called passerelle clause in Article 48 of the Treaty on European Union. However, none of these alternative solutions appear to be a realistic option. Previous discussions in Council have also confirmed this.

Article 19 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union remains the sole possible legal base to achieve the aim of prohibiting discrimination on the various grounds in the four fields mentioned in the Commission's proposal across the Union. Still, we must not give up in the face of the obviously challenging situation. We owe it to all those citizens who are discriminated against in the fields of social protection, education and access to goods and services.

I reiterate the Commission's commitment to support the Council negotiations in every way possible. I also call on all Member States for their support. This fight is key to achieving a union of equality, and it requires political will, determination and a constructive spirit.

Maria Walsh, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Mr President, Article 14 of our European Convention on Human Rights specifically outlines our right to not face discrimination, and yet, many members of our society face discrimination every single day. In Ireland, people from minority backgrounds like our travelling community, our LGBTI+ community are much more likely to face and experience discrimination in their everyday lives.

While we can continue to implement laws gradually, creating separate rules for different grounds of discrimination creates significant barriers for people. A single directive would not only be easier to implement, but it would also ensure that our citizens can clearly understand their rights. If we cannot provide our citizens with a comprehensive framework which protects our citizens against discrimination, how can we ever make progress?

Commissioner, colleagues, I put to you: equality and discrimination are two sides of the same coin. Often in this chamber, late at night, we discuss the importance of equality, of fundamental rights, of our European values, and we cannot allow our Member States to continuously put a halt on progress. We've three presidencies left under this mandate, three chances for EU leaders to push to unblock this directive. There has been discussion amongst Member States, as already shared, about separating parts of this directive, as they believe some parts will be easier to introduce than others. I call this utter nonsense. All 500 million citizens deserve equality today. All European citizens deserve the same standing and respect within our EU. We need to move. We need to unblock this directive. It is our citizens who are at risk if we don't get this right.

May I use the last ten seconds to acknowledge Commissioner Dalli and her team for continuously calling for this directive to be unblocked, one of the rare few commissioners to do so.

Marc Angel, *au nom du groupe S&D*. – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Commissaire, Madame la Ministre, chers collègues, mon message se tourne aujourd'hui en direction de nos États membres. Si la patience se veut être une vertu, elle est, dans le contexte de la directive horizontale antidiscrimination, méprisable. Quinze ans de blocage, quel scandale!

Pourtant visible et audible, la discrimination à laquelle sont confrontés trop de nos concitoyennes et concitoyens ne semble pas effrayer les gouvernements qui bloquent. Quinze ans d'immobilisme, d'inaction de certains représentants nationaux, c'est le résultat d'un manque de courage politique.

Si des législations ont déjà été adoptées par le passé en matière de discrimination sur le marché de l'emploi, il faut quand même rappeler que nous ne passons que huit heures par jour sur notre poste de travail. Or, la protection contre les discriminations doit être garantie 24 heures sur 24, dans la sphère privée comme sur le lieu de travail. Il est donc temps de balayer devant notre porte et de faire appliquer les valeurs d'égalité au sein de notre Union.

À cette fin, nous, Socialistes et démocrates, soutenons la Commissaire Dalli pour qu'encore sous ce mandat une solution soit trouvée pour adopter un texte progressiste interdisant toute forme de discrimination dans les différentes sphères de la vie privée de tous ceux qui vivent dans notre Union européenne.

Dear colleagues, to all the far-right populist religious extremists who call us – who fight discrimination, who defend women's rights, trans rights, LGBT rights, minority rights – ideologists, I just want to recall that they are the ideologists.

We are just people who defend fundamental rights, and the far-right ultra-conservative politicians, the ideologists, they are against the Union of equality, a Union of equality which Commission President von der Leyen calls for, where Helena Dalli, the Commissioner for Equality, works so hard. Thank you for having presented all this equality strategy. Thank you for defending the concept of intersectional discrimination; by the way, intersectional discrimination is a term which is banned from Council language, and this is a shame and this can no longer go on like this.

So I call on the Swedish Presidency: please do your best to work on this on this important subject, because fighting for equality, equal treatment is not giving more rights to one or the other, it's just giving the same rights to everybody. And this is what we need in our European Union.

Sophia in 't Veld, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, Madam Commissioner, Madam Minister, we've been waiting for almost 15 years. I fear Godot is going to get here before the directive does. I hear the Council strongly supports the principle of equal treatment. Well, apparently not. I know that Sweden does, so I'm not looking at you. But clearly the Council does not, because it's all a matter of priorities. It says, 'Oh, difficult, difficult. Unanimity. We can't overcome this.' But the Council has decided in recent years on the purchase of vaccines, weapons, the issuance of Eurobonds, a hundreds-of-billions recovery fund. But it cannot decide on something as basic as equal treatment of all EU citizens. It's in the Treaties. Friends, how are we going to unblock the file in the European Council? Well, maybe we should play hardball. Let's start by freezing the budget for the European Council altogether.

(Laughter in the Chamber.)

This is not funny. That will get them going, I assure you.

Two more things; additional proposals. Let's finally follow the Renew proposal for a Council formation for equality. It cannot be that difficult. If there are ministers for equality, we should have a Council formation. And finally, I call on all Member States to show their colours and join the court case against Hungary in defence of LGBTI rights.

Alice Kuhnke, för Verts/ALE-gruppen. – Herr talman! I 14 år har EU haft chansen att se till att göra diskriminering olagligt i hela EU. I 14 år har man valt att låta bli. EU:s medborgare förtjänar bättre än så här. Homosexuella, som nekas att hyra ett hotellrum, förtjänar bättre. Flickan med hijab, som blir utslängd från ett kafé, förtjänar bättre. Den rullstolsburna kvinnan, som inte får den vård hon har rätt till, förtjänar bättre.

De 14 år som har gått sedan förslaget presenterades visar att EU accepterar att vi har första och andra klassens medborgare. Några av oss kan njuta av lagens rättigheter och skydd och andra kan det inte. De som framför allt ska ställas till svars för detta, för denna uppdelning, det är rådet. Det är de som har styrt och de som styr EU:s medlemsländer.

Nu har äntligen det svenska ordförandeskapet lagt frågan på sin agenda, och det spanska ordförandeskapet har lovat mig att de ska ta vid. Därför är min fråga till rådet: Hur ser tidsplanen ut? När gör vi diskriminering olagligt i hela EU?

Susanna Ceccardi, a nome del gruppo ID. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, che cos'è la discriminazione? Il dizionario dice che è una distinzione operata in seguito a un giudizio o a una classificazione. E sapete qual è il paradosso di questa direttiva contro le discriminazioni? Il paradosso è che questa direttiva ha troppe classificazioni ma non abbastanza.

Per esempio, alla sigla LGBTQ avete dovuto aggiungere il «plus» perché avevate finito le lettere dell'alfabeto per classificare le diversità. Ma il mondo è formato da diversità, da individui, ognuno differenti dall'altro. E come farete a classificarli tutti nelle vostre tabelle? Inevitabilmente, qualcuno resterà fuori e finirà discriminato. Che cosa dicono la maggioranza delle costituzioni del mondo? Che tutti gli uomini sono uguali?

Ritorniamo a questo principio condivisibile e sacrosanto e cerchiamo di dare a ciascuno pari opportunità, che non significa leggi ad hoc per ciascun individuo del mondo. Le norme, per funzionare, devono essere generali e astratte. Gli Stati hanno bloccato questa direttiva perché i problemi di applicazione sono concreti e quei problemi concreti sono quelli che affrontano i cittadini ogni giorno e di cui la politica dovrebbe occuparsi di più.

Nikolaj Villumsen, on behalf of The Left Group. – Mr Present, no one should be discriminated because of their age, disability, sexual orientation or religious belief.

But they are today, according to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 43% of LGBT people in the EU feel discriminated in their daily life, 53% of Muslims feel discriminated because of their name when they look for housing, 60% of transgender people feel discriminated. And the numbers are growing.

And still we stand here almost 15 years since the Commission presented the horizontal Anti-Discrimination Directive. Today is a shameful day, a shameful day for the Council because you have blocked the directive and, by doing this, you have prevented better protections against discrimination.

Now let's take action, let's end discrimination and let's make sure that the EU fights all forms of discrimination.

Peter Pollák (PPE). – Vážený pán predsedajúci, téma diskriminácie sa týka mnohých v Európe. Ja dnes budem znova bojovať za rómske deti. Napriek tomu, že máme dobrú legislatívu a dokonca máme aj peniaze, ktoré posielame členským krajinám, produkujú vzdelávacie systémy v niektorých členských krajinách každý rok desaťtisíce detí z rómskych rodín bez dostatočnej kvalifikácie, bez toho, aby boli pripravené na pracovný trh.

Na jednej strane vieme, kde nás topánka tlačí. Veď predsa Európska komisia dokonca spustila *infringementy* kvôli diskriminácii v oblasti vzdelávania rómskych detí v niekoľkých krajinách. Na druhej strane sa stav nemení. Segregácia rómskych detí, diskriminácia v školách, umiestňovanie detí do tried s mentálnym postihnutým, zámerné odlúčenie od ostatných detí, to všetko pokračuje. Sú to fatálne následky tak na európskej, ako aj na národných úrovniach, a to napriek antidiskriminačnej legislatíve či miliónom európskych peňazí.

Napriek tomu všetkému nevieme dať rómskym deťom jednoducho budúcnosť. Prax nám ukazuje, že nestačí mať len legislatívu. Dokonca nestačí ani mať peniaze či víziu. Mnohé rómske deti si dnes stále nedokážu plniť svoje sny. Namiesto slov, vážení priatelia, potrebujeme činy či realizáciu.

Chcem Vás, pani komisárka, aj vás, páni kolegovia, vyzvať. Bojujme ešte viac za rómske deti a za ich budúcnosť. Som presvedčený, že keď do nich investujeme, tak sa nám to mnohonásobne vráti.

Irène Tolleret (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Commissaire, Madame la Ministre, il s'appelait Lucas, il avait treize ans. Il était scolarisé à Golbey, dans les Vosges. Il avait la vie devant lui. Pourtant, le 7 janvier dernier, à cause du harcèlement incessant qu'il subissait, Lucas s'est donné la mort. Il assumait pourtant son homosexualité. Il était moqué par ses camarades. Ses parents en avaient fait part dès septembre à son école lors de réunions entre parents et professeurs.

Pourtant, il a continué à subir. Il était harcelé par rapport à sa tenue, sa façon d'être, ce qu'il dégageait. L'homophobie l'a tué, la discrimination l'a tué. Sachez qu'en retardant l'adoption de la directive horizontale, vous privez plus de 500 millions de personnes de bénéficier d'une protection efficace contre la discrimination. Chaque jour, des centaines de plaintes pour discrimination fondée sur l'âge, la religion, le handicap, l'orientation sexuelle sont déposées dans notre Union. Toutefois, notre capacité de soutenir les victimes de discrimination reste fortement limitée.

Alors, pour tous les Lucas de notre union, soyons courageux, ne laissons pas quelques gouvernements prendre en otage nos droits. Allons de l'avant pour cette directive antidiscrimination horizontale.

Samira Rafaela (Renew). – Mr President, it's very important that we discuss the topic today of anti-discrimination legislation. Equality is one of the fundamental values on which the European Union is founded, and it is through legislation that we can protect the fundamental rights of citizens. And it is therefore very important that we continue with implementing anti-discrimination legislation.

The numbers don't lie. We have so many surveys, so many researches, so many statistics and numbers that show that people feel discriminated, that people are still excluded because of who they are, what they look like, what your name is or what your skin colour is, you name it.

And therefore we have a responsibility. And I think the European Parliament already took that responsibility to make sure that we have legislation in place. So the request to the Council is to make sure that you make work of it and that you do that as quickly as possible. Because the European Union is also founded to make sure that fundamental rights of citizens are protected. And this is exactly what we can promote in the world.

And if we want to promote human rights in the world, then we need to do the same, and we can do that through legislation.

Katrin Langensiepen (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Nach 15 Jahren ist es dann, glaube ich, auch mal gut mit *Wir sitzen es aus. Wir hoffen, dass nichts passiert.* Als ich ins Europäische Parlament einzog, war ich nicht die erste, aber die einzige Frau mit Behinderung. Jetzt sind wir drei Frauen mit Behinderungen im ganzen Parlament, sechs behinderte Menschen, sechs behinderte Abgeordnete im ganzen Parlament von 705 Abgeordneten.

Warum ist das so? Weil der Zugang zu Wahllokalen für die Listenaufstellung, zu Parteiorganisationen nicht barrierefrei ist, selbst wenn es Parteiorganisationen vor Ort noch so sehr wollen. Die Räume sind nicht barrierefrei. Da rede ich nicht von Rollstuhlgerichtigkeit. Häufig wird Barrierefreiheit mit Rollstuhlgerichtigkeit verwechselt. Barrierefreiheit ist das volle Programm! Ich hoffe, dass Sie hoffentlich bald – und dann geben Sie noch die Antwort auf meine Kollegin Frau Kuhnke, die gefragt hat: „Was ist der Plan?“ – sich stark dafür einsetzen, dass wir nächstes Mal, in der nächsten Wahlperiode, 50 % des Parlaments aus Menschen mit Behinderung stellen. Das wäre doch mal mindestens ein Plan. Barrierefreies Parlament – das wäre so meine Vision. Ich hoffe, wir kommen endlich zur Umsetzung der Antidiskriminierungsrichtlinie.

Vystúpenia podľa postupu prihlásenia sa o slovo zdvihnutím ruky

Seán Kelly (PPE). – Mr President, the European Union is a great project guaranteeing equality for nations and for citizens. But there's one thing to guarantee it in law, it's another thing to put it into practice. And this is the nub of the problem.

Too many groups in the European Union, be they people with disabilities, minority groups because of sexual orientation, religious beliefs, Travellers, as my colleague Maria Walsh mentioned, in my own country, feel that they're being discriminated against, and it's time to stop it.

And I compliment the Swedish Presidency for trying to move this forward, unblocking something that has been blocked since 2008. Sweden is a modern, progressive country, and hopefully they can make progress on this.

And finally, I would say, as we look to the east, with Putin showing total disregard for human life in Ukraine, we should move in the opposite direction and ensure absolute equality, both in law and in practice, for all our people in the European Union. That would be a great thing to do.

Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana (Verts/ALE). – Monsieur le Président, en tant que femme noire, âgée, vivant avec un handicap, qui peut-être ne se voit pas à première vue, le handicap de la vie, je sais ce que c'est de vivre avec et de subir à tout moment non seulement des discriminations, mais aussi des discriminations de personnes de qui on ne s'attend pas.

C'est pour cela que cette directive dont j'entends parler depuis des années – ça fait quinze ans que j'entends parler de cette directive –, pourquoi ne la mettons-nous pas en place? Qu'est-ce qui empêche de la mettre en place? Un État, deux États, trois États peuvent-ils la bloquer sans arrêt? Et pourquoi nous autres, qui sommes ici au Parlement, n'essayons-nous pas de réagir et de dire non, non au racisme, non à la discrimination?

La discrimination sous toutes ses formes, que ce soit la discrimination à cause de l'âge, à cause du handicap, mais aussi à cause de la race. Et c'est une discrimination que l'on subit non seulement dans nos écoles, non seulement au niveau du travail et au niveau du logement, chercher un logement, mais aussi dans nos écoles, dans nos administrations et parfois aussi avec la police comme j'en ai moi-même fait l'expérience.

C'est pour cela que je souhaite que M^{me} Dalli puisse réussir à mettre cette directive en œuvre cette année. Il est temps, Madame, que cette directive soit mise en œuvre au sein de l'Union européenne afin que nous puissions construire un monde sans discrimination. Un monde où toutes les personnes, quelle que soit leur nature, puissent vivre ici en Europe et s'épanouir.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Mr President, the protection of EU citizens against discrimination is inadequate and for far too long we've failed to improve the discrimination directive. I'm glad that we've just had the first UN international day against islamophobia, but sorry that we've had to have it because of the appalling rise of crimes against Muslims in our society. The institutional suspicion which has increased since 9/11 and the so-called war on terror, the negative profiling, the stereotyping, make life in Europe very dangerous for Muslims and the actions that some members of our parliaments take makes that even more.

In the presence of the Swedish Presidency, we have to say that burning and disrespecting the Koran is absolutely unacceptable. It is a hate crime and passing it off as just freedom of expression, I'm sorry, is just not good enough.

We have to put our actions where our words are and stamp out discrimination against Muslims in our society.

(Ukončenie vystúpení podľa postupu prihlásenia sa o slovo zdvihnutím ruky)

Helena Dalli, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, Minister, thank you, honourable Members, for this debate. I will recall once more that building a union of equality is one of the major priorities of this Commission.

The adoption of the 2008 proposal for the equal treatment directive remains a priority for the Commission because it would fill important gaps of EU legislation on non-discrimination by extending protection against discrimination on the basis of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, in relevant fields.

But as you know, adoption requires unanimity in Council, and it is always what I speak to every incoming presidency about. So rest assured that it is not because we are not trying to get this done and dusted. I reiterate the Commission's support to the Council negotiation by all possible means, and I will continue engaging with ministers for as long as necessary. We also call on all Member States for support, of course.

So the success is in this key file for a European Union of equality is about political will, determination and constructive spirit. It is about whether in 2023 we are comfortable having second-class citizens. And for those of you coming from Member States still resisting this proposal, I also urge you to push your governments to support this important proposal.

Jessika Roswall, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, honourable Members, Commissioner, once again, let me underline how valuable it is to maintain these issues on the agenda and keep discussing them. It is part of the priority for the Presidency.

Your active engagement in the fight against discrimination is vitally appreciated. Madam Kuhnke, and about the timetable, as I said in my first intervention, we intend to place the proposal on the agenda for a technical level discussion in the coming weeks and a plan to have a report in the EPSCO Council in June. It will not be easy, but today's discussion will provide useful input into our work.

May I also recall that the Council's work against discrimination goes well beyond the directive. For example, the Swedish Presidency has launched a discussion on the Commission's proposals on standards for equality bodies. We are also working on a set of Council conclusions on mainstreaming a gender equality perspective in policies, programmes and budgets, as well as Council conclusions on the safety of LGBTIQ persons in the EU, both of which we hope to see approved in June.

Honourable Members, the road to equality is a long one and Parliament and the Council both have a role to play in this endeavour. I am pleased to see that we are committed to working on this path together. Thank you very much for the debate and yes, Mr Angel, we will do our best.

Predsedajúci. – Rozprava sa skončila.

Hlasovanie sa uskutoční na aprílovej schôdzi.

Písomné vyhlásenia (článok 171)

Ádám Kósa (NI), *írásban*. – Magyarország fontosnak tartja a diszkrimináció elleni küzdelmet. Nem tagadható, hogy léteznek diszkriminációs jelenségek, amelyekkel szemben fel kell lépni, de az sem állítható, hogy globális összehasonlításban Európa rosszul teljesítene a diszkrimináció elleni küzdelemben. Magyarországon az egyenlő bánásmódról és az esélyegyenlőség előmozdításáról szóló 2003. évi CXXV. törvény átfogó szabályozást alkalmaz, kiterjedtebb védelmet nyújt, mint a hatályos uniós jog: a horizontális antidiszkriminációs irányelvtervezet által szabályozni kívánt területekre már jelenleg is vonatkozik.

Eközben az EU 2009 óta nem tud megállapodásra jutni, így egyes csoportokkal szembeni diszkriminációk tilalmát, amelyben a tagállamok között közmegegyezés van, sőt amelyben jogszabályi kötelezettség terheli az EU-t, nem lehet jogszabályba ültetni más csoportokkal kapcsolatos dilemmák miatt. Csak akkor tudunk előre lépni, ha nem akarunk mindent egy irányelvbe erőltetni. Semmiképpen sem indokolt az antidiszkriminációs jogalkotásban az EUMSZ 19. cikke szerinti egyhangúság helyett a minősített többségi döntéshozatalra való áttérés. A tárgyalások elakadásának feloldása nem a passerelle klauzula alkalmazásában van, hanem az összes tagállam számára elfogadható kompromisszumos javaslat kidolgozásában. A Bizottság terjesszen elő külön jogszabály javaslatot azokban a témákban, ahol egyetértés van. Továbbá érdemes a jogszabályokon túlra is tekinteni: a diszkrimináció elleni harc hatékony eszköze az azt kiváltó társadalmi problémák kezelése: sztereotípiák és előítéletek megváltoztatása, szemléletformálás és megfelelő társadalmi integráció biztosítása.

21. Debates sobre casos de violaciones de los derechos humanos, de la democracia y del Estado de Derecho (debate)

21.1. Irán, en particular el envenenamiento de cientos de alumnas

Predsedajúci. – Ďalším bodom programu je rozprava o šiestich návrhoch uznesenia o Iráne: najmä otrava stoviek školáčok (2023/2587(RSP)).

David Lega, author. – Mr President, dear colleagues, thousands, thousands of school girls in Iran have been poisoned, many of whom have been hospitalised. And we don't know for sure who is behind the attacks or what the purpose of them is.

But what we do know for sure is that girls have been hurt, that girls have been prevented from attending their education, and that this has hindered both young girls and their parents from participating in the protests against the regime. And if the regime is not behind the poisoning attacks, it has nevertheless failed to act on numerous credible reports of systematic, toxic attacks in schools across Iran.

Either way, these attacks are a sign of weakness of the regime. Strong leaders would never attack nor accept attacks on their own children. The resolution that Parliament is to adopt tomorrow recalls that the Islamic Republic bears full responsibility for Iranian women and girls' fundamental right to education and to safety.

Needless to say, depriving girls of education has a devastating impact on their future as they become more vulnerable to poverty, forced marriages, domestic violence and sex trafficking. And why? Why have these girls been poisoned and kept from school?

It looks like the poisoning attacks on school girls are revenge for the role young women played in recent protests against the regime and against the mandatory veiling. When girls speak up and demand the basic human rights that every single person is entitled to, they are punished with violence even in their own classroom.

The poisoning of school girls in Iran is pure evil, and the regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran is pure evil. So the most important task for us, dear colleagues, is to reiterate our steadfast support for the aspirations of the Iranian people who want to live in a free, democratic country.

The European Parliament stands with the women and girls in Iran, and I stand with you, the change-makers of Iran.

President. – Colleagues, just a quick announcement: because we are over half an hour delayed, there will be no catch-the-eye procedure or blue cards for the rest of the evening so that all of us, especially the interpreters can make it on time.

Evin Incir, author. – Mr President, into this debate I am taking the words of the Nobel Peace Prize winner, Shirin Ebadi, who was with us today. Speak to your respective Foreign Affairs Minister on how to listen to the people in Iran. I would have loved to do that but, unfortunately, the Swedish Presidency, so to say, the Swedish Government just left.

I therefore want, however, to turn to the Swedish government through, I guess, they are listening to me wherever they are, but I'm going to do it in Swedish.

Både kvinnor och skolflickor i Iran är modiga. Med risk för sina liv har de tagit sig ut inte bara på gator och torg utan även i skolor. Ropen fortsätter att skalla: 'Kvinna! Liv! Frihet! Zan! Zendegi! Azadi! Jin! Jijan! Azadi!'

Som följd av detta förgiftades hundratals skolflickor. Den straffrihet som förövarna bakom dessa brutala attacker åtnjuter är oacceptabel. Vi måste säkerställa en FN-ledd utredning om dessa brott och stödja skolflickorna i landet.

Till Sveriges regering, till Sveriges utrikesminister Tobias Billström och deras stödparti Sverigedemokraterna vill jag avslutningsvis återigen säga: Sluta hitta ursäkter för regimen i Iran och stämpla i stället revolutionsgardet IRGC som en terroristorganisation nu. Ni sitter på EU-ordförandeskapet.

Samira Rafaela, *author*. – Mr President, so obviously the Government of Iran has completely lost their legitimacy when they decided to systematically discriminate against women and minorities. And what is so much important right now is that there will be a legitimate investigation.

To make sure that the UN can do a fact-finding mission to Iran to also make sure that we have an investigation that is legitimate and that is fair, because we need girls in the world to have education, that is their right. And it's absolutely absurd what is happening right now.

Iran is violently repressing their own people and, therefore, the Member States should make sure that we make available humanitarian visas for women and girls that are so much in need right now. That's the best we can do at least.

And let us also make sure that the IRGC will become a terrorist organisation, will be put on the terrorist list, because it is very important now that as the EU, we make use of our instruments, we make use of our voice and we make a strong statement towards such a regime who does not respect women's rights and girls' rights.

Ernest Urtasun, *author*. – Mr President, day by day, the situation worsens in Iran and the feeling of outrage grows among Iranians. The deliberate poisoning of hundreds of schoolgirls is the latest cruel attempt at intimidating girls and women for their bravery and courage in a country that represses them. Teenage girls and university students have been at the forefront of the countrywide protests that have been held since the death of Jina Mahsa Amini in September last year.

After the beating of protesters, poisoning seems now to be a new attempt to silence and punish them for their brave acts as part of a wider systemic discrimination against women and girls in the country. We cannot and we will not remain silent in the face of such atrocity. And we call on Iran to launch a credible and transparent investigation, but also together with independent international organisations, and to hold those responsible to account.

But we also call – and we will call with a resolution tomorrow – on the Commission and the Member States to increase technical and capacity support to Iranian civil society and to facilitate the issuance of visas and asylum, as well as emergency grants for those that need to leave the country, particularly women and girls.

Marisa Matias, *Autora*. – Senhor Presidente, desde novembro, milhares de meninas sofreram ataques químicos em escolas, em toda a República Islâmica do Irão.

Têm sido relatados problemas respiratórios, dores de cabeça, náuseas, tonturas e paralisia temporária dos membros. Centenas de estudantes e funcionários foram hospitalizados e morreu, tragicamente, Fatemeh Rezaei, de apenas 11 anos. Acredita-se que estes ataques provêm de grupos religiosos que se opõem à educação para raparigas e é impossível dissociá-los dos protestos liderados por mulheres e raparigas, desde a morte de Mahsa Amini.

A consequência é ter pais e mães a manter as filhas em casa para as proteger. Condenamos estes ataques contra as alunas e instamos as autoridades iranianas a conduzirem uma investigação rápida, transparente e imparcial sobre os envenenamentos.

Precisamos de uma missão de inquérito independente das Nações Unidas. Precisamos também de vistos de urgência para quem está a lutar pela liberdade e pela vida. Não podemos abandonar as bravas meninas e raparigas do Irão. Nada poderá impedir as mulheres do Irão de serem livres.

Charlie Weimers, *author*. – Mr President, the Islamic Republic is an evil republic. The mullahs and/or their henchmen have poisoned thousands of schoolgirls in 11 provinces as part of an unconscionable and despicable tactic to suppress pro-democracy protests. These girls are not mere numbers, another statistic, but individuals – as valuable to their families as my own four daughters are to me. They have, or rather should have, the same – and even more – rights to life and liberty as our own daughters.

These crimes against humanity are an affront to the people of Iran and to the international community. Our answer cannot be meek, diplomatic condemnations and feeble demands for justice for their families. No, our answer must have real consequences for those that took the decision to perpetrate these evil acts against young girls and strike at the political and economic foundations of the Islamist theocracy. The corrupt mullahs' time is running out. The youth of Iran dare to dream again, and the party that will follow the fall of this evil regime will be one to behold.

I call upon the Commission, the European Council and the Swedish Presidency, including Foreign Minister Tobias Billström, to invite representatives of the Alliance for Democracy and Freedom in Iran to Brussels for discussions on the future of a free, secular and democratic Iran, to end negotiations on the JCPOA, and to classify the IRGC and use their assets to create a strike fund. Member States should, of course, recall their ambassadors from Tehran and expel both the mullahs, diplomats and their families.

(The speaker concluded in a non-official language)

Seán Kelly, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Mr President, once again we are witnessing the Iranian regime's vicious repression of its women. In September, Iranian security forces repeatedly used violence and intimidation to silence women and girls peacefully protesting the regime's anti-women policies.

We are now contending with what could be potentially one of the most heinous and inhumane acts of systemic abuse against Iranian women. The distressing reports of the serial poisonings of school girls across Iran call for prompt action and independent investigation. The regime's weak response to the situation sends a clear message that Iran does not listen to its women.

I also call on the EU to increase increased technical and capacity support to Iranian civil society. Women are equal to men and education is a fundamental right. There should be zero tolerance for any attempt to infringe on this right.

Alessandra Moretti, *a nome del gruppo S&D*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, un ciuffo di capelli sfugge al velo e una donna in Iran viene uccisa; un balletto e cinque ragazze vengono arrestate; una giornata dietro il banco di scuola e le studentesse vengono avvelenate. Non possiamo più tollerare violenze che mirano a privare le ragazze del diritto al loro futuro.

Sono state migliaia le studentesse vittime di armi chimiche in questi mesi, un crimine terribile e vigliacco. Armi chimiche usate nelle scuole che rappresentano il luogo per eccellenza dell'emancipazione. La premio Nobel, Shirin Ebadi, rivolgendosi a quest'Aula, oggi, è stata chiara: non giratevi dall'altra parte.

Voglio dire alla signora Ebadi, alla famiglia di Mahsa Amini, alle cinque ragazze arrestate, alle studentesse che hanno paura di tornare a scuola e a tutti coloro che protestano per le loro libertà, che noi continueremo a lavorare perché la Guardia rivoluzionaria sia considerata gruppo terrorista, perché siano implementate le sanzioni, perché nessun accordo commerciale o finanziario venga portato avanti con il governo iraniano.

Lavoreremo per i canali umanitari sicuri per le attiviste e continueremo a patrocinare chi ingiustamente è stato incarcerato e rischia la vita. Sosteniamo le donne e un Iran libero. *Woman. Life. Freedom.*

Abir Al-Sahlani, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, *(the speaker used a slogan in a non-EU language)*. Woman, life, freedom: three words that have shaken the world. If you have not heard them, then you have been sleeping. It is time to wake up. If you have not seen the bullets of the IRGC and the freedom-seeking women's body, if you have not smelt the poisoning gas that has been attacked to the schoolgirls in Iran, then it is time for you to come out of the cave that you have been into.

But do you know what it is time for? For the foreign affairs ministers of the EU to actually finally act, to choose a side, to show the same courage as the women of Iran that are shouting on the top of their lungs for freedom. It is time to put the IRGC on the EU terrorist list. We have chosen to stand with the women and girls in Iran until the people of Iran are free. Our fury will be bigger than the oppressor. *(The speaker used a slogan in a non-EU language.)* Women, life, freedom. Put IRGC on the EU terrorist list now.

Hannah Neumann, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, dear colleagues, women and girls are the heart of the protests in Iran. They are out in the streets waving their hijab. They are singing Baraye Azadi in the classrooms, they chase away militias and they even record videos dancing in the streets.

But while those dancing in the streets on Women's Day have been put in prison for two days, forced into confessions and forced into wearing a hijab, those poisoning schoolgirls with gas are still running free. And while the regime puts all its resources behind harassing and jailing girls, they only issue lukewarm calls for investigations after months of poisoning. But believe me, no one is falling for this regime propaganda anymore, which is why we call for an international investigation into the poisoning and for more sanctions against all those terrorising the people of Iran.

Dear colleagues, no one will be able to silence the women of Iran and I want us to stand with the girls, the women, the people of Iran until they are all free. *(The speaker used a slogan in a non-EU language)*

Ryszard Czarnecki, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Pani Komisarz! Szanowne Koleżanki, Szanowni Koledzy! Myślę, że ta debata jest bardzo potrzebna, o ile nasze słowa, ważne słowa ponad podziałami politycznymi, przerodzą się w czyny.

Tu pada szereg pomysłów. Słyszę, że może warto odwołać ambasadorów państw zachodnich z Iranu. Inni mówią o konieczności wysłania misji międzynarodowej, która by sprawdziła to, co dzieje się w Iranie – pewnie władze w Teheranie nie wyrażą na to zgody. Ale jedno jest pewne: trzeba nie tylko o tym głośno mówić, ale trzeba przełożyć to, o czym dzisiaj usłyszeliśmy tutaj w trakcie obchodów Międzynarodowego Dnia Kobiet od przedstawicielki Iranu, na pewne konkretne działania Zachodu. Myślę, że tylko język sankcji może być przez Iran zrozumiały.

I na koniec życzę, aby w niedalekiej przyszłości to kobieta stanęła na czele rządu Iranu, władz Iranu. Czy to będzie pani Marjam Radżawi, czy ktoś inny – byłby to najlepszy policzek dla tych, którzy dzisiaj prześladują kobiety w Iranie.

Silvia Sardone, *a nome del gruppo ID*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, le atrocità del regime islamico iraniano fanno sempre più rabbrivire. Centinaia di ragazze sono rimaste intossicate in numerose scuole dell'Iran. Un avvelenamento di massa. Qualcuno vuole negare alle donne iraniane il proprio diritto all'istruzione.

È una forma di vendetta contro le numerose studentesse che hanno partecipato alle proteste e hanno fatto video postati sui social dove si tolgono il velo e gridano slogan antigovernativi. Abbiamo visto anche cinque ragazze fare un ballo senza velo islamico in mezzo alla strada: ecco, quelle cinque ragazze sono state arrestate e costrette a scusarsi con il capo coperto.

I divieti imposti dalla dittatura islamica rappresentano in pieno la loro concezione della donna: con il velo islamico, sottomessa, senza istruzione, un essere inferiore. Dobbiamo sostenere le ragazze che lottano e condannare gli atti di terrore portati avanti dal regime contro la libertà delle donne. Basta stare in silenzio, basta chiudere gli occhi. *Woman. Life. Freedom.*

Pernille Weiss (PPE). – Hr formand! Iran kan stå ved point of no return nu. Vi er lige præcis dér i historien, hvor situationen i Iran med alt det, den gør ved menneskers værdighed, kvinders position og unge pigers fremtid kan forandres. Især i kraft af den oprejsning, befolkningen selv mobiliserer, og den forbindelse til omverdenen og den iranske diaspora, som vores digitale samtid giver mulighed for. Derfor bliver det hørt i Iran, og stort set hele Europa-Parlamentet krævede i en beslutning i januar at få Irans Revolutionsgarde, IRGC, på EU's terrorliste. Det samme har flere europæiske udenrigsministre også udtalt, at de gerne ser sker. Sådan noget giver håb, og lige nu næres den iranske befolkning af de håb, vi giver dem. At give mennesker i desperation håb må ikke være en gratis omgang eller varm luft. Det kan vi simpelthen ikke være bekendt, ligesom vi heller ikke kan være bekendt at hælde faglige juridiske argumenter ned ad brættet, som EU's udenrigspolitiske repræsentant, Borell, påstår ved at sige, at vi ikke kan få IRGC på EU's terrorliste, uden at der foreligger en konkret domstolsafgørelse. Lad os nu få fakta på bordet. Lad os give Iran handling og ikke kun håb.

Thijs Reuten (S&D). – Mr President, Commissioner, dear colleagues, they can't breathe, President. Imagine the horror: 7000 Iranian girls thinking school is safe and then suddenly gasping for air.

We may not yet know who is behind these atrocious attacks, not for certain. But we do know one thing, the Islamic Republic always comes after women first. Khomeini and his IRGC have never hesitated to kill Iranians, especially those leading the resistance, and the UN must investigate, this cannot be left to Tehran

And Commissioner and Council: when? when will you finally designate the IRGC as what they are? There really is no need to dance around the word. They are terrorists, plain and simple.

President, today let's celebrate the school girls' fierce resistance, the leadership of Iran's women, their unbroken defiance, dancing in the streets, their hair flowing freely in the wind. That's the freedom Iran deserves.

María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos (Renew). – Señor presidente, cómo imaginar un mayor horror en un país que es el país con el mayor número de ejecuciones a mujeres, torturas y asesinatos del mundo. Pues sí, una acción sin precedentes por su magnitud y su naturaleza; el ataque más criminal contra niñas y estudiantes que hemos conocido: un envenenamiento masivo. Y el ministro de Salud de Irán indicó el pasado 26 de febrero que se trata de un veneno suave. No podemos confiar en ninguna investigación interna de este país. Necesitamos una investigación internacional.

Las mujeres afganas crearon un eslogan que ha traspasado fronteras: «mujer, vida, libertad». Pero de nosotros se espera más que palabras. Se esperan acciones realmente contundentes: visados de emergencia, más oportunidades para la integración europea, apoyo para poner en contacto a las mujeres iraníes en la diáspora —que suman más de cuatro millones— con las mujeres que resisten dentro del país. Porque no es verdad, como dice el régimen autocrático, que son ellos o el caos. No, Irán tiene derecho a una transición democrática real.

Lukas Mandl (PPE). – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Was die freie Welt mit vielen Versuchen – mit dem Atomdeal, ohne Atomdeal, mit Sanktionen, vielleicht auch manchmal durch Halbherzigkeit oder ein bisschen Naivität – bisher zumindest nicht geschafft hat – und, das nötigt mir Respekt ab –, das schafft jetzt eine Bürgerbewegung, eigentlich eine Bürgerinnenbewegung im Iran, nämlich dieses diabolische Regime an den Rand seiner Existenz zu bringen.

Das ist sehr, sehr viel wert für die Bürgerinnen und Bürger des Iran, für die Zukunft des Iran, aber auch für den gesamten Nahen Osten, für die gesamte Welt, weil der Iran eine Bedrohung für die eigenen Bürgerinnen und Bürger ist. Das iranische Regime ist diese Bedrohung, und das iranische Regime ist es aber auch für seine Nachbarstaaten, besonders für unseren Partnerstaat Israel und auch für uns, auch im Wege des islamistischen Terrors, der aus dem Iran unterstützt wird, der nicht einmal davor zurückschreckt, seitens dieses Regimes Schülerinnen zu vergiften, damit sie nicht in die Schule gehen können. Dieses Regime gehört an den Rand seiner Existenz gebracht und überwunden.

Jiří Pospíšil (PPE). – Pane předsedající, dámy a pánové, já se chci připojit ke svým předřečníkům a jednoznačně odsoudit ohavné zločiny, které jsou v Íránu páčány vůči dětem, vůči ženám. Ať už je režim páchá přímo anebo pouze toleruje, je viníkem toho, co se v Íránu děje. Atmosféra strachu, nenávisti, útoků vůči ženám, útoků proti všem odpůrcům režimu je to, co je příčinou toho, že tisíce mladých žen a dětí jsou takto napadány a takto poškozovány. My to musíme jasně odsoudit. Já jsem zde mnohokrát vystupoval a kritizoval jsem íránský režim i během minulého volebního období, kdy někteří zde byli optimisté, že je možné se s íránským režimem domluvit. Bohužel se ukazuje, že to není možné, a proto se připojuji, byť jsem to říkal i v minulosti, k hlasům všech, kteří tvrdí, že je třeba zpřísnit sankce vůči režimu a chtít mezinárodní vyšetření těchto zločinů.

Stanislav Polčák (PPE). – Mr President, dear colleagues, Iranian girls and women have been the target of this organised gas attack launched by Khomeini agents against them in hundreds of schools because they want to target the women and girls who are the hope for change in Iran

There is mounting evidence of government involvement in these horrific attacks. And today we heard directly from Iranian women representatives how shamefully the Iranian regime treats women, girls and young people for many decades. And we heard also the request to blacklist the IRGC.

I am really glad that our Parliament has long-term cooperation with Iranian opposition groups. One important movement, National Council of Resistance, is also headed by a woman, Ms Rajavi. And I remember her warning that any contacts with the Iranian regime are pointless.

We lifted the sanctions and the Iranian regime used the new money not for Iranian people, but to invest in weapons in drones, which are now attacking Ukraine and to get a nuclear weapon. So, please, no more mistakes. Let's work with Iranian women and let's blacklist the IRGC.

Javier Zarzalejos (PPE). – Señor presidente, después de lo que hemos escuchado aquí hace unas pocas horas, no se me ocurre nada que pueda mejorar las palabras de la Premio Nobel de la Paz, la señora Ebadi, porque es difícil pensar en un testimonio más auténtico, más apasionado y más apremiante.

Así que, quiero recordar una petición que la señora Ebadi nos hizo hoy: pedir que conste en los libros de Historia lo que el régimen iraní hace con las niñas iraníes. Y nosotros, en el Parlamento, podemos colaborar a que, efectivamente, en los libros de Historia conste la represión de este régimen. Pero tenemos que hacer más.

Se ha hablado reiteradamente —y es necesario repetirlo— de la necesidad de que se incorpore la Guardia Revolucionaria a la lista de organizaciones terroristas. No nos engañemos: el régimen podrá iniciar sus operaciones de lavado, pero el régimen no se puede reformar. Ahora bien, aunque el régimen no se pueda reformar, el régimen no es imbatible: debemos tener esta idea presente cuando apliquemos la estrategia que la amenaza iraní requiere.

Helena Dalli, Member of the Commission. – Mr President. I want to thank this House for its continued close attention to the worrying internal situation in Iran. The nationwide unrest following the death of Mahsa Amini has decreased substantially, but the root causes of social unrest are still there and are not being seriously addressed by the Iranian authorities.

There is serious concern about the fast-track trials and the harsh sentences – including death sentences – handed down against protesters. The death penalty is an unacceptable denial of human dignity and integrity, and the EU aims at its universal abolition. The EU and its Member States have been quick to condemn and react to the Iranian authorities handling of the protests and continue to respond to any issue of concern from Iran.

Human rights and fundamental freedoms must be respected in all circumstances. The EU is closely monitoring the ongoing pardoning of Iranian convicts and detainees, including those unjustly arrested in the context of the protests. We expect Iran to make good use of this opportunity.

Iran has been on the agenda of the Foreign Affairs Council for the past six months. Five packages of targeted, restricted restrictive measures have been adopted so far, and this approach will continue as long as necessary, in line with the Council conclusions adopted in December, which define the EU's policy approach towards Iran.

The countrywide poisoning of Iranian students, mostly female students, including schoolchildren, is a further cause for concern. We express our solidarity with the student victims of the poisonings and their families. Many aspects still need to be clarified, including who is behind this new series of attacks and what the motive is. We are following reports of arrests made in recent days and expect Iran to conduct a proper and transparent investigation and hold the perpetrators accountable, in full respect of the due process rights of the accused individuals.

In line with the Council conclusions supported by all Member States. Keeping channels of communication open with Iran continues to be crucial in order to address, as appropriate, the multiple challenges posed by Iran, ranging from human rights to the nuclear dimension, and from the JCPOA to the unacceptable military cooperation with Russia.

The HR/VP and the EU Foreign Ministers will continue to take stock at the next Foreign Affairs Council, and I can assure you that they will continue to show zero tolerance towards abuses and human rights violations.

Predsedajúci. – Rozprava sa skončila.

Hlasovanie sa uskutoční vo štvrtok 16. marca 2023.

Písomné vyhlásenia (článok 171)

Sandra Pereira (The Left), *por escrito*. – Condenamos as violações dos direitos das mulheres, ocorram estas no Irão ou em qualquer outro país do Médio Oriente, da Europa ou do mundo. Somos solidários com as lutas pelo respeito e cumprimento dos direitos das mulheres – dos seus direitos sociais, económicos, políticos, culturais ou específicos –, tenham estas lugar no Irão, nos Estados Unidos da América, em Portugal ou noutra qualquer país do mundo. Consideramos que devem ser realizadas as necessárias investigações para o cabal apuramento dos factos e dos responsáveis pelo envenenamento de alunas do ensino secundário no Irão. No entanto, rejeitamos e denunciámos a invocação e instrumentalização dos direitos das mulheres, ou em geral dos direitos humanos, para que, a seu pretexto, sejam promovidas operações de desestabilização e políticas de confrontação no plano das relações internacionais, com tão trágicas consequências, nomeadamente no Médio Oriente. Uma invocação tão mais cínica quando protagonizada por aqueles – os EUA, a NATO ou a UE – que, proclamando o respeito dos direitos humanos, promovem uma política de permanente desestabilização, incluindo através da imposição de sanções que atentam contra os direitos do povo iraquiano, que é responsável por brutais guerras no Médio Oriente – como no Iraque, na Líbia ou na Síria – que semearam a morte e a destruição.

21.2. Túnez: ataques recientes contra las libertades de expresión y de asociación y los sindicatos, en particular el caso del periodista Nuredín Butar

Predsedajúci. – Ďalším bodom programu je rozprava o šiestich návrhoch uznesenia o Tunisku: nedávne útoky na slobodu prejavu a združovania a odborové zväzy, najmä prípad novinára Núraddína Bútára (2023/2588(RSP)).

Michael Gahler, *Verfasser*. – Herr Präsident! Tunesien, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, ist auf einem verhängnisvollen innenpolitischen Kurs. Die Verantwortung dafür trägt allein der Präsident. Er hat vom Gerichtshof der Afrikanischen Union bescheinigt bekommen, dass alles, was er seit dem 25. Juli veranlasst hat, rechtswidrig und unter Bruch der Verfassung geschehen ist: Entlassung der Regierung, Auflösung des Parlaments, Abschaffung der Verfassung von 2014, der unabhängigen Wahlbehörde und des Hohen Justizrates, Entlassung von 57 Richtern, Auflösung aller kommunalen Vertretungskörperschaften.

Mit einer Wahlbeteiligung von 11 % bei den sogenannten Wahlen hat die Bevölkerung dem Präsidenten eine Legitimität in entsprechender Höhe bescheinigt. Die Angriffe auf Meinungs- und Versammlungsfreiheit und die Organisationen der Zivilgesellschaft, darunter der Gewerkschaftsdachverband UGTT, sind inakzeptabel.

Die Verhaftung des Journalisten Nouredine Boutar am 13. Februar steht hierbei Pars pro Toto. Er ist der Direktor des größten unabhängigen Radiosenders in Tunesien. Weitere Kritiker wurden verhaftet und verurteilt, Gewerkschafter wurden angeklagt, und die Chefin des Europäischen Gewerkschaftsbundes wurde ausgewiesen. All das ist nicht akzeptabel! Wir fordern die sofortige Freilassung von Nouredine Boutar und allen, die willkürlich verhaftet oder schon verurteilt wurden. Alle illegal entlassenen Richter müssen wieder eingesetzt werden; Militärgerichte dürfen keine Zivilisten aburteilen.

Ich erwarte, dass sich der EU-Außenministerrat am 20. März mehr als nur besorgt zeigt. Es muss einen Unterschied machen, ob wir es mit einem demokratischen oder einem undemokratischen Tunesien zu tun haben. Ich erwarte, dass sich unsere Minister die Forderungen des Parlaments zu eigen machen, dass wir z. B. die Kooperation mit repressiven Strukturen unter der Kontrolle des Innen- und Justizministeriums einstellen. Ich erwarte, dass unsere EU-Delegation und unsere Botschaften regelmäßig gegenüber den Behörden vorstellig werden und ein Ende der verfassungswidrigen Praktiken der Behörden einfordern. Ich erwarte, dass wir demonstrativ den Kontakt zu unabhängigen Medien, politischen Parteien und Organisationen der Zivilgesellschaft suchen und von der Regierung die Erfüllung ihrer internationalen Verpflichtungen einfordern.

Matjaž Nemec, *author*. – Mr President, my message today goes first to the good people of Tunisia. The European Parliament is with you. The situation in the country is extremely worrying. President Saied has been self-ruling since 2021 and has dismissed practically all levels of government. People have lost their trust in the institutions. The extremely low turnout of the recent elections is a symptom of that. Crackdown on civil society, the arrest and detentions of trade unions' representatives, journalists, judges, lawyers and political activists paint a grim picture of Tunisia's democracy.

In the S&D Group, we urgently demand the authorities to reverse course and return to democracy before it's too late. We condemn the expulsion of the European Trade Union chief Esther Lynch. And we demand the respect of workers' rights. We need to act now. People of Tunisia are losing hope of their country. Europe stands with you.

Jan-Christoph Oetjen, *Verfasser*. – Herr Präsident, Frau Kommissarin, verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Das Europäische Parlament steht an der Seite der tunesischen Bevölkerung. Wir stehen an der Seite derjenigen, die für Demokratie kämpfen, die dafür kämpfen, dass ihr Land diesen Weg in Richtung einer Diktatur nicht weitergeht. Denn auf diesem Weg ist Tunesien derzeit. Es ist auf dem Weg, seitdem Präsident Saied im Prinzip die Verfassung abgeschafft hat. Es gab fragwürdige Wahlen mit 11 % Wahlbeteiligung, die zeigen, was die tunesische Bevölkerung von diesen Wahlen hält, verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen!

Aber es wird immer dramatischer in Tunesien. Journalisten können nicht mehr ihrer Arbeit nachgehen. Noureddine Boutar, der Chef des größten unabhängigen Radios, ist verhaftet worden. Die Richter, die sich gegen das System stellen, werden ihrer Ämter erhoben und, verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen, das sind alles keine Anzeichen für Demokratie, sondern das sind Anzeichen für eine Autokratie. Das können wir nicht hinnehmen.

Wir erwarten, dass die konstitutionelle Ordnung wiederhergestellt wird, dass freie Meinungsäußerung gewährleistet wird, dass Menschen sich versammeln können, Vereine gründen können, sich aktiv in der Zivilgesellschaft beteiligen können. An der Seite dieser Menschen stehen wir, und für diese Menschen kämpfen wir hier im Europäischen Parlament.

Mounir Satouri, *auteur*. – Monsieur le Président, la situation en Tunisie se dégrade à vue d'oeil. Kaïs Saïed installe pierre après pierre toutes les composantes d'une dictature. En quelques mois, toute la démocratie est par terre, séparation des pouvoirs, système judiciaire, liberté de la presse, droits humains, tissu associatif. La démocratie a une nouvelle page de déchirée. Les maires élus ont été démis de leurs fonctions.

Ce nouveau système fait aussi des victimes nombreuses, parmi lesquelles Noureddine Boutar et bien d'autres. Le président met en péril cyniquement la vie des subsahariens avec des discours racistes qui ouvrent la porte à des exactions envers les migrants et les Tunisiens qui ont le malheur de leur ressembler. Le populisme est à son comble. Il fait écho, un écho malheureux, au même populisme raciste européen. On a les amis qu'on mérite.

Il est temps de condamner clairement ce régime. Il est temps de s'assurer qu'aucun financement européen ne serve directement ou indirectement l'installation de cette dictature et les violations du droit humain. Notre responsabilité est immense. Restons aux côtés de celles et ceux qui défendent encore le droit et la démocratie en Tunisie.

Ryszard Czarnecki, *autor*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Pani Komisarz! Szanowni Państwo! Myślę, że trzeba uważać z oskarżeniami o populizm, ponieważ jest to nieodłączna cecha, niestety, polityki współczesnej. Występuje ona na różnych kontynentach, także u nas, i to w zasadzie niezależnie od tego, kto rządzi, a kto jest w opozycji.

Natomiast mówiąc o Tunezji po raz kolejny, po raz kolejny w ciągu bardzo niedługiego czasu, nie mówiąc o tym rekordzie absencji wyborczej – no bo, jeżeli na wybory idzie co dziewiąty wyborca, to świadczy o jakimś kompletnym dramacie, o kompletnym braku zaufania wyborców, podatników do instytucji wyborów, a więc do wiary, że coś się zmieni – to trzeba powiedzieć, że oczywiście możemy krytykować i trzeba krytykować. Dobrze, że robimy to wspólnie i solidarnie.

Ale cofnijmy się trochę wstecz. No jednak błąd, błąd, nasz błąd, błąd Unii Europejskiej, błąd Zachodu, że poparliśmy arabską wiosnę, i nie tylko w Tunezji. My płacimy za to rachunki do dzisiaj. I to jest nasz problem.

Emmanuel Maurel, *auteur*. – Monsieur le Président, pour nous Européens et pour moi Français, la Tunisie c'est plus qu'un partenaire économique ou politique, c'est une amie. Et l'amitié ça implique le soutien, le respect. Cela implique aussi la sincérité. Et en amitié et en sincérité, il faut reconnaître que la situation se dégrade gravement en Tunisie.

Elle se dégrade économiquement et socialement et c'est ce qui préoccupe le plus les Tunisiens. Elle se dégrade aussi au niveau des libertés et de l'état de droit. Je pense bien sûr à Nouredine Boutar, le directeur de Mosaïque FM, qui a été inquiété, harcelé, emprisonné. Je pense aussi aux syndicalistes de l'UGTT qui ont été harcelés par le pouvoir en place. Je pense à madame Lynch, de la CES, qui a été expulsée de la Tunisie. Je pense également au limogeage des élus locaux remplacés par des fonctionnaires.

Alors qu'est-ce que l'Union européenne peut faire là-dedans? D'abord, elle doit soutenir tous ceux qui, en Tunisie, pas forcément les parlementaires mais surtout hors sphères politiques, qui ont des solutions. Je pense notamment au grand syndicat UGTT, je pense au quartet national et ça c'est important de le savoir. Et puis aussi, quand même, il faut qu'on sache que la situation économique et sociale est dramatique.

Et si l'Union européenne a un rôle à jouer, c'est en particulier là-dessus. On ne doit absolument pas négocier notre soutien financier, notre soutien économique. Là aussi, cela permettra au peuple tunisien de maîtriser son destin.

Pedro Marques, *em nome do Grupo S&D*. – Senhor Presidente, Senhor Comissário, Caros Colegas, quando, há já 20 meses, o Presidente Saied demitiu o governo e suspendeu o parlamento, assumindo plenos poderes, a comunidade internacional – a Europa, certamente – ficou apreensiva.

De então para cá, sucederam-se as desilusões. Não foram cumpridas as promessas de democratização, tal como não foi cumprido o respeito pela liberdade de imprensa e de expressão, pela liberdade política e de associação ou pela independência judicial. Aliás, todas elas foram incumpridas.

A triste realidade hoje na Tunísia passa pela prisão de jornalistas, sindicalistas, ativistas políticos e magistrados apenas por motivos políticos, passando até pela expulsão da líder da Confederação Europeia de Sindicatos apenas por participar numa manifestação sindical, o que lamentamos profundamente.

A desilusão da população expressa-se tanto nas manifestações em massa, como nas baixíssimas taxas de participação eleitoral por, simplesmente, não acreditarem naquele processo eleitoral. É, por isso, urgente retomar o processo de diálogo nacional para encontrar saídas políticas para a situação e conduzir a Tunísia aos trilhos da democracia e do respeito pelos direitos humanos.

Salima Yenbou, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Monsieur le Président, la dérive autoritaire en Tunisie a pris un nouveau tournant ces dernières semaines. Le président Kaïs Saïed continue de détruire la démocratie et les droits fondamentaux du peuple tunisien. Journalistes, juges, avocats, syndicats, défenseurs des droits humains ou opposants politiques, bientôt les ONG, font tous face à une répression violente. Nouredine Boutar, Chaïma Issa, Issam Chebbi ou encore Ghazi Chaouchi et tellement d'autres sont victimes de cette grave répression pour avoir exercé leur droit à la liberté d'expression.

Que dire des propos racistes tenus par le président Kaïs Saïed au sujet des migrants subsahariens? Ils sont pour moi d'une extrême gravité, leur seul but étant de se déresponsabiliser en désignant un bouc émissaire aux graves crises économiques et politiques subies par les Tunisiens. Quelle tristesse, quel gâchis pour la Tunisie, berceau du printemps arabe, trop longtemps à la merci d'un régime qui prend en otage la transition démocratique historique lancée par son peuple en 2011.

L'UE doit se montrer bien plus ferme face à ces dérives autoritaires, en cessant de financer ce régime. Ne soyons pas complices. La promesse de 2011 doit être tenue. Constitution, liberté, démocratie.

Thierry Mariani, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Monsieur le Président, Madame, la promesse de 2011 a amené ce pays au bord du chaos, au bord du chaos où Ennahdha et les mouvements islamistes l'ont entraîné. Le Président Kaïs Saïed a eu simplement le tort ces derniers jours de dire que, pour résider en Tunisie, il fallait avoir des papiers et être en règle avec la loi tunisienne. Cela n'en fait pas du tout un raciste.

Il s'agit désormais donc de revenir sur l'arrestation de M. Boutar, directeur d'une radio tunisienne inculpé pour blanchiment d'argent. Le Parlement européen est donc capable de savoir s'il est coupable ou non quelques semaines après son arrestation. J'admire tous ceux qui ont cette faculté. À croire que le Parlement européen bénéficierait de lumières quasiment divines, lui permettant de savoir quelle décision de justice est fondée et qu'elle ne l'est pas.

Il faudra donc ne pas s'étonner si la Tunisie conspu notre ingérence comme le Maroc et l'Égypte avant elle. C'est à croire que le Parlement veut organiser notre rupture définitive avec toutes les puissances méditerranéennes. Alors oui, je le dis, nous devons plutôt aujourd'hui accompagner la Tunisie dans la voie de son redressement. Quand on voit la situation économique dans laquelle Ennahdha a laissé ce pays, c'est avant tout la priorité.

Manu Pineda, *en nombre del Grupo The Left*. – Señor presidente, nos preocupa la situación de Túnez. La situación de la disolución del Parlamento, la reforma del poder judicial o el ataque a la libertad de expresión son una muy mala noticia para el pueblo tunecino. Nos preocupa especialmente el intento de represión que está sufriendo la Unión General Tunecina del Trabajo, principal sindicato del país y organización clave en el derrocamiento de la dictadura de Ben Alí y en la ampliación de los derechos de la clase trabajadora tunecina.

En Túnez, como en todo el mundo, los sindicatos son una vacuna contra el autoritarismo. Rechazamos su represión y la reciente expulsión de la secretaria general de la Confederación Europea de Sindicatos y de un representante de la Unión General de Trabajadores de España. No es casual que se ataque a los sindicatos de clase, pero tampoco es casual que se debata ahora aquí sobre Túnez cuando Francia y Marruecos están perdiendo influencia en el país. Ojalá este Parlamento debatiese sobre la situación de los países, independientemente de su orientación geopolítica. La defensa de los derechos humanos no puede depender del cálculo geopolítico.

Margarida Marques (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, Senhor Comissário, Caros Colegas, as reformas do presidente tunisino estão a colocar em causa a independência do poder judiciário, os direitos dos trabalhadores, as liberdades de expressão e associação. A detenção do jornalista Noureddine Boutar ou a expulsão da sindicalista Esther Lynch são disso exemplo. A sociedade civil, a imprensa, os sindicatos são vitais nas sociedades democráticas.

As recentes declarações do Presidente Saied, responsabilizando os imigrantes por situações de violência e pela prática de crimes, acenderam um rasilho num país que vive uma profunda instabilidade social e uma grave situação económica. Sim, são declarações racistas e repugnantes.

Esta resolução exige das autoridades tunisinas o respeito pelos direitos fundamentais e pelo Estado de direito, e exige à Comissão e ao Conselho que denunciem o que se está a passar no país. Pede que a ajuda da União Europeia seja canalizada apenas para a sociedade civil.

A Tunísia é um ator demasiado importante na região do Mediterrâneo, mas temos que garantir que os cidadãos vivem na democracia e no Estado de direito.

Georgios Kyrtos (Renew). – Mr President, only 11% of Tunisia's voters participated in the recent legislative elections. This is a strong message addressed to the President of the Republic, Saied, who is in the process of imposing a dictatorial regime. People are aware of his intentions and methodology and refuse to offer him a democratic alibi.

Tunisia passed, during a period of 12 years, from dictatorship to the Arab Spring, to disenchantment with democratically elected governments and is in danger of returning to the starting point in a much worse economic and social situation. President Saied suspended the democratically elected government and parliament in July 2021 and since then has been restricting media freedom, persecuting journalists, trade unionists and political opponents. He projects himself as the solution to Tunisia's problems. In my view, he is in the process of becoming one of his country's major problems.

Helena Dalli, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, thank you for giving me the opportunity to join this timely debate on Tunisia. The different interventions today have shown that we broadly share the analysis and the concern over the latest developments in Tunisia – an important partner and a close neighbour for the EU.

The arrests of prominent political, civil society and media figures in recent weeks are indeed worrying. So are some recent statements targeting the sub-Saharan migrants in the country, which have already led to arrests, harassment and violence. These events contribute to a climate of growing internal tension and polarisation.

Democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, are values that the people of Tunisia chose during the Jasmine Revolution in 2011. They also constitute the foundation of the EU's partnership with Tunisia, in which the country's vibrant and dynamic civil society also plays an important role. That is why we will continue to advocate for the preservation and consolidation of these values.

We will equally keep insisting on an inclusive dialogue among the various forces in Tunisian society, so that a common project can emerge for the future of the country. That is the only way to ensure social cohesion and the sustainability of major and urgently needed reforms.

At the same time, the economic situation in Tunisia is increasingly dire, with a direct impact on the life of Tunisians, who are suffering from inflation, scarcity of products and high unemployment, especially among the young. The consequences of Russia's aggression against Ukraine have hit Tunisia particularly hard and further aggravated the situation. Therefore, we must not turn our backs on the Tunisian people, and we must show that we are standing by our partners when they need us most.

The Foreign Affairs Council next week will also discuss the situation in Tunisia and chart a way forward for EU engagement with the country. As always, the European Parliament will be fully informed, and we look forward to continuing the discussion with you.

Predsedajúci. – Rozprava sa skončila.

Hlasovanie sa uskutoční vo štvrtok 16. marca 2023.

21.3. Camboya, en particular el caso del líder de la oposición Kem Sokha

Predsedajúci. – Ďalším bodom programu je rozprava o piatich návrhoch uznesenia o Kambodži: prípad opozičného vodcu Kema Sokhu (2023/2589(RSP)).

Michaela Šojdrová, *author*. – Mr President, dear colleagues, first of all, I would like to thank all the co-rapporteurs for your cooperation on this urgent case of political persecution. The three decades of Hun Sen's rule have placed Cambodia on the list of repressive regimes. The recent imprisonment of the opposition leader, Kem Sokha, for 27 years only strengthened the one-party government and worsened the human rights in Cambodia. Moreover, at least 39 political opposition members are currently in Cambodian prisons. This all happens just before the upcoming elections in July.

Therefore, we call for the immediate and unconditional release of Kem Sokha and all opposition officials and activists convicted or held in custody in politically motivated charges. Further, we urge the Cambodian authorities to ensure free and fair elections in July 2023.

The government's systematic repression against independent media, civil society and political opposition must end. The recent shutdown of one of the last remaining independent media outlets, *Voice of Democracy*, is one more step for Hun Sen to seize power completely.

The EU is Cambodia's largest export market, accounting for 45% of the country's exports and, as such, it is the duty of the EU to be an active advocate for human rights and use this vital position to promote them. Cambodia benefits from access to the EU market under the 'everything but arms' (EBA) scheme. However, respecting human rights and fundamental freedom is an essential part of the EU trade policy.

Therefore, we call for the further suspension of the EBA status if the violations of human rights and freedom continue. This is a strong and efficient tool for the EU, and we should not hesitate to use it. Thank you for your support.

Karsten Lucke, *Verfasser*. – Herr Präsident, Frau Kommissarin! Ein Oppositionspolitiker aus Kambodscha hält 2013 eine Rede in Australien und setzt sich für politische Pluralität und demokratischen Wettstreit ein, und dafür kriegt er jetzt 27 - Jahre Hausarrest aufgebremmt. Mit der Verurteilung von Kem Sokha stirbt ein weiterer Teil einer erstrebenswerten Demokratie in Kambodscha. Eine unabhängige Justiz – Fehlanzeige. Die Regierung kann das politische Spielfeld nach eigenem Gutdünken lenken. Demokratie ist hier im Kern nicht mehr vorhanden.

Wir brauchen nur dem Premierminister Hun Sen zu lauschen, der im Januar dieses Jahres sagte, ich zitiere: „Seid vorsichtig! Wenn ich mein Temperament nicht zügeln kann, werdet ihr zerstört werden.“ Jetzt könnte man meinen, da hat ein Politiker vielleicht über die Stränge geschlagen. Nein, weit gefehlt. In Kambodscha muss die Opposition eine solche Drohung mehr als ernst nehmen. Das hat der Fall Kem Sokha bewiesen. Kem Sokha muss umgehend freigelassen werden!

Die Wahlen im Juli dieses Jahres sollten dringend die Tür zu einer kambodschanischen Demokratie öffnen, die in die Zukunft führt und die eben eine aufstrebende Gesellschaft und eine aufstrebende Demokratie möglich macht.

Frédérique Ries, *auteure*. – Monsieur le Président, libérer Kem Sokha, le leader de l'opposition cambodgienne, c'est le message que martèle ce soir notre Parlement. Il a été condamné à 27 ans de prison le 3 mars dans une parodie de justice, et c'est le dernier prisonnier politique en date d'un régime qui est incapable, plus que jamais, de tolérer la moindre voix divergente. Qu'elle soit politique, comme celle de Kem Sokha, de dizaines d'opposants et d'activistes que le pouvoir harcèle et juge en masse, qu'elle soit médiatique, comme celle de VOD, *Voice of Democracy*, l'un des derniers médias indépendants du pays qui fut muselé le mois dernier.

Alors Phnom Penh doit libérer Kem Sokha, Phnom Penh doit garantir sa participation en juillet à des élections libres, justes et transparentes. Phnom Penh doit réhabiliter son parti du sauvetage national du Cambodge. Madame la Commissaire, l'Union européenne doit soutenir les aspirations démocratiques des Cambodgienne et des Cambodgiens. Nous en avons les moyens. Sanctionnons ceux qui censurent la démocratie et utilisons tous les moyens qui sont dans notre boîte à outils pour faire libérer Kem Sokha.

Heidi Hautala, *author*. – Mr President, Commissioner, the EU has already partially suspended the trade benefits of the 'everything but arms' scheme. And now what we see is that the opposition leader Kem Sokha has been convicted on politically fabricated accusations to a prison sentence of 27 years by a ruler that has ruled the country for 38 years.

And I think the European Union should indeed insist that, if these violations will continue, then we will indeed use all the possible means to see that the situation would be improved. We also could improve indeed, and could include the possibility to altogether continue to suspend the 'everything but arms' benefits.

Ryszard Czarnecki, *autor*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Pani Komisarz! Szanowni Państwo! Znowu debata o Kambodży. Drakoński wyrok i pytanie, co możemy zrobić? W jaki sposób mamy zaprotestować? Przedemną występowali mądrzy i zaci posłowie. Zgadzam się z tym, co mówili. Zastanawiałem się, co powiedzieć, i może nadszedł czas, Panie Przewodniczący, żeby zaprotestować w inny sposób. Mam jeszcze 30 sekund mojego wystąpienia i chciałbym te 30 sekund milczeć – milczeć, solidaryzując się z tymi, którzy są prześladowani w Kambodży.

Isabel Santos, *em nome do Grupo S&D*. – Senhor Presidente, a situação no Camboja deteriora-se a cada dia que passa. Os ativistas são espiados e presos, as organizações não governamentais são criminalizadas, os meios de comunicação social são encerrados, os sindicalistas, ativistas e jornalistas perseguidos e detidos. A censura alastra-se às redes sociais, com a detenção de cidadãos pelos conteúdos das suas publicações e mensagens *online* contra o regime de Hun Sen, que governa há quatro décadas.

Kem Sokha, antigo líder do Partido para a Salvação do Camboja, foi alvo de detenção arbitrária em 2017 e, agora, condenado a 27 anos de detenção por traição e conspiração com os Estados Unidos, num julgamento politicamente motivado, num país que mimetiza o regime chinês.

Apelamos à imediata libertação de Kem Sokha e de todos os presos políticos, e que a União Europeia suspenda todos os benefícios do regime «Tudo Menos Armas».

Svenja Hahn, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, colleagues, you've all been very clear, and I think we're very much sharing a line here. It is very clear the Hun Sen regime has dismantled democracy in Cambodia. The democratic opposition is in exile, if they're lucky, or in prison.

Now, in the sham trial, Kem Sokha, the former opposition leader, has been sentenced to 27 years in house arrest, stripped of all political rights. The regime is not even trying to hide their intentions about manipulating the elections in July. Kem Sokha and other political prisoners must be released immediately and unconditionally, and the Council must finally prepare to implement targeted sanctions against the autocratic leaders.

The Commission must make clear that the legitimacy of the Cambodian Government will depend on the legitimacy of these elections. If the independent electoral observers find evidence of unfair elections, it is more than overdue that the Commission is finally fully withdrawing the EPA preferences because the conflict of our time is autocracy versus democracy. We cannot forget this and we should not fool ourselves.

The autocrats of the world are united in the fight against freedom and democracy, and that is why the EU must always, must always, always, always stand by those fighting for our democratic values.

Petras Auštrevičius (Renew). – Mr President, Madam Commissioner, dear colleagues, let me, on your behalf, most heartily welcome Sam Rainsy, leader of the Cambodia National Rescue Party, and his delegation visiting the European Parliament today. You are most welcome Mr Rainsy to our House.

Dear colleagues, the 27-year sentence for Cambodian Opposition leader Kem Sokha was shocking news to Cambodians and the democratic community worldwide. The Hun Sen regime disregards the basic norms of an open society and suppresses the opposition in the run-up to this summer's parliamentary elections.

I call on the Commission and the External Action Service to take immediate actions to further reduce preferential trade with Cambodia unless, I emphasise, unless all charges against Kem Sokha are dropped and he is immediately released.

I call for individual sanctions against regime officials if parliamentary elections are not held in a free and fair manner. The officials responsible for the most serious human rights violations, such as Generals Hing Bun Hieng and Kun Kim, should be among the first ones added to the EU Magnitsky list.

Helena Dalli, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, in all our engagements with Cambodian authorities, we have been placing a strong emphasis on the protection and promotion of human rights, including the respect for fundamental freedoms. Serious and systematic violations of human rights, including the emblematic case of opposition leader Kem Sokha, who was charged with treason in 2017, led the Commission to partially withdraw trade preferences from Cambodia under the Everything but Arms scheme.

On 23 July 2023, Cambodia will hold parliamentary elections. The recent conviction of Kem Sokha to 27 years in jail, excluding him from participating in the electoral process, deprives once again Cambodian citizens of their right to choose their representatives in a transparent and credible electoral process.

After a long three-year judicial process, the court has delivered a harsh verdict. The European Union has joined others in the international community, including several of our Member States, in condemning this unjustified sentence. We have been unequivocal in calling for the reopening of civic and political space in Cambodia. We have also called on the Cambodian authorities for the immediate release of Kem Sokha and the reinstatement of his political rights. We will be following the conditions of his detention while in house arrest.

Our political dialogue with Cambodia intensified in 2022 — the year Cambodia held the ASEAN chairmanship. Local elections took place in the same year with the participation of the opposition, which received over 20% of the votes. We engaged in frequent contacts at all levels of the Cambodian Government throughout the year, where we discussed the constraints, legal and otherwise, of the political environment at all meetings, including at high level, especially in relation to opening space for the upcoming parliamentary elections.

The High Representative also took the opportunity to meet Kem Sokha in his home during his August visit to Cambodia. However, since the beginning of 2023, we observed new judicial cases brought against representatives of the main opposition party, the Candlelight Party, and further restrictions to the freedom of expression and media freedom. The recent closure of Voice of Democracy, an independent media outlet in Cambodia, has restricted further the capacity of citizens to access information from independent sources.

In the run up to the elections. The EU will continue to call on the Cambodian authorities to take all measures to ensure inclusive, transparent and credible parliamentary elections in June 2023.

Predsedajúci. – Rozprava sa skončila.

Hlasovanie sa uskutoční vo štvrtok 16. marca 2023.

22. Explicaciones de voto

Predsedajúci. – Ďalším a posledným bodom na tento deň sú vysvetlenia hlasovaní.

22.1. Nuevos actos de represión contra la población de Bielorrusia, en particular los casos de Andrzej Poczobut y Ales Bialiatski (B9-0163/2023, RC-B9-0164/2023, B9-0164/2023, B9-0165/2023, B9-0166/2023, B9-0167/2023, B9-0168/2023)

Ústne vysvetlenia hlasovania

Seán Kelly (PPE). – Mr President, I would like to say firstly, I am surprised that the EPP did not have a speaker on the Cambodian discussion. As rapporteur for ASEAN, I met the opposition, Sam Rainsy, and the delegation today and I would have been willing to speak.

Apropos this topic, Lukashenko's regime in Belarus has continued its repression against the Belarusian people, with civil society representatives, human rights defenders, journalists and opposition activists being persecuted for purely political reasons. Criminal persecution and draconian laws remain one of the most severe and widespread forms of repression in Lukashenko's totalitarian state. More than 40 000 Belarusians are estimated to have been detained while protesting against this tyrannical regime, while human rights defenders have documented hundreds of cases of torture and ill treatment, with several people still missing and others having been found dead and, unfortunately, thousands having fled the country.

The show trial of journalist Andrzej Poczobut and the manufactured charges against Nobel Peace Prize laureate Ales Bialiatski are an absolute abomination. This is terrible and we have to condemn it.

Stanislav Polčák (PPE). – Pane předsedající, já jsem pochopitelně podpořil tento návrh usnesení. Represe, kterým jsou vystaveni Andrzej Poczobut a Ales Bjaljacký, jsou nepřijatelné. Ale samozřejmě to nejsou pouze tyto dva případy. Těch případů je naprostá většina, se kterými jsme se setkali a hovořili jsme zde o nich v posledních měsících. Bělorusko se stalo totalitním státem, pošlapává všechna myslitelná lidská práva a je důležité říci, že běloruský prezident se stal nepochybně sluhou ruského medvěda a že může již létat pouze do Číny či Íránu. Myslím si, že musíme dále zpřísnit sankce, pomáhat běloruské opozici a být připraveni na změnu režimu, protože já jsem přesvědčen, že běloruský lid si nenechá vnutit tuto totalitní praktiku a že brzy v Bělorusku snad zavládnou lidská práva a demokracie.

22.2. Una renta mínima adecuada que garantice una inclusión activa (B9-0099/2023, B9-0116/2023)

Ústne vysvetlenia hlasovania

Seán Kelly (PPE). – A Uachtaráin, glaonn an tairiscint seo ar Bhallstáit inniu go bhfuil an t-íosioncam náisiúnta oiriúnach le ráta riosca na bochtaineachta. Leagann an tairiscint amach na slite gur féidir leis na Ballstáit a úsáid chun athchóiriú a dhéanamh ar a scéimeanna ioncaim ionas go mbeidh siad níos éifeachtaí, ag cabhrú le daoine teacht amach as an mbochtaineacht agus ag cuidiú le lánpháirtiú an mhargaidh fostaíochta i gcomhair dóibh siúd atá in ann oibriú.

Gan athchóiriú a dhéanamh ar íosioncam náisiúnta, cuireann an tairiscint béim ar thástáil maoine indibhidiúla i gcomparáid le tástáil maoine teaglaigh. Ina theannta sin, déantar measúnú ar thraenáil, fáil ar sheirbhísí éigeandála agus gníomhaíocht margáí fostaíochta in áireamh an íosioncaim. Ní mór don tairiscint seo inniúlacht na mBallstát a chosaint freisin.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Mr President, I voted in favour of this text because of the urgent need to raise the national minimum income in the EU Member States in order to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty and social inclusion. Now, we know that in 2021, 95.4 million people in the EU, 21% of the population, were at risk of poverty and social exclusion.

So, grand and all as this measure is, and it is, unless we go much further than this, the problems will not be sorted out. Our workers are in a situation of constant precariousness; the energy crisis, deindustrialisation, unemployment, inflation are all increasing the numbers of people who are increasingly insecure.

The share of housing costs in the disposable income of people at risk of poverty is 38%. In Ireland in the last quarter last year, average rents were EUR 1 733 per month. In France, the number of people achieving food aid has tripled. The social emergency is here, it's time to wake up.

Charlie Weimers (ECR). – Herr talman! Samma år som EU:s sociala pelare antogs i Göteborg hittade Europaparlamentet ett problem och uppmanade medlemsstaterna att introducera "tillräcklig minimiinkomst". Sedan blev direktivet om minimilöner lag, mot Sveriges och Danmarks vilja.

För att strö salt i såren lovade kommissionär Schmit att tackla de otillräckliga minimiinkomsterna. I förra höstens icke-bindande rekommendation uppmanades medlemsstaterna att nå en "tillräcklig nivå för inkomststöd" före 2031. När stödet inte nått den tillräckliga nivån kommer det bindande lagstiftning, även om beslutsmakten ska vara kvar på medlemsstatsnivå. Så fungerar maktöverföringen till EU.

De som kallar sig liberaler röstar som marxister här i parlamentet. I dag understödde de kravet om tillräcklig minimiinkomst. Om jag, för freden i Europa, skulle kräva miljardstöd för att släppa ut fredsduvor skulle majoriteten rösta för.

EU-staten växer ohämmat om ingen gör motstånd. Därför röstade vi sverigedemokrater nej till resolutionen om tillräckliga minimiinkomster.

22.3. Semestre Europeo para la coordinación de las políticas económicas 2023 (A9-0044/2023 - Irene Tinagli)

Ústne vysvetlenia hlasovania

Seán Kelly (PPE). – A Uachtaráin, this report for Economic Policy Coordination outlines the European Parliament's contribution to the annual European Semester cycle, very supportive.

The report describes the economic risks Member States are facing and highlights the necessary steps to alleviate these challenges. The report recognises the risks of a high debt-to-GDP ratio in Member States, and that the recent increase in interest rates makes debt servicing an ongoing and heightened challenge.

Parliament's report concurs with the Commission's recommendations on the need for support measures to be targeted, and that prudent medium-term fiscal positions must be pursued.

The adopted report highlights the need to have proper enforcement of fiscal rules and a strong role for independent fiscal institutions. In essence, the report reiterates that robust economic growth, sound fiscal policies and a healthy balance between government revenues and expenditure are necessary to reduce legacy debt and make debt sustainable in the long run.

22.4. Semestre Europeo para la coordinación de las políticas económicas: prioridades sociales y en materia de empleo para 2023 (A9-0051/2023 - Estrella Durá Ferrandis)

Ústne vysvetlenia hlasovania

Stanislav Polčák (PPE). – Pane předsedající, já jsem tuto zprávu nepodpořil a dovil bych si vysvětlit z jakých důvodů. Vůbec nepochybňuji, že je důležité, aby k této koordinaci hospodářských politik samozřejmě docházelo. Tato politika má rovněž své úspěchy. V době pandemie COVID-19 přinesla určité zabezpečení pro řadu zaměstnanců. Také souhlasím s tím, že tato politika musí řešit sociální problémy, sociální vyloučení, chudobu, to je nepochybné. Ale v řadě bodů si myslím, že se neshodujeme v pojetí, co také oslabuje konkurenceschopnost Evropské unie a jejích členských států. Je to nepochybně také výrazná míra právní regulace, špatně cílená podpora i pro zrovna zaměstnavatele, pro naše podniky a je to velká byrokracie. Takže mně v té zprávě chyběla jistá vyváženost a z těchto důvodů jsem ji nepodpořil.

22.5. Informe de ejecución sobre el Acuerdo sobre la retirada del Reino Unido de la Unión (A9-0052/2023 - Pedro Silva Pereira)

Ústne vysvetlenia hlasovania

Stanislav Polčák (PPE). – Pane předsedající, tuto zprávu jsem naopak podpořil. Je mi velmi líto, že došlo k brexitu. Myslím si, že sami Britové již mohli poznat, že jim mnozí jejich politici lhali, i ti, kteří zasedali v tomto Parlamentu. Nicméně domnívám se, že je důležité obrátit list, že je velmi důležité ocenit dohodu, kterou jsme nakonec udělali mezi Velkou Británií a Evropskou unií, a je třeba budovat nové spojení. Já jsem s tou implementací dohody spokojen a myslím si, že z těchto důvodů je dobré podpořit i tuto zprávu v Evropském parlamentu a doufat, že v blízkých zítřcích nebo v budoucnosti nalezneme spoustu společného a budeme si velmi blízkými partnery, to znamená na obou stranách Lamanšského průlivu, jak ve Velké Británii, tak v Evropské unii. Čeká nás spousta výzev, které jsou zcela zjevné, a myslím si, že toto spojení by mohli ocenit občané na obou dvou stranách.

22.6. Relaciones UE-Armenia (A9-0036/2023 - Andrey Kovatchev)

Ústne vysvetlenia hlasovania

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Mr President, (*off-mic/sound*) ... creating a sustainable peace settlement as a reliable partner. It frames Russia as an unreliable partner to Armenia and suggests moving closer to Euro-Atlantic players. This is a simplistic reading of the situation. The agreement between Armenia and Russia has done most to deter NATO member Turkey from attacking Armenia, and the US and Europe seems structurally incapable of developing a coherent strategy for the Caucasus.

Caution would seem to be the most appropriate course but instead, we have a former Secretary-General of NATO in Armenia this week setting out his vision for Armenia's future. Whose interest is this man representing I wonder?

The EU and US are playing games here, trying to push countries in different directions and exploiting tensions created by the war in Ukraine. We are increasing the chances of renewed ethnic conflict with zero regard for the people.

The EU is not an honest broker here.

22.7. Relaciones UE-Azerbaiyán (A9-0037/2023 - Željana Zovko)

Ústne vysvetlenia hlasovania

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Mr President, the differing tones in the and Azerbaijan texts are striking. We need to coax the fledgling democracy Armenia away from Russia and our close partners, Iran. And we can't condemn Azerbaijan enough for their military aggression, for persecution of political activists and civil society and for all kinds of human rights violations.

Yet, Azerbaijan, the dictatorship and the aggressor, is our close partner. We just signed an MOU with them to double imports of their natural gas to at least 20 billion cubic metres a year by 2027. They are great pals with our like-minded partners, Israel, who kill Palestinians on a daily basis. Azerbaijan are Israel's largest oil supplier, and Israel sells to them 70% of the weapons they like to use against Armenians.

Our American partners see them as a useful tool in the battle against Iran – another reason for the Israeli arms sales. As with Armenia, not everything fits nicely into the larger narrative crafted in Brussels and Washington. Not only can we not form a coherent strategy in the area, and the EU will do well to watch its step in the Caucasus.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Mr President, this report on Azerbaijan is a really interesting read. In it, we've alleged war crimes with torture and mutilation, the persecution of political dissidents, lack of women's rights, racist hate speech, child labour, illicit spying on journalists and politicians, with the grotesquely evil trophy park in Baku; we've enforced disappearances, desecration of corpses, political repression, police brutality, intimidation, death threats and assassination against the opponents of the Azerbaijani Government; lack of media freedom, violation of human rights, not to mention no workers' rights – because they don't have any.

And after all of that, after all the squares of this shameless authoritarian bingo card have been ticked off, the EU's oil and gas deal with Azerbaijan is signed in the same breath as, 'We can't do business with the authoritarian Russia. We'll do it with these valiant defenders of democracy and human rights.'

If you want a clue about why nobody outside here takes this place seriously, well, this report is a very good place to start.

Predsedajúci. – Týmto sa skončili vysvetlenia hlasovaní.

23. Orden del día de la próxima sesión

Predsedajúci. – Nasledujúce rokovanie sa uskutoční zajtra, teda vo štvrtok 16. marca 2023 o 9:00 h. ráno. Program schôdze bol uverejnený a je k dispozícii na webovom sídle Európskeho parlamentu.

24. Aprobación del Acta de la presente sesión

Predsedajúci. – Zápisnica z tohto rokovania bude predložená Parlamentu na schválenie zajtra na začiatku popoludňajšieho rokovania. Rokovanie sa týmto skončilo.

25. Cierre de la sesión

President. – Thank you very much, especially to the interpreters, for staying until such a late hour, and have a good night everyone.

(The sitting closed at 23.28)

Explicación de los signos utilizados

*	Procedimiento de consulta
***	Procedimiento de aprobación
***I	Procedimiento legislativo ordinario (primera lectura)
***II	Procedimiento legislativo ordinario (segunda lectura)
***III	Procedimiento legislativo ordinario (tercera lectura)

(El procedimiento indicado se basa en el fundamento jurídico propuesto en el proyecto de acto.)

Abreviaturas utilizadas para las comisiones parlamentarias

AFET	Comisión de Asuntos Exteriores
DEVE	Comisión de Desarrollo
INTA	Comisión de Comercio Internacional
BUDG	Comisión de Presupuestos
CONT	Comisión de Control Presupuestario
ECON	Comisión de Asuntos Económicos y Monetarios
EMPL	Comisión de Empleo y Asuntos Sociales
ENVI	Comisión de Medio Ambiente, Salud Pública y Seguridad Alimentaria
ITRE	Comisión de Industria, Investigación y Energía
IMCO	Comisión de Mercado Interior y Protección del Consumidor
TRAN	Comisión de Transportes y Turismo
REGI	Comisión de Desarrollo Regional
AGRI	Comisión de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural
PECH	Comisión de Pesca
CULT	Comisión de Cultura y Educación
JURI	Comisión de Asuntos Jurídicos
LIBE	Comisión de Libertades Civiles, Justicia y Asuntos de Interior
AFCO	Comisión de Asuntos Constitucionales
FEMM	Comisión de Derechos de la Mujer e Igualdad de Género
PETI	Comisión de Peticiones
DROI	Subcomisión de Derechos Humanos
SEDE	Subcomisión de Seguridad y Defensa
FISC	Subcomisión de Asuntos Fiscales

Abreviaturas utilizadas para los grupos políticos

PPE	Grupo del Partido Popular Europeo (Demócrata-Cristianos)
S&D	Grupo de la Alianza Progresista de Socialistas y Demócratas en el Parlamento Europeo
Renew	Grupo Renew Europe
Verts/ALE	Grupo de los Verdes/Alianza Libre Europea
ID	Grupo Identidad y Democracia
ECR	Grupo de los Conservadores y Reformistas Europeos
The Left	Grupo de la Izquierda en el Parlamento Europeo - GUE/NGL
NI	No inscritos