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ESACTA LITERAL DE LOS DEBATES DE 17 DE SEPTIEMBRE DE 2019

(C/2024/3953)

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Sesiones del 16 al 19 de septiembre de 2019

ESTRASBURGO

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ESACTA LITERAL DE LOS DEBATES DE 17 DE SEPTIEMBRE DE 2019

PRESIDÊNCIA: PEDRO SILVA PEREIRA

Vice-Presidente

1. Apertura de la sesión

(A sessão é aberta às 09h02)

2. Preparación de la Cumbre sobre la Acción Climática y la Cumbre sobre los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible en Nueva York (debate)

Presidente. – Segue-se o debate sobre a declaração da Comissão sobre a preparação da Cimeira sobre a ação Climática e os Objetivos de Desenvolvimento Sustentável das Nações Unidas em Nova Iorque (2019/2809(RSP)).

Miguel Arias Cañete, *Member of the Commission.* – Mr President, it is a pleasure to be here this morning as we prepare for the forthcoming Climate Action and Sustainable Development Goals Summits in New York.

Regarding the Climate Action Summit, the Commission adopted on 11 September a Communication to the European Parliament and the Council in preparation for the Summit, to present the European Union's impressive track record on climate policy and our commitment to accelerated climate ambition. The high attendance of European Union leaders at the Summit – including the President of the European Council Donald Tusk – will enable the European Union to recall and explain comprehensively and coherently where Europe stands today and where it wants to go. The European story is one of ambition, real action, unity and determination, and yet one that recognises the richness of approaches applied by the individual Member States and adds value to them.

The European Union narrative for the Summit will build on the following elements. First, the solid progress made on the preparation and finalisation of our long-term strategy for climate neutrality by 2050. Second, the over-delivery of our nationally determined contribution (NDC) through a comprehensive body of detailed laws and measures. And third, the planning and organisation to monitor and review the actual implementation and the continuing adequacy of our goals and targets.

Last June a large majority of European leaders supported the Commission proposals to make Europe climate neutral by 2050 – a project that means radical transformation of our economy and our society. This is exceptional progress, considering the scale of the challenge.

The European Union has been increasing its climate ambition since 1990 and will continue to do so. The European Union reduced its emissions by 22% between 1990 and 2017, while our GDP grew by 58%. Full implementation of our new 2030 legislation, adopted with very large support in Parliament and the Council, would yield another 23% reduction between 2018 and 2030: twice as fast. The adoption of a 2050 objective, together with the governance mechanisms that we have put in place, will ensure that we will continue this acceleration, on a fast track but in a gradual and manageable manner, towards climate neutrality.

When fully implemented, we estimate that the measures for 2030 will enable the European Union to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 45% compared to 1990 levels, which goes further than the European Union's stated objective in its nationally determined contribution, to cut emissions by at least 40% by 2030.

Delivering on the 2030 targets will have benefits well beyond 2030. It will ensure the European Union is also going in the right direction towards 2050.

At the same time, the European Union is already using its budget to ensure that investments are aligned and actively contributing to the climate goals – we have a 20% climate mainstreaming target in the current European Union budget, amounting to around EUR 200 billion of funds over the 2014-2020 period to support the low carbon transition.

In the multiannual financial framework for 2021-2027 that is being discussed in Parliament and in the Council, the Commission has proposed that 25% of the whole budget, or an expected EUR 320 billion, will be specifically climate-relevant, and the rest will be compatible with our climate objectives.

The climate and energy transition towards climate neutrality begins with a massive investment challenge, one that we must meet already in the coming years: investment in a clean energy system; in clean industry and clean mobility; in maintaining and restoring our land, to make sure that it not only continues to provide us with food, feed and fibres, but also helps us absorb the greenhouse gas emissions we will not be able to eliminate.

We know, of course, that the scale of this investment is beyond the capacity of the public sector alone, and that the private sector will have a major role to play. To attract enough private investment, the European Union is already putting in place the conditions and incentives for investors to fund projects aligned with the climate goals, such as the European Union Action Plan on financing sustainable growth and the associated legislative package.

We must focus on adaptation and resilience as well, and on disaster risk reduction, both in Europe and elsewhere. To do this, we will be able to build on the work done under the European Union's Adaptation Strategy and on our international cooperation efforts in supporting our partner countries.

To this end, the European Union is stepping up its outreach and cooperation, financial and technical, to all partner countries. Nationally determined contributions will be at the core of our support, especially in critical sectors such as renewable energy and energy efficiency, urban development or agriculture and forests.

Not only is the European Union the world's leading donor of development assistance with EUR 74.4 billion in 2018, it is also the world's largest climate finance donor, providing over 40% of the world's public climate finance. The European Union and its Member States' contributions have more than doubled since 2013, exceeding EUR 20 billion annually.

The European Union remains fully committed to continuing to scale up the mobilisation of international climate finance, including through enhanced ambition by its investment facilities and the European Investment Bank. Likewise, the European Union's array of legally binding trade and cooperation agreements will continue to include robust provisions to promote climate action and implement the Paris Agreement.

The rapidly changing climate is a global problem and it calls for global responsibility. We in Europe are doing our part. We have acted and we continue to act, but to meet our long-term temperature goals we know we must do more and act faster still. On all this, we have a strong message to communicate at the Summit.

We also know that the task does not end here. No matter how much we have done so far, and how much we have strengthened our ambition and speeded up our efforts in these past few years – the years in which I have had the honour of being in charge of climate action and energy policy, and therefore part of this effort – the Summit in New York can only conclude that more is needed.

Europe will answer this call to action. Following the elections to the European Parliament and the political guidelines of the President-elect, it is very clear that the European Union will continue to work to raise its ambition further – as always, ‘in a responsible way’ – but with undiminished determination.

My expectation is that we will continue to take further bold actions, building on our solid and significant achievements so far, and that we will develop, in a not too distant future, the model for a climate-neutral, modern, competitive and prosperous European economy and society. This must also be a model that our partners in the rest of the world will want to emulate, and that will therefore enable us collectively to avert the climate disasters that would await us otherwise.

Let me turn now to the Sustainable Development Goals Summit (SDG Summit). It is of great political importance. It closes the first four-year cycle of the High-Level Political Forum.

The Commission welcomes that heads of state and government will, with all relevant stakeholders, for the first time have the opportunity to review progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The Summit should provide political leadership, guidance and recommendations for acceleration progress towards the Agenda. The SDG Summit should endorse a political declaration that includes a clear call for accelerated action.

The political declaration includes in particular the commitment to: maintain the integrity of the 2030 Agenda and to persevere on the 2020 targets; more concrete language on climate change, including on the synergies between implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement; more concrete language on broader environmental protection including new references to marine ecosystems and sustainable consumption and production.

The Commission supports the key messages in the Global Sustainable Development Report, notably: despite significant action underway across the world, the current rate of progress is not adequate to reach the SDGs; some trends even remain negative, including rising inequalities, global warming, biodiversity loss and increasing waste from human activity; and accelerated action is required, as dynamics show that some countries seem to distance themselves from the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement.

Let me conclude here by thanking you for your continuing strong support for European Union climate action, which enabled us to tell this positive story on the international stage and to encourage our international partners to enhance global climate ambition and real action.

This is what our citizens expect from all of us, including the young generation that is mobilising all over Europe and the rest of the world for a better future.

Presidente. – Obrigado, Senhor Comissário, pela sua intervenção e pelas informações que nos deu quanto à mensagem que a Comissão tenciona dirigir na importante cimeira de Nova Iorque. É precisamente o assunto que vamos debater já de seguida com as intervenções dos colegas. Dou a palavra à Senhora Vice-Presidente Mairead McGuinness.

Mairead McGuinness, on behalf of the PPE Group. – Mr President, I am very conscious when I stand up here that the Secretary-General of the UN has said, ‘bring an action plan and not a speech’. The best we can do in this Chamber this morning is bring a speech and a commitment to honour commitments that Europe has signed up to, but also to acknowledge that though we speak well, we don’t always deliver. I am very conscious when I start with the Sustainable Development Goals that there are four of them, in particular, where we are actually going backwards, for example, Sustainable Development Goal 2 on hunger. We were making great progress, but as the FAO have pointed out, we are now going backwards and over 820 million people don’t have enough to eat. There is rising inequality, Commissioner, as you have just stated, so Goal 10 is not being met. On biodiversity and climate, we are also not doing or putting into place actions which will allow us to meet these objectives.

Let me just mention again – on the hunger issue, because it is a very real problem and a challenge for us all to have policy coherence both in Europe and, indeed, globally – the Lancet report, which many of us are familiar with, talked about sustainable intensification. I think even in this House we do not have a consensus as to what that might look like, or how that might evolve, so we do need to have deeper discussions in this Parliament between committees on these issues. One of the things that I hope for is that the new Parliament, which is now in session, will allow for greater coordination between committees.

On climate, we know that there are huge problems looming, and the younger generation are pushing us really forward to do more, but we also have to challenge ourselves and the younger generation to make sure we are ready for the changes in consumption and production patterns that will be required to meet all of these very noble but attainable objectives.

Just to mention two issues again – on oceans and on land. We have strong policies in Europe. We need to impress upon our colleagues in the UN next week that multilateralism is vital. The tragedy is that it's now weaker than it was when it we signed up to these goals. I hope our delegation will impress that it is working together, both within Europe and the rest of the world, so that we will make our greatest change and I certainly, as one of the leaders of the delegation, will stress that very objective.

Miriam Dalli, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, timing is everything and the Climate Action Summit and the Sustainable Development Goals Summit are critical in helping us address the global climate emergency we are facing. The European Union needs to agree on a climate plan that provides an overall level of ambition, ensuring that the required transition takes place and providing the necessary financial means, together with the horizontal policies that need to be set.

As things stand today, even if all the 2030 pledges were to be fully implemented, we would not be on track to achieve the Paris Agreement targets. The European Union has the potential and the duty to act ambitiously before 2030 and to adopt and implement a vision for a future climate-neutral and fossil-fuel-free environment. We require clear decarbonisation strategies by different sectors. We require action plans that clearly show how these strategies will be achieved and how they will be financed. They will require changes in sectors like transport, building, industry, agriculture and forestry. Climate change is a global challenge and solutions need to be global too, as the Commissioner himself indicated.

But the European Union needs to continue in its leadership role, whilst providing support to the most vulnerable countries that are mostly affected by climate change. We need collective action and, as part of Parliament's delegation to the Summit, I want to hear a strong European voice that is not afraid of putting forward ambitious programmes, because weak commitments would undermine our communities, our industries, our economies, our youth and our children. It is only through EU leadership that we can speed up global action on the Sustainable Development Goals and climate change goals and the EU should not shy away from its responsibilities.

María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, *en nombre del Grupo Renew*. – Señor presidente, señor comisario, efectivamente, el cambio climático -ya está demostrado- no es una cuestión de ideología, sino de supervivencia. Y debemos actuar de forma rápida, urgente, adoptando decisiones y acciones sin precedentes en nuestra historia. Si no lo hacemos así, el mundo se dirige hacia un incremento de más de tres grados centígrados a finales de siglo y habremos perdido cualquier oportunidad de actuar.

Pero ahora podemos. Por eso, la convocatoria y el llamamiento que el secretario general de las Naciones Unidas hace para que la próxima semana —la semana más importante de las Naciones Unidas— se celebre una Cumbre sobre la Acción Climática y otra sobre los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible es absolutamente clave.

Porque lo hace en un momento fundamental: a un año de que todas las partes firmantes del Acuerdo de París presenten, tengan que presentar sus compromisos nacionales; compromisos concretos de descarbonización para evitar este incremento de la temperatura y que en 2050 no lleguemos a superar un grado y medio de incremento. También en un momento como este año, en el que hemos visto cómo las devastaciones climáticas en forma de sequía, incendios, inundaciones han sido noticia cada día.

La Unión Europea puede liderar este cambio en una cumbre de la que ya se ha dicho que no es para hacer discursos, sino para presentar acciones. La Unión Europea puede hacerlo. Tiene un compromiso claro con una acción climática neutra en 2050. En esta Cámara, recientemente, la presidenta designada de la Comisión anunció la primera ley climática europea, una gran ambición política, acompañada también de una gran ambición de financiación, señalando que el Banco Europeo de Inversiones se debe convertir en parte en banco climático.

Por lo tanto, como miembro perteneciente a la delegación del Parlamento Europeo en esta cumbre, creo que tenemos que ser conscientes de que hoy, en el mundo global, en el ámbito del multilateralismo, solo la Unión Europea puede liderar este proceso de cambio. Podemos y creo sinceramente que debemos hacerlo.

Bas Eickhout, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, I would like to thank the Commissioner. This Friday will be the start of a week of action, a week of global action, of many citizens on the streets, and they have been referred to many times already, but they are asking for much more action than the world is taking right now, including Europe.

Commissioner, I know this is probably going to be one of your last plenaries, but to be very honest, you must have noticed that your speaking notes on climate action of Europe have not changed that much over the last two years. They have always referred to the fact that we have a 2030 package in place, that we are trying to get to carbon neutrality but still have not achieved it, and that we're the only continent achieving something. I don't think this is the speech that people are asking for. People are asking for more action; people are asking for politicians to listen to science, and we're not doing that. The science is very clear: we have 10 years. Ten years to make sure that we are preparing for a new economy – and we have to deliver on that. That means that Europe needs to increase its ambition. I think that there is a bit of change with the new Commission potentially, but I think it's also very important that we do want to know what exactly they are going to say, what exactly are they going to do in that climate law? I think there you have an important role, because if I talk to the people of your DG, I don't feel that there is this urgency. There will maybe be a climate law and then there will be a long set of deliberations on what to do after that. We expect Europe to increase its ambition to at least -55% next year, before Paris starts. That's what people are asking for, the minimum to change; otherwise, the people on the streets will again be disappointed by the lack of action by the world, and certainly also by Europe.

Jordan Bardella, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur António Guterres, l'actuel Secrétaire général des Nations unies, a déclaré le mois dernier qu'en matière de lutte contre le dérèglement climatique, les beaux discours ne suffisaient pas.

Nous attendons désormais des actes. Nul ne peut nier aujourd'hui que les organisations internationales, FMI, Banque mondiale et OMC en tête, portent une lourde responsabilité dans le système écologiquement prédateur que nous vivons. Ce sont tous ces organismes qui ont jeté les bases de la folle mondialisation sauvage aux dérives les plus absurdes. Ce sont les traités de libre-échange qu'ils ont encouragés qui jettent toujours plus de porte-containers ultra-polluants sur nos mers, souvent pour transformer des produits que nous pourrions fabriquer près de chez nous.

Que dire de l'Union européenne qui va favoriser un désastre agricole, sanitaire et écologique en signant un traité commercial avec le Mercosur. Il faut le dire clairement, dans les instances mondialistes et européistes, en matière d'écologie comme ailleurs, c'est bien l'hypocrisie qui règne à tous les étages. On prétend se soucier du dérèglement climatique, sans remettre en question le dérèglement commercial qui pourtant le nourrit. Je terminerai par ces mots inspirés de Bossuet, célèbre écrivain français: Dieu se rit des hommes qui déplorent les effets dont ils chérissent les causes.

Anna Zalewska, w imieniu grupy ECR. – Panie Przewodniczący, Panie Komisarzu, Szanowni Koleżanki i Koledzy! W wystąpieniu pana komisarza pojawiały się słowa: ambicja, determinacja. Na szczęście pojawiło się sformułowanie: „realne działania”. Dlatego chcę zadać pytanie. Czy jesteśmy przygotowani do dyskusji po realnej analizie działań, ale również możliwości poszczególnych państw? Czy mamy zaplanowane realne inwestycje na najbliższe lata? Wreszcie, żeby to wszystko było realne, czy mamy realne źródła finansowania? Pan komisarz powiedział o ogromnej kwocie ponad 320 mld euro na działania środowiskowe, ale zapomniał powiedzieć, że Komisja nie przygotowała budżetu na transformację. To Parlament zwrócił na to uwagę i proponuje niewiele: 5 mld euro. Jednocześnie chcę zapytać, czy tak ambitne plany nie spowodują, że – jeżeli nie przyłączą się do nas inne gospodarki – zwiększy się – a nie zmniejszy – emisja, dlatego że cała Unia Europejska wyprowadzi się do krajów, gdzie można pozwolić sobie przy niższych standardach na wysokoemisyjną gospodarkę.

Πέτρος Κόκκαλης, εξ ονόματος της ομάδας GUE/NGL. – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, κύριοι συνάδελφοι, κύριε Επίτροπε, την επόμενη εβδομάδα ο Γενικός Γραμματέας των Ηνωμένων Εθνών μας περιμένει στη Νέα Υόρκη για να παρουσιάσουμε το σχέδιό μας για τον τρόπο με τον οποίο θα σταματήσουμε την αύξηση των εκπομπών του διοξειδίου του άνθρακα έως το 2020 και θα τις μηδενίσουμε έως το 2050.

Η φωνή της επιστήμης είναι ενωμένη, είναι ξεκάθαρη και έχει σημαίνει συναγερμό. Ένα συναγερμό που έχει κυριαρχήσει τη νεολαία της Ευρώπης και όλου του κόσμου. Η απάντηση, λοιπόν, στην κλιματική έκτακτη ανάγκη δεν απαιτεί τίποτα λιγότερο από τον ριζικό μετασχηματισμό της οικονομίας και της κοινωνίας μας. Έχουμε μια τελευταία ευκαιρία να υλοποιήσουμε μια τακτική και δίκαιη μετάβαση, εφαρμόζοντας τους 17 στόχους βιώσιμης ανάπτυξης και το πολιτικό πρόγραμμα της Συμφωνίας του Παρισιού που διεκδικούν – ταυτόχρονα με την αντιμετώπιση κλιματικής αλλαγής – την εξάλειψη της φτώχειας και τις ακραίες ανισότητες.

Η πολιτική διακήρυξη του συνεδρίου αναφέρει ρητά ότι ξέρουμε τον κόσμο που θέλουμε και έχουμε τον δρόμο να πάμε εκεί. Ας το κάνουμε, λοιπόν, ενσωματώνοντας τους 17 στόχους βιώσιμης ανάπτυξης στο Πολυετές Δημοσιονομικό Πλαίσιο και στο Ευρωπαϊκό Εξάμηνο. Δεν περιμένουμε τίποτα λιγότερο από το να είναι το νέο πρόγραμμα που ετοιμάζει ο Αντιπρόεδρος Timmermans ένα νέο πράσινο κοινωνικό συμβόλαιο. Και αυτό, κυρίες και κύριοι συνάδελφοι, δεν γίνεται καταψηφίζοντας, χθες, το αίτημα για την κατάθεση ψηφίσματος καταδίκης για την καταστροφή του Αμαζονίου.

Eleonora Evi (NI). – Signor Presidente, signor Commissario, onorevoli colleghi, in questo dibattito il vero elefante nella stanza è il continuo erogare sussidi diretti e indiretti alle fonti fossili, in totale contraddizione con gli obiettivi di maggiore ambizione dichiarati dall'Unione europea: 5 300 miliardi di dollari nel 2015 a livello mondiale, secondo il Fondo monetario internazionale, 231 miliardi nell'Unione europea. La stessa Commissione ne riconosce 55 miliardi all'anno e conferma che non sono per nulla diminuiti nel tempo.

Al vertice di New York noi dobbiamo andare con delle proposte concrete, dire «stop» ai sussidi alle fonti fossili e abbandonarle totalmente nel medio periodo, proporre di ridisegnare la fiscalità, perché è semplicemente assurdo trattare allo stesso modo dei beni che hanno processi di produzione e impatti differenti sull'ambiente e sul clima.

E dobbiamo andare a dire che non servono dei dazi per difendere i prodotti europei, americani o cinesi ma piuttosto serve una leva fiscale con criteri trasparenti e obiettivi ambientali, che tutto questo è coerente con l'idea di mercati aperti e di concorrenza, per premiare veramente chi innova.

Tomas Tobé (PPE). – Mr President, the European Union and its Member States are the leaders in development cooperation and that role is becoming even more important in these political times. The European Union was the driving force at the UN when the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) goals were shaped, and that is something to be proud of, but now it's time for more action and more progress, especially on all SDG goals.

I am very pleased to see that the Commission President-elect seems ready to take more action and that all new Commissioners should contribute to the SDG goals, but we need a broader commitment if we're going to succeed in reaching the SDG goals and therefore I really look forward to going to the Summit next week and co-chairing the delegation, because I think that the EU has a role, that we need to make sure to steer the policy in the right direction, and that means that we need to stand up for multilateralism and also a result-orientated European Union development policy.

Udo Bullmann (S&D). – Mr President, a week ahead of the assembly in New York, the sustainable development goals (SDGs) are on everybody's lips. Business people are talking about them, and politicians all over the globe.

But what does it mean in real terms?

Are we on track? No, we are not.

We are missing our goals in the global south because of a lack of resources, and we are far behind in the global north, in many cases because of a lack of political will and decisive action. That has to be changed radically. Yes?

Especially in the low-income countries, we would need some USD 530 billion a year to make meaningful progress on the SDGs. But what sounds so huge is not more than 0.5% of global GDP. So why are we not ready to invest this amount of money for proper heating, water supply, health care and decent nutrition for the kids in our poorest areas of the world?

Even where we see pragmatic progress in the north, it is far from enough. As long as we have spillovers – where we clear rainforests for the production of meat and palm oil for the global north, where we see the production of our clothes under the poorest conditions – we will see rising problems.

Ich glaube, dass der entscheidende Schlüssel zum Kampf um den Fortschritt für die Nachhaltigkeitsziele der Kampf gegen Ungleichheit und Ungerechtigkeit ist. Nur wenn wir in unsere Gesellschaften investieren und die Menschen in die Lage versetzen, ihr Schicksal selber in die Hand zu nehmen, mit starken Institutionen, mit multilateralem Ansatz und mit einer Politik für bessere Erziehung in die nächste Generation, werden wir eine Chance haben. Das erwarten wir vom nächsten Gipfel.

Catherine Chabaud (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, la semaine prochaine, alors que nous serons, pour quelques-uns d'entre nous, aux Nations unies, afin de nous mobiliser pour l'action climatique et les objectifs du développement durable, au même moment, à Monaco, les experts du climat dévoileront le rapport spécial «Océan et cryosphère». Ce rapport, que nous avons demandé il y a quatre ans, avec mes amis de la plateforme Océan et Climat, s'annonce très alarmant.

Chers amis, à sa manière l'océan brûle. Pourtant, pendant des années, les négociations climatiques ont ignoré son rôle primordial dans l'équilibre du climat et les services essentiels qu'il rend à l'humanité. Grâce à la photosynthèse des micro-organismes végétaux, l'océan fournit la moitié de l'oxygène de l'atmosphère; c'est l'autre poumon de la planète. Il absorbe un quart des émissions de gaz à effet de serre. Les écosystèmes marins et côtiers, comme les mangroves et les récifs coralliens, assurent la sécurité alimentaire de trois milliards d'êtres humains. Ils sont un rempart face à la montée de l'océan et à la violence des événements climatiques extrêmes. La fréquence et l'intensité des cyclones sont une conséquence du réchauffement de l'océan en profondeur. La mort des coraux est due à l'augmentation de la température, à la désoxygénation et à l'acidification de l'océan. Et je m'inquiète de ce que va nous annoncer ce nouveau rapport.

En 2015, nous avons réussi à faire entendre la voix de l'océan à la COP 21 à Paris. C'est enfin devenu un sujet émergent qui mobilise la Commission européenne, grâce notamment au travail du commissaire Vella. Et le Chili a baptisé la prochaine COP 25 la «Blue COP». Mais la bonne santé de l'océan doit être l'un des objectifs de la négociation climatique, d'autant qu'il fait aussi partie de la solution.

Il faut financer la restauration des écosystèmes marins et côtiers, réduire les émissions du transport maritime, développer des énergies marines sans détruire les habitats, etc. Premier espace maritime au monde, l'Europe a une responsabilité formidable et un leadership à prendre. C'est un défi que nous pouvons relever et qui attend le futur vice-président en charge du Green Blue Deal et le futur commissaire à l'environnement et à l'océan – et je me félicite de cet intitulé. Un océan, enfin, dont j'appelle à ce qu'il soit reconnu comme un bien commun de l'humanité.

Aileen McLeod (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, on Friday, thousands of young people will march across Scotland, just as millions of others will do across the world, to demand that we, their elected politicians, implement ambitious climate action now. They are looking to us to stand up and deliver policies that meet the needs of our planet. As a member of the delegation to the UN Climate Summit, we must take to it the strong message that we, across the EU, will meet the challenge laid before us and take bolder actions that will get us on track to meet the Paris Agreement and achieve the 1.5 degrees goal. That is what is expected of us and that is what we must deliver.

My country, Scotland, has already declared a climate emergency. We are taking bold and meaningful action to end our contribution to climate change and we will end that within a generation. We need all countries across the EU and beyond to step up to the plate. The EU has a moral duty to lead that process and to stimulate the global ambition that we urgently need, and you'll have Scotland's support in doing so.

(Applause)

Sylvia Limmer (ID). – Herr Präsident! Während im Dezember mal wieder der Klimazirkus in Chile tagt mit etwa 25 000 Teilnehmern – Teilnehmer, die vielfach von der angeblichen Klimaretung leben und um die halbe Welt jetten, dabei Millionen Flugkilometer hinter sich bringen und ich weiß nicht wie viele Tonnen böses, böses CO₂ ausstoßen, genau jenes CO₂, dessen Existenz dann so scheinheilig medial wirksam bejammert wird und politisch so gut verwendet werden kann; von den Millionen Euros Verschwendung, die zuvor den hart arbeitenden Steuerzahlenden Bürgern abgepresst wurden, mal ganz zu schweigen. Während sich also die Klimaoberaufseher in den schönsten Urlaubszielen versammeln – Marrakesch, Lima in Peru, Südafrika, Bali 2007 und so weiter und so fort – und dabei immer neue Horrorszenarien am dräuenden Horizont entdecken, sorgen sie zu Hause dafür, dass dem Bürger Flugreisen immer unmöglicher werden, Autos als Mittel der freien individuellen Fortbewegung eingeschränkt werden und natürlich das böse Fleischessen verboten wird – um nur einiges zu nennen.

Übrigens, falls es diesbezüglich Fragen gibt: Ja, ich bin dieses Mal im Dezember in Chile dabei, aber CO₂ ist dort ganz sicher nicht mein größtes Problem. Vielen Dank, sehr geehrtes EU-Publikum, für heute habe ich fertig.

Jadwiga Wiśniewska (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Już dzisiaj Unia Europejska ma najbardziej ambitną politykę klimatyczną na świecie, dlatego też nie uważam, że powinniśmy w Nowym Jorku składać kolejne deklaracje związane z podniesieniem poziomu ambicji. Proszę zwrócić uwagę, że nadmiernie restrykcyjna polityka klimatyczna Unii Europejskiej doprowadziła już do spadku konkurencyjności europejskiego przemysłu. Czy Państwo nie widzą na przykład co dzieje się w branży stalowej? Otóż na naszych oczach zalewa nas tania stal z Chin. Nadmierna polityka klimatyczna Unii Europejskiej prowadzi właśnie do tego, że przemysł wyprowadzany jest poza granice Unii Europejskiej. W związku z „ucieczką” emisji, następuje również „ucieczka” miejsc pracy, a więc wzrasta bezrobocie.

Mówimy o celach klimatycznych, więc należy powiedzieć również o ubóstwie energetycznym. W Unii Europejskiej pięćdziesiąt cztery miliony ludzi cierpi z powodu ubóstwa energetycznego. Na to też proszę zwrócić uwagę. Jestem jak najbardziej za tym, żeby chronić klimat, ale transformacja klimatyczna musi być sprawiedliwa, musi uwzględniać różnicowane miks energetyczne państw członkowskich, takich na przykład jak Polska, która ma miks energetyczny oparty na węglu. Dlatego też potrzeba funduszu sprawiedliwej transformacji.

Silvia Modig (GUE/NGL). – Arvoisa puhemies, paras kilpailukykytekijä on olla edelläkävijä tässä muutoksessa. Tulevaisuuden voittajia niin yrityksissä kuin julkisessa taloudessa ovat ne, jotka kykenevät sopeuttamaan tuotantonsa tulevaisuuteen, niihin rajoihin, joita ilmastonmuutos meiltä vaatii.

Komissaari mainitsi puheessaan päästövähennystavoitteen. Vuoden 2030 päästövähennystavoitteeksi ei riitä 45 prosenttia, näin kertoo meille tieteellinen tieto. Päästövähennyksen on oltava vähintään 55 prosenttia. Tämä on esimerkki siitä, että vaikka meillä on kauniita puheita, meidän kunnianhimon taso ei vielä ole riittävä. Meidän on pakko asettaa meidän tavoitteemme tieteellisen tiedon pohjalta.

Tällä hetkellä kestävä kehityksen etenemistä haittaa neljä ilmiötä: eriarvoisuuden lisääntyminen, ilmastonmuutoksen eteneminen, jäteongelman kasvu ja biodiversiteettikadon jatkuminen. Biodiversiteetin heikkeneminen kiihtyy huolestuttavasti. On muistettava, että vaikka luonnon monimuotoisuus on itseisarvo, on kyse myös tämän planeetalle resilienssistä, eli siitä, miten tämä planeetta pystyy sopeutumaan siihen väistämättömään lämpenemiseen, joka edessämme on. On aivan välttämätöntä saada aikaan irtikytkentä talouskasvun ja koetun hyvinvoinnin ja neitseellisten luonnonvarojen käytön välillä. Meidän on nyt vastattava niille nuorille, jotka seisovat tuolla kaduilla ja vaativat itselleen tulevaisuutta ja meiltä tekoja.

Peter Liese (PPE). – Herr Präsident! Die designierte Präsidentin der Europäischen Kommission, Ursula von der Leyen, hat gesagt: „Ich fühle mich von der Leidenschaft, der Überzeugung und der Energie der Millionen junger Menschen inspiriert, die ihrer Stimme auf unseren Straßen und in unserem Herzen Gehör verschaffen.“ Ich kann Ursula von der Leyen nur dabei unterstützen, dass sie den Weg mit uns gemeinsam geht. Wir wollen klimaneutral werden, und wir wollen auch das Ziel der Europäischen Union für das Jahr 2030 erhöhen.

Ich möchte uns aber alle gemeinsam davor warnen, uns sozusagen nur noch in Selbstbeschimpfung zu üben. Die Europäische Union ist auch bisher schon Vorreiter beim Klimaschutz. Wir haben, soweit ich das sehe, als einzige große Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft der Welt, als einziger großer Emittent, schon Gesetze beschlossen, die das, was wir in Paris versprochen haben, übererfüllen. Das reicht nicht aus, und da müssen wir weiter arbeiten. Aber wir sollten unseren Blick stärker auf andere große Verschmutzer richten und überlegen, wie wir in einen Dialog kommen, denn die Diskussion, die wir hier in Europa führen, dass wir schon Gesetze haben, die das Ziel übererfüllen und wir trotzdem noch weiter gehen wollen, erlebe ich leider in anderen großen Ökonomien nicht. Daran müssen wir stärker arbeiten. Und um die anderen zu überzeugen, müssen wir auch einen Weg gehen, wie Ursula von der Leyen das vorgezeichnet hat, wo wir die Betroffenen mitnehmen, wo wir die Industrien dekarbonisieren und die Industrien nicht aus Europa vertreiben. Ich glaube, das ist der richtige Weg: Klimaschutz und Arbeitsplätze zusammenbringen. Dann können wir das auch weltweit zum Vorbild machen und uns insgesamt durchsetzen.

Marc Tarabella (S&D). – Monsieur le Président, le nombre de personnes qui souffrent de la faim ne cesse de croître. La perte de biodiversité atteint des proportions alarmantes et le changement climatique s'accélère tandis que la coopération multilatérale est menacée. Le sommet interviendra exactement une année avant que les pays ne doivent renforcer les engagements pris au niveau national en faveur du climat, conformément aux accords de Paris.

Ces pays ont élaboré leur propre plan d'action en faveur du climat, conformément à l'accord de Paris, mais la somme de ces plans est insuffisante pour limiter la hausse du réchauffement climatique à un niveau largement inférieur à 2 degrés. Ils doivent dès lors impérativement renforcer leur stratégie pour atteindre les objectifs fixés dans le cadre de l'accord de Paris et rehausser leurs ambitions pour lutter contre les changements climatiques.

L'action pour le climat et la protection de l'environnement sont des outils clés en matière de lutte contre la pauvreté, de lutte contre la famine dans le monde, ou encore en matière de questions migratoires. Il est également primordial que ces mesures, les mesures qui seront prises, soient supportées par tous et que l'on ne fasse pas peser les efforts uniquement sur les populations les plus fragiles sur le plan socio-économique, tant dans nos pays, que dans les pays moins avancés.

J'exhorte donc les États à prendre des mesures fortes et adéquates qui devront permettre de réduire les inégalités et non les accentuer. Nous ne pouvons pas nous contenter d'ambitions mitigées, il est plus que temps d'être courageux et de se donner les moyens de construire positivement l'avenir. Le temps est aux actions concrètes et plus aux atermoiements.

Frédérique Ries (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, pour paraphraser l'ancien président français Jacques Chirac, la maison brûle. Mais 17 ans après le sommet de Johannesburg, il y a une différence: le monde a les yeux rivés dessus et ce sera le cas encore la semaine prochaine à New York grâce à l'initiative du secrétaire général des Nations unies, António Guterres.

Alors certes, et le commissaire l'a rappelé, l'Europe globalement est dans les clous dans ses ambitions et dans ses résultats. Nous faisons mieux même avec déjà aujourd'hui 23 pour cent de réduction des émissions. Et cependant 2019 a vu encore et encore se répéter les épisodes climatiques: ouragans, inondations, incendies. Chacun le sait, les objectifs de Paris ne sont pas suffisants, le Programme des Nations unies pour l'environnement estime d'ailleurs qu'il faudra tripler les efforts pour limiter le réchauffement à 2 degrés et pour un degré et demi c'est fois 5 carrément.

Il s'agira donc, à New York, de déterminer les moyens ensemble d'aller plus vite, d'aller plus fort. Et puis surtout, et sachant que nous ne représentons que 9 pour cent des émissions mondiales, de montrer aux autres, aux principaux pays pollueurs, par l'exemple, que relever l'ambition climatique c'est booster nos économies et pas l'inverse. C'est tout le sens du Green Deal de Madame von der Leyen, 100 jours pour une loi qui se devra être exemplaire, indispensable.

Karima Delli (Verts/ALE). – Monsieur le Président, mes chers collègues, cet été, la planète nous a envoyé des signaux d'urgence. L'Amazonie brûle, la planète entière suffoque. De nombreux jeunes expriment leur colère et leur peur face au dérèglement climatique. Les scientifiques, les chercheurs ne cessent d'alerter.

Face à cette réalité, nous n'en pouvons plus des discours! Nous n'en pouvons plus des mots vides! Désillusion!

Nous avons besoin maintenant d'actions et de mesures concrètes. Il est temps que l'Europe soit exemplaire. Je le rappelle, aucun État de l'Union européenne ne respecte les accords de Paris. Alors, réveillez-vous! Tous les secteurs doivent être mis à contribution, et il faut donc, dès cette semaine, lors de l'assemblée générale de l'OACI, défendre une taxation ambitieuse de l'aviation.

L'Europe a une occasion unique de faire entendre sa voix. J'espère que vous saurez enfin saisir l'occasion et je vous le dis: si vous ne faites rien, demain vous serez non seulement comptables, mais coupables d'une inaction criminelle.

Jorge Buxadé Villalba (ECR). – Señor presidente, señor comisario, los alarmistas del cambio climático también contaminan más de lo que algunos nos dicen a los que nos acusan de escépticos. Y no lo digo yo, sino que lo dicen estudios científicos publicados por la Universidad de Michigan el año pasado. Y solo habría que ver el modo de vida de personajes como Al Gore, Leonardo DiCaprio o incluso algunos de los que están aquí presentes.

Señorías, nadie más preocupado por la conservación del medio natural que la opción política que represento, movidos por un extraordinario amor por nuestras patrias. Pero me temo que de esto no estamos hablando aquí hoy. Hoy, aquí, y dentro de unos días en las Naciones Unidas, de lo que se hablará es de una agenda política que disfraza la ideología en ciencia, sustituye la superstición, convirtiéndola en una verdad revelada, y elimina todo debate científico, sustituyéndolo por el llanto de una niña en horarios de máxima audiencia.

Esto de la agenda climática solo va a beneficiar a unas grandes empresas globalistas, destrozando la industria europea, condenando al paro a millones de europeos, e impidiendo el desarrollo en África, con una doctrina esencialmente, a nuestro modo de ver, profundamente inhumana.

Se habla en este Parlamento de miles de millones de euros, pero no se les dice a los ciudadanos europeos que ese dinero saldrá de sus bolsillos.

Marc Botenga (GUE/NGL). – Voorzitter, we gaan stoppen met rond de pot te draaien. We weten: honderdduizenden jongeren overal in Europa hebben een ambitieus en sociaal klimaatbeleid gevraagd en eigenlijk gaan we daar nog steeds niet noodzakelijkerwijs echt op vooruit. We staan nog altijd niet waar we moeten staan en we laten die jongeren op deze manier echt in de steek. Als we vandaag een antwoord willen geven op de stijgende ongelijkheid enerzijds en het gebrek aan effectieve klimaatactie anderzijds, dan moeten we eerst en vooral breken met het besparingsbeleid en massale openbare investeringen in onze infrastructuur toelaten.

Ten tweede: laten we er alstublieft voor zorgen dat die miljonairs op het hele continent hun belastingen beginnen te betalen. Laten we hen hun belastingen doen betalen en dat geld gebruiken voor mens en planeet. En ten slotte: laten we breken met die emissiehandel die multinationals toelaat winst te maken ten koste van het klimaat. Dan gaan we er misschien geraken, want we weten het: als de planeet een bank was, was ze al gered.

Cristian-Silviu Buşoi (PPE). – Mr President, the Sustainable Development Goals are extremely important in order to bring a better and more sustainable future for all of us. Despite important progress being made, for example in SDG 3 (health) in terms of reducing child and maternal mortality and in other areas, there is still a lot to be done in climate, biodiversity, reducing inequality and hunger.

Climate will be for sure the most debated issue in the Summit, but I would also like to draw your attention to SDG 10 (reducing inequality). Worldwide, the majority of countries do not implement this SDG into their development plans, whether we are discussing health policies or economic growth, or even sustainable development. Nowadays we can no longer just discuss inequalities in low income countries; this is also a challenge in high and middle-income countries. Economic growth is very important, but concentrating only on economic growth will not reduce inequalities. We need dedicated policies in order to achieve this goal.

Javi López (S&D). – Señor presidente, señor comisario, el conjunto de la comunidad internacional se va a reunir la semana que viene para hablar sobre la lucha contra el cambio climático y los objetivos del desarrollo sostenible. Una reunión que tiene que servir para hacer frente a algo que ya no es una amenaza futura, sino una emergencia presente. Y una reunión que tiene que servir, sobre todo, para pasar de la retórica a la acción.

De la retórica a la acción, porque en 2015 nosotros aprobamos como comunidad internacional los Acuerdos de París para limitar el crecimiento de la temperatura en la Tierra. Pues bien, los últimos cuatro años han sido los cuatro años registrados como más cálidos de la historia. Y esto está también multiplicando las catástrofes climáticas que hemos vivido recientemente también en España, en forma de inundaciones.

En segundo lugar, no solo pasar de la retórica a la acción, sino pedir y exigir a la Unión Europea liderazgo en esta materia. Que podemos y debemos. En la transición ecológica, en la descarbonización de nuestra economía y en la reducción de emisiones. Tenemos como objetivo la reducción del 40 % ya para 2030. Habrá que marcar objetivos más ambiciosos y habrá que hacerlos realidad.

Y en tercer lugar, pedir que esta necesaria transición ecológica sea una transición ecológica justa. Porque, como cualquier transformación -y esta lo requiere en materia de infraestructuras, movilidad y energía- va a necesitar amortiguadores para proteger nuestros puestos de trabajo, para tener socialmente y equitativamente una salida a esta transición y para poder enviar un mensaje de que transición ecológica y justicia social van de la mano. Hagámoslo ahora que estamos aún a tiempo.

Morten Petersen (Renew). – Hr. formand! Jeg vil gerne starte med at takke kommissæren for hans utrættelige arbejde for at fremme den grønne omstilling i den sidste mandatperiode.

Valget til Europa-Parlamentet før sommer var jo et klimavalg. Unge og gamle borgere over hele Europa manifesterede sig og erklærede, at dette spørgsmål er så vigtigt, at det er nu, det gælder, og at det haster. Derfor er der også god grund til at se på, om vi leverer det, vi skal fra EU's side. Vi kommer faktisk til topmødet i næste uge, uden at vi egentlig er enige om den ambition, vi bør have, nemlig et helt og aldeles klimaneutralt EU i 2050. Så vi har virkelig stadigvæk et stort hjemmearbejde at gøre for at vise vejen, og det skal vi simpelthen gøre.

Dette topmøde burde egentlig handle om, at vi forøger vores ambitioner, og at EU går forrest på dette område. Jeg har store forhåbninger til den nye Kommission og von der Leyens gode planer. Dette må indebære et højere mål for 2030 og et bindende klimamål, og det haster med implementere alt det fortrinlige arbejde, som ikke mindst kommissær Cañete har gennemført i sidste periode.

Lad mig slutte af med endnu engang at takke kommissæren, for det er måske en af de sidste gange, vi har fornøjelsen af at se ham på plenarmødet. Stort tillykke med alt det store, gode arbejde i sidste periode. Det haster, vi har meget mere at gøre.

Michael Bloss (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, on 24 May, just before the election of this European Parliament, millions of young people went on climate strike. They have been striking, Commissioner, because you are not acting. The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report and the scientists have told us that we are able to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees. Their main message is that we don't have time and we need to act now, yet nothing has been done. You will go to the UN Climate Summit empty handed. You will not come with new, more ambitious climate targets. I'm sorry, this is a failure.

Therefore, this Friday, millions of children and adults will again go on strike. They are striking because you are not able to deliver. They have one message, it's simple, and I want you to hear it. They say 'Climate action now!'

(Applause)

Izabela-Helena Kloc (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzu! W tym tygodniu media na całym świecie zostały zalane bezprecedensową ilością wiadomości ze szczytu klimatycznego w Nowym Jorku. Oczywiście jest, że polityka ekologiczna stała się głównym nurtem politycznym. Słyszemy to na całym świecie. ONZ twierdzi, że wydarzenia te – tu cytuję – „razem wzięte wyślą silne sygnały i nadadzą rozmachu wyścigowi na szczyt wśród krajów. Jest to niezbędne dla osiągnięcia celów porozumienia paryskiego”. Tyle ONZ.

Ja jako poseł wybrany na Śląsku chciałabym jednak przypomnieć przedstawicielom Rady i Komisji oraz panu komisarzowi, że powinniśmy starannie dobierać tempo tego wyścigu. Dążenie do zrównoważonej przyszłości musi iść w parze z solidarnością, z grupami społecznymi i regionami – tymi, które najbardziej odczuwają przyspieszone zmiany w strukturze gospodarek europejskich. W Nowym Jorku będą państwo również reprezentować znajdujących się w trudnej sytuacji społecznej obywateli krajów, które potrzebują znacznie więcej czasu na transformację energetyczną. Proszę o nich nie zapomnieć.

Dolors Montserrat (PPE). – Señor presidente, querido comisario, el trabajo que haces al frente de una cartera tan difícil como la de Energía y Cambio Climático ha significado un antes y un después para todos los europeos. Has sido el artífice, el motor de poner a Europa liderando la lucha contra el cambio climático para dejar un planeta mejor a todas las futuras generaciones.

El Acuerdo de París ha sido vital y es de justicia decir hoy aquí que sin tu empeño no se hubiera logrado, como también has logrado la unión energética, la descarbonización y pasar a la acción. Tus cinco años al frente de la comisaría se definen con una palabra: éxito; éxito que solo es posible lograr trabajando con pasión, con tu capacidad negociadora y con tu visión.

Los españoles siempre dejamos huella por donde vamos, pero la huella de tu paso por la Comisión será tan imborrable como la de nuestra querida Loyola de Palacio. Como española te digo, de todo corazón, gracias. Es un orgullo tener un comisario como tú y, por tanto, continuemos en la acción en la cumbre de Nueva York la próxima semana.

Seb Dance (S&D). – Mr President, I would like to say to the Commissioner that it has been two years since the report on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that I was rapporteur for passed this Parliament. We called for three things: raising ambition for mainstreaming SDGs throughout the institutions of the European Union and, crucially, status reports on how far we are from delivering on the SDGs by 2030. I have to say that, in these two years, it's been somewhat disappointing. I don't think that failure for action is a personal one. I think it's systemic. I think we have to look very carefully at how the European Union's institutions are set up to deliver and mainstream those SDGs, which is why I was actually pleasantly surprised by the Commission President-designate's comments that we need to have the SDGs mainstreamed throughout all directorates-general (DGs) and the responsibility given to the new Commissioners to deliver just that. But, of the three scenarios that were outlined – let me be very clear here – only scenario one, the first scenario, will get us to the position we need to be in. It's the only realistic scenario to deliver on the targets and to create a sustainable future. We have to show in this place a strong leadership role, which is so desperately lacking on the world stage, and we have to move on from the idea that the SDGs are something to be done in a tick-box exercise at the end of the day when all of the standard business is done.

Commissioner, I want to thank you personally for your commitment during these years, but please, let's not overlook the systemic failures and let's get it right in this next mandate.

Valter Flego (Renew). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, poštovani povjereniče, jako mi je drago da danas možemo pričati o ovoj važnoj, reći ću, presudnoj temi za našu sadašnjost i budućnost. Kad govorimo o našem cilju, on mora biti vrlo jasan. Biti svjetski lider u borbi protiv klimatskih promjena, ne biti drugi ili treći, nego prvi, svjetski lider. A da bi to postigli, onda mi, kao Europski parlament, kao predstavnici europskih građana, tražimo znatno povećanje sredstava u proračunu 2020., odnosno 2021. – 2027. za borbu protiv klimatskih promjena, za alternativne izvore energije, ali istovremeno i za otvaranje pametnih, novih, zelenih radnih mjesta za ulaganje u novu tehnologiju.

Imamo itekako šansu, ne tražiti ispriku, već način kako to realizirati. Imamo šansu biti svjetski lider i siguran sam da možemo tu šansu iskoristiti. Neka nas u svim tim poslovima ne nosi ekonomska grabežljivost kao neke druge svjetske lidere, nego odgovornost i dugoročnost. I zapamtimo, priroda može bez čovjeka, ali čovjek ne može bez prirode.

Alexandra Louise Rosenfield Phillips (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, a race we can win, a race we must win, but not for us, for our children. I've been so inspired by young people from Greta Thunberg to the youth everywhere. We are relying on our kids to drop out of lessons, to take to the streets, to sail across the Atlantic just to make us politicians act, and their impact has been phenomenal. As a result, this Parliament now has an environmental mandate that we all must act on. The 2015 climate plans still put the world on course to warm by at least 3 degrees by the turn of the century. The EU must commit to net zero by 2030. This means investing in a truly green new deal, which could combat poverty, inequalities and the climate crisis, so I will be taking part in Friday's global climate strike – to demand that the health of our earth is taken seriously for my son Rafi, for the future of us all.

Agnès Evren (PPE). – Monsieur le Président, quatre ans après la signature de l'accord de Paris, on constate un décalage abyssal entre les engagements qui ont été pris et les actions menées par les pays signataires, notamment certains gros pollueurs. Or, Monsieur le Commissaire, votre communication oublie de mentionner le rôle crucial des villes dans la lutte contre le changement climatique, alors que la moitié de la population mondiale y vit.

Bâtiments trop énergivores, chauffage domestique encore souvent vétuste, saturation du trafic routier, espaces verts trop rares... À l'échelle planétaire, les villes produisent plus de 60 % des émissions de gaz à effet de serre. C'est pourquoi, d'ailleurs, le Secrétaire général de l'ONU a identifié les villes et l'action locale comme l'un des portefeuilles d'action prioritaires.

Ma question est double: comment la Commission européenne compte-t-elle porter et inclure la voix des villes européennes, le 23 septembre? Et quelles avancées significatives la Commission pourrait-elle mettre en avant pour prouver son leadership sur cette question fondamentale?

Jytte Guteland (S&D). – Herr talman, herr kommissionär. Den valrörelse som vi precis har lämnat gav ett tydligt budskap till det här parlamentet om att prioritera en hållbar omställning snabbare, och också ta en ledande roll globalt för klimatet.

Jag bär med mig ungdomarnas krav på oss i det här parlamentet att agera mycket kraftfullare än vad vi historiskt har gjort. Den tillträdande kommissionen med Ursula von der Leyen har tydligt sagt att klimatet kommer vara huvudprioritet, och också den biologiska mångfalden i världen. Det är lovligt. Men i New York kommer vi ha vår möjlighet att bevisa att vi menar allvar. Det är där vi kan visa att vi också tar det globala ledarskapet för klimatet och för Agenda 2030. Inte minst för att det inte bara blir vackra ord utan att det också blir konkret handling.

För oss socialdemokrater är just arbetet med hållbar framtid (ekologiskt, socialt och ekonomiskt) det drivande och bärande för hela Europa. Vi måste leva upp till Parisavtalet och vi måste visa att det är det här som är den stora och viktigaste prioriteringen för EU. Men samma sak måste också göras globalt. Det är viktigt att vi nu samlar våra medlemsländer och visar konkret handling i New York, men att vi också visar att det här betyder såväl att ta Parisavtalet som Agenda 2030 på allvar och se till att det blir konkret handling. Vi har en chans nu i New York. Låt oss inte försumma den. Europa spelar en nyckelroll i klimatomställningen. Använd den nyckeln. Se till att vi blir den ledande kontinenten och att vi visar det internationella samfundet att i Europa har vi förstått allvaret och vi kommer ta ett politiskt ansvar.

Jutta Paulus (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident! Es sind jetzt fast vier Jahre nach dem Pariser Abkommen, und es hat sich gezeigt, das, was wir da beschlossen haben, nämlich die Erderhitzung unter zwei Grad – möglichst bei 1,5 Grad – zu halten, das wird immer schwieriger zu erreichen, weil die Emissionen in diesen vier Jahren einfach nicht gesunken sind. Jetzt wird nächste Woche in New York der *Climate Action Summit* abgehalten werden, und – Entschuldigung, Herr Cañete, Herr Liese – ich bin nicht der Ansicht, dass wir uns mit der Europäischen Union auf der Überholspur befinden und unsere Ziele übererfüllen; davon kann überhaupt keine Rede sein.

Wir haben diese 1,5 Grad unterschrieben, und wenn wir jetzt anschauen, auf was wir uns festgelegt haben, dann reicht das eben nicht aus, nach dem, was die Wissenschaft uns sagt, insbesondere auch nach dem *Special Report* vom letzten Jahr, der noch mal herausgestellt hat, wie groß unser *carbon budget* tatsächlich ist, also das, was wir noch an Emissionen ausstoßen können.

Deswegen wird es Zeit – und das erwarte ich von der neuen Kommission –, dass in alle Bereiche einfließen wird: Welche Auswirkung hat das auf den Klimaschutz? Welche Auswirkung hat das auf unsere Emissionen? Da gehört eben nicht nur die Energiepolitik dazu, sondern natürlich gehört da die Verkehrspolitik dazu, natürlich gehört da die Handelspolitik dazu! Denn was wir da tun, ist zum Teil kontraproduktiv, das sorgt sogar dafür, dass anderswo noch Emissionen steigen oder der Urwald abgeholzt wird.

Deswegen mein Appell: Lasst uns diese Notsituation auch wirklich ernstnehmen und den jungen Menschen, die am Freitag wieder auf die Straße gehen, gerecht werden!

(Die Rednerin ist damit einverstanden, eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“ gemäß Artikel 171 Absatz 8 der Geschäftsordnung zu beantworten.)

Λουκάς Φούρλας (PPE), ερώτηση με γαλάζια κάρτα. – Ευχαριστώ πάρα πολύ. Δεν είναι ακριβώς ερώτηση. Είναι στήριξη σε αυτά που λέει η συνάδελφος. Ακούω πάρα πολλές φορές από όλους εδώ να λένε ότι η Ευρώπη και εμείς ως Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο μπορούμε να αναλάβουμε ηγετικό ρόλο. Όχι απλώς μπορούμε, αλλά επιβάλλεται να αναλάβουμε αυτό τον ρόλο. Αυτή την εντολή έχουμε λάβει από τους Ευρωπαίους πολίτες. Το ερώτημα είναι: πώς αναλαμβάνουμε αυτή τη ευθύνη εμείς ως Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο; Είναι ωραίο να λέμε ότι πρέπει να αναλάβουμε ηγετικό ρόλο. Πώς μπορούμε να πιέσουμε για να αναλάβουμε αυτό τον ηγετικό ρόλο ως Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο;

Jutta Paulus (Verts/ALE), *blue-card answer*. – Thank you very much for your question. I think that Parliament can play a very strong role – because it is our role to step on the toes of the new Commission if they don't take sufficient action and if they are not prepared to step up to the goals we have already agreed upon for 2030, which – we all know – will not be sufficient for what we all want to achieve. I would like to call on all groups in this Parliament who are concerned about the survival of our civilisation. We have to work together as groups. We have to bridge the gaps between our political views because it is our common not only goal, but obligation. It's our common obligation to step up in action.

(Applause)

Edina Tóth (PPE). – Elnök úr! A klímaváltozás elleni globális küzdelem és a párizsi megállapodás valamennyi részes fél általi végrehajtása korunk egyik legnagyobb kihívása, ugyanis a klímaváltozás hatása ma már nemcsak gazdasági és jóléti probléma, hanem sok esetben egzisztenciális kérdés is. Üdvözlendő, hogy az ENSZ-főtitkár kezdeményezése a világ vezetői újra a legmagasabb szinten foglalkoznak ezzel a kérdéssel. Az Európai Unió méltán lehet büszke eddigi eredményeire és elkötelezettségére a klímaváltozás elleni küzdelemben. Az EU 2030-as vállalása messze a legambiciózusabb valamennyi meghatározó ország között. Magyarország ebben a munkában és célkitűzésben határozottan elkötelezett. Ezt bizonyítja eddigi teljesítményünk is, miszerint a GDP növekedése elvált a szinten maradó szén-dioxid-kibocsátásunktól.

A klímaváltozás elleni küzdelem azonban nem csak az EU-n múlik, amely a világ üvegházhatásúgáz-kibocsátásának alig 10 százalékát adja. Ez a kihívás csak úgy kezelhető, ha valamennyi állam az EU-hoz hasonló ambíciót vállal. Ennek fényében külön üdvözlendő, hogy az új Európai Bizottság kijelölt felelős alelnöke megbízólevelében kiemelt helyre került a klímaváltozással kapcsolatos nemzetközi tárgyalások vezetése. Az EP részéről ennek a feladatnak az elvégzését szorosan nyomon kell követni, hiszen a tét a bolygónk jövője.

Intervenções «catch the eye»

João Ferreira (GUE/NGL). – Senhor Presidente, a ação climática, como já antes o desenvolvimento sustentável, saltaram para o centro do discurso político. Mas para além dos chavões, para além de alguma propaganda, de alguma superficialidade e até oportunismo com que tantas vezes estas questões são tratadas, o que é que fica? E o que fica é, infelizmente, a insistência nas mesmas políticas que têm comprometido a possibilidade de um desenvolvimento assente numa relação sustentável entre o homem e a natureza. Alguns dos que fazem juras de empenho na ação climática, alguns dos que afirmam compromissos solenes com o desenvolvimento sustentável, são os mesmos que escancaram as portas às políticas que semeiam a destruição ambiental, económica e social, como aquelas assentes no livre comércio, políticas comerciais e agrícolas que promovem a deslocalização da produção, que destroem os sistemas produtivos mais débeis e que aumentam os fluxos de matéria e de energia associados à satisfação das necessidades mais básicas.

Senhor Comissário, alguém na Comissão fez as contas sobre quanto custará em emissões de gases com efeito de estufa o acordo que acabou de ser celebrado com o Mercosul? Começemos por aqui, por modelos de produção e de consumo mais sustentáveis, e paremos de tentar pintar de verde um sistema que é intrinsecamente insustentável. A questão fundamental é política e social, e não tanto tecnológica. O capitalismo não é verde.

Μαρία Σπυράκη (PPE). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση ηγείται πράγματι της αντιμετώπισης της κλιματικής αλλαγής. Και αυτό είναι το κεκτημένο μας, Επίτροπε Cañete, στα χρόνια που ηγείσθε αυτής της προσπάθειας. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση ηγείται πράγματι νομοθετικά, αλλά ηγείται και στην εφαρμογή των στόχων στα κράτη μέλη. Αλλά προφανώς αυτό που συμβαίνει δεν αρκεί.

Η νέα πράσινη συμφωνία που θα παρουσιάσει ο Αντιπρόεδρος Timmermans οφείλει να λάβει υπόψη της τα προβλήματα ανταγωνιστικότητας της ευρωπαϊκής βιομηχανίας και την ανάγκη να αλλάξει γρήγορα η προέλευση του ηλεκτρικού ρεύματος που χρησιμοποιεί, με έμφαση στις ανανεώσιμες πηγές ενέργειας.

Το «New Green Deal» πρέπει όμως ταυτόχρονα να στηριχθεί και σε μια νέα παγκόσμια συμμαχία για την αντιμετώπιση της κλιματικής αλλαγής: μια παγκόσμια συμμαχία προθύμων που θα περιλαμβάνει κράτη, θα περιλαμβάνει περιφέρειες και θα έχει ως στόχο τη νέα βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη, με έμφαση στη χρηματοδότηση της έρευνας και τις νέες τεχνολογίες. Και τα χρήματα αυτά μπορούν να προέλθουν από το δικό μας Πολυετές Δημοσιονομικό Πλαίσιο, από τους κρατικούς προϋπολογισμούς, από τα χρηματοδοτικά εργαλεία αλλά και από τον ιδιωτικό τομέα.

Τα ενεργειακά αναβαθμισμένα κτίρια για όλους, η αντιμετώπιση της ενεργειακής φτώχειας, η κυκλική δραστηριότητα στην παραγωγή και πρώτα και πάνω απ' όλα η αλλαγή του καταναλωτικού μοντέλου μπορούν να είναι η βάση και οι πυλώνες για τη νέα πράσινη ανάπτυξη.

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Domnule președinte, domnule comisar, stimați colegi, eu cred că poziția Europei, a Uniunii Europene a fost foarte clară pe acest subiect. Sigur, ne-am stabilit ținte, ne-am stabilit ținte pentru 2030, pentru 2050. Cred că următoarea comisie, care va fi validată cât de curând, trebuie să aibă o abordare pragmatică, să găsească măsuri adecvate, pentru a nu rata ținta 2050.

Însă cred că acest summit este important pentru că, din păcate, nu numai Europa poluează și, dacă noi avem pași importanți făcuți, știm bine că globul este afectat de poluarea din China, din SUA... Și cred că la acest summit reprezentanții instituțiilor europene trebuie să sublinieze acest lucru, iar acest summit trebuie să se termine cu măsuri concrete la nivel global și, desigur, părerea mea este că Organizația Națiunilor Unite trebuie să fie mai implicată pe acest subiect.

Și mai cred, domnule comisar, că este bine ca noul cadru financiar multianual – să nu uităm de bugete – să reflecte faptul că avem nevoie de investiții, avem nevoie de susținerea IMM-urilor pentru adaptarea la noile măsuri, iar fără investiții, fără inovare, fără cercetare, nu o să putem să atingem țintele.

Ellie Chowns (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, as we've heard, this Friday, around the world young people will spill on to the streets to demand that we all step up action to tackle the climate emergency. I've personally found their leadership on this issue both humbling and really inspiring.

In response to their call, there are three things that we can all do. We must stand in solidarity with the climate strikers, first of all. We must each reflect on our own behaviour and live more lightly on the planet. But, most importantly, as representatives, we must work for systemic change. We in Europe have built our prosperity on the use of fossil fuels and on resource exploitation, a model that we have exported worldwide. The result has been a world facing a climate crisis and unacceptable inequality. We therefore have a special responsibility to show leadership in achieving zero carbon and in tackling global inequality.

There's still insufficient ambition both in this House and in our national parliaments to tackle the climate crisis. Warm words about a Green New Deal need to be translated into policies: no trade policy that encourages deforestation and no investment in fossil fuels; instead, public transport, zero carbon buildings, green agriculture. We in Europe need to put our money where our mouth is and take this opportunity of zero carbon transition to build the societies and economies that our children deserve.

Mick Wallace (GUE/NGL). – Mr President, setting targets and talk of ambitions will not be worth a damn if the policies the EU adopts make things worse rather than better: The IPCC has called for near-term reductions in natural gas production of 15% by 2030 and 43% by 2050, relative to 2020. These kind of reductions are not compatible with the expansion of the current natural gas system, including the building of new, liquefied natural gas capacity and the importation of frack gas from the US.

So why are we expanding our liquefied natural gas systems? Because Shell, one of the biggest polluters on the planet, successfully lobbied the Commission in the lead-up to the 2014 EU climate pact. The idea that gas is a more suitable transition fuel than an energy approach based on renewables was created by Shell.

Commissioner, do you not think that achieving higher reduction targets is unlikely to be achieved unless we challenge neoliberalism?

Радан Кънев (PPE). – Г-н Председател, ние всички сме разтревожени от кризата на климата. Аз бих казал нещо повече – разтревожени сме от общата криза на околната среда, която застрашава водите, горите и производството на достатъчно храна както на нашия континент, така и на нашата планета. Но сме разтревожени от още нещо – от наличието на твърде много думи и твърде малко дела в тази политика. Въпросът е: защо?

Моят отговор е: защото никоя политика не може да бъде успешна, ако не е изначално обърната към нуждите на хората, т. е. да бъде политика, която спасява, а не съсипва фермерите; която подкрепя, а не разорява малкия бизнес; която гарантира запазването на металната, стоманената, алуминиевата индустрия в Европа; политика, която развива, модернизира енергийните и въглищни райони, а не ги закрива и обезлюдява.

За да имаме такава политика, вярвам, че трябва да се обърнем точно към тези млади хора, които протестират, и преди всичко да бъдем лидери в науката, иновациите и образованието – нещо, което Европа не е.

Carlos Zorrinho (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, as alterações climáticas são o maior desafio com que a Humanidade alguma vez foi confrontada. Fazemos face a um enorme desafio de mitigação, adaptação e proteção da biodiversidade. O consenso científico sobre estas prioridades é inquestionável, mas muitos põem em questão a evidência e retiram-se dos acordos multilaterais determinantes para a defesa do planeta.

É neste contexto que António Guterres convocou a Cimeira sobre a Ação Climática, em Nova Iorque, já na próxima semana com o objetivo de encorajar os chefes de Estado a aumentarem a sua contribuição para a redução de emissões. Na União Europeia fizemo-lo desde a primeira hora. Somos, a nível mundial, a economia que mais ambição tem demonstrado no combate às alterações climáticas, uma ambição reforçada pela nova Comissão.

No mandato anterior fiz parte da equipa de negociadores do Regulamento relativo à governação da União da Energia e conseguimos fechar um acordo forte, e podemos agora ir ainda mais longe. O desafio da descarbonização é um desafio global. Não hesitemos em partilhar o que conseguimos no plano legislativo e sejamos rápidos a concretizá-lo.

Senhor Comissário, nós temos um plano, temos 27 planos nacionais, temos um plano da União Europeia. Concretizemo-los!

(Fim das intervenções «catch the eye»)

Miguel Arias Cañete, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, thank you for this rich and engaging debate, which demonstrates that climate policy and development goals policy are truly at the heart of the European debate.

I will start with some words from Mr Peter Liese. Mr Liese says that sometimes we Europeans criticise ourselves too much, but I think that in New York the European Union, thanks to the efforts of this Parliament or the former Parliament, has a very good story to tell. Our energy legislation was approved in this House with 80%, on average, of the votes cast. Our climate legislation was approved here with more than 78% of the votes cast. There was wide support for the efforts that the Commission had put on the table to deliver ambitious climate policy. And where are we now, what's the story we can tell in New York?

We Europeans have the most ambitious nationally determined contribution (NDC) of all those expressed by the parties to the Climate Convention, reducing our emissions by at least 40% by 2030 compared with 1990. But what is most important is that we have all the binding legislation needed to achieve this target and in fact – thanks to Parliament's ambition – to over-achieve this target, because with the current legislation we will reduce our emissions by 45%.

So we have an ambitious target, we have binding legislation, and we have strong governance in the form of integrated national climate action plans. No other party in the world has this. If the government changes in the United States, the policy changes. In the European elections, elections result in different governments every time but the policy remains the same. So we have ambitious commitments, we have strong legislation and we have put on the table a very ambitious climate-neutral study for 2050.

In the October Council, 24 Member States endorsed this legislation – there are only four missing at the moment – and I have high expectations that in the December Council this climate neutrality for 2050 will be a reality in the European Union. It will be extremely important: climate neutrality in 2050 is much more ambitious than the pathways of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), because the IPCC says that globally we have to become climate neutral after 2060 and before 2080.

We will become the first major economy to become climate neutral in 2050, and that's a good story to tell, notably because, in the new Commission, the President-elect has committed to proposing a European Green Deal in the first 100 days of her term, and that will include the first European climate law to enshrine the 2050 climate neutrality target. We have a strong story to tell.

In addition, the President-elect wants to reduce emissions by 50% in 2030 and not by 2055. So we will go to New York with a good story. And we will go too with lots of support for developing countries to be able to implement climate action, because what is important is not that the European Union is the most ambitious it has ever been, and that we are delivering and will deliver on our commitments, but that we are also supporting other people in delivering and are doing outreach to convince the world that it has to work in this direction.

We are the biggest donor of climate finance to developing countries, more than EUR 20 billion every year, so we can be proud of what we have done. We have a lot of ground to cover because we have to work to be world leaders, because if we are world leaders – developing renewables, developing energy efficiency, phasing out fossil fuels and creating growth and jobs in the green economy – then the rest of the world will follow us.

So we have a responsibility because if the European Union does not assume the leadership then nobody will assume it – here, in climate policy or on the Sustainable Development Goals. I am pretty sure that the new Commission will take that responsibility on board and that this Parliament will give the next Commission the same degree of support that they gave to me.

When we made proposals, Parliament improved the proposals. Now with the commitments of the President-elect, I'm also sure that this Parliament will raise the level of ambition.

Just two comments. Becoming climate neutral is a revolution, an economic and social revolution, bigger probably than the industrial revolution, because it changes the way you produce energy, changes the way you heat and cool, changes how your industry is going to produce goods and the means whereby we transport ourselves. It's a revolution. Changing the way our agriculture has to reduce methane emissions and the use of fertilisers is a big revolution and it produces different impacts in different territories. The impacts are asymmetrical, but there must be a fair and just social transition, and for that the Just Transition Fund becomes fundamental.

I am extremely happy that the President-elect has declared the Commission will support the people in the regions most affected through a Just Transition Fund. This is fundamental because nobody should be left behind in the big transformation that the European economic and social system must envisage in the next few years. So we will be ambitious on climate policy but we also have to look after our citizens, our people, so that this is a socially just and fair transition.

A final very specific word on the comment made by Mr Ferreira. He referred to the impact of trade agreements and to Mercosur in relation to climate policy. I just want to say that the European Union is strongly committed to leveraging its trade policy to promote climate action in partner countries and to project our approach to climate policies and standards. We have delivered on this commitment in all the agreements negotiated in the past year.

The Mercosur Association Agreement follows this approach. It has an ambitious, dedicated 'trade and sustainable development' chapter, including legally binding commitments related to environmental protection and climate change, and with respect to the Paris Agreement it contains the strongest form of commitment. Each party commits individually to effectively implementing the Paris Climate Agreement, including in respect of the nationally determined contributions. This means that withdrawal from the Paris Agreement or a breach of its commitments will also be a breach of the EU-Mercosur Agreement, and the commitment to effective implementation of the Paris Agreement is particularly meaningful where partners have made a strong nationally determined contribution under the Paris Agreement.

Presidente. – O debate está encerrado.

Declarações escritas (artigo 171.º)

Rasmus Andresen (Verts/ALE), schriftlich. – Nur wenn wir die EU bis 2040 klimaneutral machen, werden wir die Klimakrise stoppen. Dafür müssen wir unsere Gesellschaft verändern. Wir brauchen einen Green New Deal mit massiven Investitionen in unser Klima und für soziale Teilhabe; tun wir das nicht, sorgen wir dafür, dass die ohnehin schon verheerenden Kosten von Klimafolgeschäden den kommenden Haushalten und damit den jungen Generationen aufgebürdet werden.

Um die Klimaziele der EU zu erreichen, tun die Mitgliedstaaten zu wenig. Wir sind weit davon entfernt, die selbst gesteckten Ziele einzuhalten – gerade Deutschland sollte endlich anfangen, ernsthaft zu handeln, und hier Vorbild sein. Scheinmaßnahmen und Symbolpolitik nützen nichts und sind ein Schlag gegen kommende Generationen und gegen die schon heute sozial benachteiligten Gruppen in der Bevölkerung. Auf sie werden die Kosten kurzfristig angelegter Gewinnmodelle langfristig abgewälzt – das wollen wir uns nicht gefallen lassen.

Millionen junge Menschen gehen seit Monaten weltweit auf die Straßen; sie fordern zu Recht, dass wir die eingeschlagenen Pfade unseres Handelns und Wirtschaftens verlassen und endlich neue Wege einschlagen: für ihre Zukunft und für unseren Planeten. Aus unserer Sicht fußt gerechte und zukunftsweisende Politik auf der Grundlage sofortiger, radikaler Maßnahmen für umweltverträgliche und klimagerechte Umstrukturierungen auf allen Ebenen unseres Handelns. Dafür brauchen wir Climate Action Now!

Livia Járóka (PPE), írásban. – Manapság több mint 2 milliárdra- a világ népességének egyharmada- becsülik a teljesen vagyontalanok és szegények arányát, akiket egyre súlyosabban fenyegetnek megélhetési és társadalmi problémák, beleértve az éghajlatváltozást is. A becslések szerint 2030-ra a klímaváltozás és éghajlati katasztrófák miatt további 100 millió embert érinthet súlyos nélkülözés és több mint 200 millió ember hagyhatja el a lakhelyét.

Ez azt jelenti, hogy az éghajlatváltozás akadályozhatja a világ szegényeinek felszámolására irányuló fontos globális erőfeszítések sikerét, mint például az ENSZ Fenntartható Fejlődési Céljait is, amely 15 év alatt szeretné felszámolni a mélyszegénységet. Az elszegényedett közösségek és az alacsony jövedelemű országok különösen érzékenyek az éghajlatváltozás hatásaira és a szegény sorsúak sokkal többet veszítenek az átlagnál.

Jobban ki vannak téve a természeti katasztrófáknak, mint például az árvizeknek, amelyek elmoshatják az eszközöket és a megélhetésüket, ráadásul emelik a vízi úton terjedő betegségeknek a veszélyét, ilyen például a malária. Ha sürgősen nem lépünk fel, a klímaváltozás a szegénység növekedését fogja katalizálni. Ezért szükségünk lenne egy éghajlatváltozás és szegénység leküzdésére irányuló platformra és egy átfogó szegénység elleni Európai Unió stratégiaira, ahol integrált megoldásokkal állhatunk elő ezen globális problémák orvoslására

3. Nombramiento del presidente del Banco Central Europeo – Candidata: Christine Lagarde (debate)

President. – Segue-se o debate sobre o relatório do Deputado Roberto Gualtieri sobre a nomeação do Presidente do Banco Central Europeu (N9-0023/2019 - C9-0048/2019 - 2019/0810(NLE)) (A9-0008/2019).

Antes de abrir o debate gostaria de informar, e recordar para aqueles que já o sabem, que, nesta sessão plenária, vamos testar o novo sistema de registo eletrónico dos pedidos «catch-the-eye» e «cartão azul».

As informações foram disponibilizadas aos Srs. Deputados. As instruções encontram-se nos vossos lugares e, portanto, para apresentarem os pedidos de intervenção «catch-the-eye» e «cartão azul» poderão utilizar os respetivos botões nas funções apropriadas dos vossos dispositivos eletrónicos de votação.

Enquanto o sistema estiver em teste, continua a ser possível fazer os pedidos pela forma antiga, tradicional, mas convidamos os Srs. Deputados a utilizarem a nova metodologia, sendo que isto significa que não se devem esquecer de trazer convosco o cartão de votação para que possam participar nos debates através destes instrumentos eletrónicos.

Vou então dar início ao nosso debate. Como os Srs. Deputados sabem, o relatório que está na base do nosso debate foi um relatório a cargo do nosso antigo colega Roberto Gualtieri que, entretanto, se tornou Ministro da Economia de Itália e a quem, certamente, desejamos as maiores felicidades no exercício dessas funções. Para a apresentação do presente relatório ele foi substituído pela nossa colega Irene Tinagli, que foi eleita, no dia ontem, presidente da Comissão ECON substituindo, portanto, também nessa tarefa o nosso colega Gualtieri. A ela desejamos igualmente os maiores sucessos no exercício das funções nessa importantíssima comissão deste Parlamento.

É a ela que dou, portanto, a palavra no início do nosso debate. A Sra. Tinagli tem 6 minutos de intervenção, já que manifestou interesse em esgotar o seu tempo de intervenção inicial e final na mesma intervenção de abertura.

Tem, então, a palavra a Sra. Tinagli.

Irene Tinagli, *Chair of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs*. – Mr President, with this report the European Parliament delivers its opinion on the appointment of the fourth President of the European Central Bank – an institution which became a fundamental pillar not only for the conduct of monetary policies but also for the whole process of Europe's economic integration.

The nomination of Christine Lagarde as the first woman to serve in this position, which is itself something historic, is happening fortuitously only a few months after the solemn celebration in this Chamber of the euro's 20th anniversary. The single currency is, first and foremost, a powerful economic tool. Not only is it the natural and indispensable complement to the single market, but it is also, as President Mario Draghi often recalls in his speeches, the prerequisite for preserving monetary sovereignty in an increasingly global and interconnected world.

The euro though is more than a mere economic tool: it is, above all, an ambitious political project. It is the cornerstone of a European Union of peace and prosperity and the indispensable instrument for protecting and supporting the European economic, social and political model – as we face the important transformations of our time.

Over the past 20 years – despite the imperfection and incompleteness of European economic governance – the single currency has shown amazing strength and resilience, even when confronted with one of the toughest economic crises in history. In addition to the political determination to maintain its integrity, the commitment by the European Central Bank and its Presidents – within their terms of reference, of course – to preserve the single currency through concrete monetary-policy action has made a fundamental contribution to protecting the euro and hence the well-being of all European citizens.

The 76 written answers provided by the candidate, which are attached to the report being voted on today, as well as the intense hearing before the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs on 4 September, show, I believe, not only Christine Lagarde's awareness of the task and the challenges ahead but also her suitability to take up the baton from her predecessors and to keep on pursuing this important mission.

The large consensus which the candidate obtained in the committee constitutes, I believe, a good basis for the outcome of today's vote. However, our task does not end here. In accordance with the Treaties and in line with our committee's work and that of Parliament as a whole, we will keep on monitoring the activity and decisions of the ECB, inter alia through quarterly monetary dialogues, annual reports and written questions from MEPs. As always, we will be demanding. And we will expect an institution that lives up to the fundamental task it is expected to perform.

If we want to reach our ambitious objectives, however, the strength and the stability of the euro is not sufficient. We need to add new institutions, new tools and truly European economic policies to monetary-policy measures.

It is imperative to pursue an authentic deepening of our economic and monetary union, as was stated too in the programme presented by Commission President-elect Ursula von der Leyen, which includes measures to ensure the full implementation of the social pillar, as well as growth-oriented revision of European economic governance. In this context, as co-legislator, we are ready to accept the challenge.

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Vice-President of the Commission*. – Mr President, it is always an honour to take part in the deliberations of the European Parliament. Today's vote on the candidate for the President of the European Central Bank is particularly important as the ECB plays a central role in EU economic policy. The Treaties enshrine the independence of the European Central Bank in its conduct of monetary policy. This is a principle that the Commission defends wholeheartedly as it is crucial for achieving the objective of safeguarding price stability.

But independence and accountability go hand in hand. Today's vote is an important manifestation of the mechanisms by which the ECB is held to account towards the European Parliament. The importance of the debates and the positions expressed by this Parliament are evident from the choice of the Council to propose Christine Lagarde as ECB President. I concur with the view of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON) and the ECB Governing Council that Christine Lagarde has all the credentials for the job. Her appointment is moreover a strong signal for gender balance within the ECB, something on which the Parliament has repeatedly taken a clear stance.

The ECB's role in the European economy cannot be overstated. The European Central Bank is tasked by the Treaties to secure price stability, a precondition for a well-functioning monetary area. The ECB's decisive actions during the financial and economic crisis have averted a serious threat of deflation and allowed the euro area economy to recover steadily in recent years. However, the low inflation environment has become a persistent feature within the most advanced economies since the post-crisis period and monetary policy alone is not able to change that. For a more balanced and effective policy mix monetary policy should be supported by structural reforms and fiscal policy.

On the side of structural reforms, we need to use all levers to facilitate the transformation which Europe's businesses and employees will need to embark on in the coming years amid challenges like climate change, the digital age and global and political uncertainty. As regards fiscal policies, within the limits of fiscal sustainability, fiscal policy can provide a boost to domestic demand and investment. Christine Lagarde also stressed this point in her opening statement in the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee and I could not agree more.

In the longer term, I strongly believe that the deepening of economic and monetary union is also essential. In particular, deeper and better connected European capital markets and a completion of the banking union are key building blocks for a stronger and more resilient euro area.

So I look forward to hearing your views and continuing our good cooperation with the European Central Bank.

Markus Ferber, *im Namen der PPE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, Herr Vizepräsident der Kommission, liebe Kolleginnen, liebe Kollegen! Die Geldpolitik der Europäischen Zentralbank ist ja in den letzten Jahren von vielen Beobachtern sehr intensiv diskutiert worden. Dabei ist oftmals auch der Eindruck entstanden, dass die EZB mehr Wirtschaftssteuerung betreibt als das Primärziel ihres Mandates zu verfolgen, nämlich Preisstabilität sicherzustellen. Allein die Entscheidung der vergangenen Woche, das Anleihen-Aufkaufprogramm wieder aufzunehmen, den Zins noch weiter zu senken, hat noch einmal Öl ins Feuer gegossen. Damit – und das stellen wir jetzt auch in der veröffentlichten Meinung fest – hat die Europäische Zentralbank unter Mario Draghi viel Vertrauen verspielt. Umso mehr freut es uns als EVP-Fraktion, dass Christine Lagarde sich bei der Anhörung im Wirtschafts- und Währungsausschuss klar zu den Zielen, wie sie im Vertrag verankert sind, bekannt hat.

Und, liebe Freunde der Sozialdemokratie, man ist nicht blind und taub, wenn man den Vertrag einhält, sondern da ist man rechtstreu. Ich bitte, dies doch auch mal zur Kenntnis zu nehmen.

Sich diesem Ziel zu verpflichten, bedeutet auf mittlere Sicht aber auch, dass die Europäische Zentralbank auf mittlere Sicht aus der ultralockeren Geldpolitik aussteigen muss. Die europäische Wirtschaft und auch einige Staaten der Europäischen Union können nicht dauerhaft am Tropf des billigen Geldes hängen. Vor diesem Hintergrund ist es auch löblich, dass sich Christine Lagarde zur Aufgabe gemacht hat, die Geldpolitik der Europäischen Zentralbank besser zu kommunizieren. Das ist dringend notwendig. Unabhängigkeit heißt nicht, dass man nicht rechenschaftspflichtig wäre über die Entscheidungen, die man getroffen hat. Zur besseren Kommunikation gehört aber auch, dass Frau Lagarde nicht nur erklärt, sondern auch zuhört und auf die Kritik an der Geldpolitik eingeht. Das sind die wesentlichen Zukunftsfragen für uns. Die EZB muss sich wieder auf ihr Mandat konzentrieren, muss ihre Entscheidungen besser kommunizieren. Wir

werden, weil Frau Lagarde beides zugesagt hat, heute als EVP-Fraktion der Ernennung von Frau Lagarde zustimmen.

Jonás Fernández, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señor presidente, decía que muchas gracias por la palabra, por este debate, señor Dombrovskis, por estar aquí.

Hace dos semanas teníamos en la Comisión ECON a la candidata a presidir el BCE, en una intervención que consideramos claramente satisfactoria. En primer lugar, porque la candidata Lagarde apostó claramente por mantener una línea continuista con la labor que Mario Draghi ha desarrollado en el BCE en los últimos años y que, sin duda alguna, ha logrado salvar al euro en momentos muy críticos.

Pero además, la candidata defendió revisar el marco conceptual de la política monetaria —el *framework* de la política monetaria—, obviamente dentro de los Tratados, señor Ferber, dentro de los Tratados. Pero dentro de los Tratados hay margen suficiente para revisar cuál es la manera de conseguir esa estabilidad de precios.

Y además, diré también -aprovechando que el comisario Dombrovskis está aquí- que necesitamos una política fiscal que acompañe claramente a la política monetaria, porque si no, no seremos capaces de conducir el ciclo.

Luis Garicano, *en nombre del Grupo Renew*. – Señor presidente, no estamos aquí para evaluar las credenciales de la señora Lagarde. La realidad es que hace dos semanas tuvimos una reunión de la Comisión de Asuntos Económicos en la que evaluamos sus credenciales y ella pasó el examen de una manera extremadamente satisfactoria.

Estamos aquí porque algunos diputados quieren usar la oportunidad para criticar las acciones del Banco Central Europeo durante los últimos siete años. La realidad es que el Banco Central Europeo ha sido la institución que ha estado dispuesta a luchar, la única que ha estado dispuesta a luchar contra una recesión y una crisis que hubiera tenido consecuencias impensables sin su actuación. Y algunos dicen: «la política monetaria está intentando hacer demasiado, el Banco Central Europeo está haciendo demasiado». Y es cierto, está haciendo mucho, sí, pero la razón no es porque el Banco Central Europeo lo desee, la razón es porque los Estados miembros no están haciendo su parte.

Los Estados miembros —como la señora Lagarde dijo en su intervención— pueden hacer bastantes cosas. Por un lado, la mitad de los Estados miembros de la Unión Europea no tienen déficit o están cerca de cero. Dado el contexto de tipos de interés, prácticamente cero, pueden invertir en su futuro, no porque sean muy buenos y quieran hacer el bien para los demás Estados, sino porque es lo correcto para sus propios ciudadanos.

De la misma manera, los Estados que tienen mucha menos capacidad fiscal, como mi propio país, como España, también pueden hacer algo. Pueden luchar para hacer esas reformas estructurales que ahora mismo están paralizadas —reformas en el mercado educativo o en el mercado laboral— y que permitan que los países adquieran una tasa de crecimiento mucho mayor.

Finalmente, nosotros, el Parlamento Europeo y las instituciones europeas podemos también hacer mucho más. Tenemos expedientes paralizados que tenemos que poner en marcha, como el seguro de depósitos común o el seguro de desempleo común. Tenemos muchas cosas que hacer para que la tasa de crecimiento se recupere.

En definitiva, nosotros votaremos a favor de la señora Lagarde, porque pensamos que está cualificada. Creemos que ella va a hacer su parte del trabajo. La pregunta es: ¿lo haremos nosotros?

Sven Giegold, *im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident! Die Diskussion um die Nominierung von Frau Lagarde ist eigentlich – finde ich – ein Stück eine Ablenkungsdiskussion. Es gibt doch ganz klar ein Signal, und die Ernennung von Frau Lagarde ist im Grunde eine Bestätigung des Grundkurses unter Mario Draghi und der EZB. Es war die EZB, die den Euro gerettet hat; ohne die EZB hätten wir keine Preisstabilität mehr, denn die unstabilste Währung ist auch eine, die keine Preisstabilität mehr hat. Eine zerfallende Währung ist per se nicht stabil.

Deshalb sind diese Angriffe, die EZB habe ihr Mandat nicht erfüllt, völlig an der Sache vorbei. Stattdessen haben wir eine Situation, dass die Mitgliedsländer der Eurozone ihre Aufgaben nicht machen, und zwar sowohl in den Ländern, die mit wirtschaftlichen Problemen zu kämpfen haben, die bei den Reformen, bei sozial gerechten Reformen, die gleichzeitig die Wirtschaft ankurbeln, nicht richtig vorankommen, genauso aber auch in den Überschussländern, die derzeit Schulden abbauen, statt Raum zu geben, damit wirtschaftliche Entwicklung gerade auch im Sinne von einer ökologischen und sozialen Transformation unserer Wirtschaft in Gang kommt.

Deshalb freuen wir uns, dass Frau Lagarde klar gesagt hat: Die Mitgliedstaaten müssen eine gemeinsame Fiskalpolitik machen. Das ist die Voraussetzung, damit die Geldpolitik nicht mehr die Risiken eingehen muss, die mit einer überlaxen Geldpolitik einhergehen. Und wir haben auch klare Signale: erstmals eine Frau an der Spitze der EZB und eine Begründung der gemeinsamen Geldpolitik. Das sind klare Zusagen von Frau Lagarde, darüber freuen wir uns.

Gerolf Annemans, *namens de ID-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, collega's van de niet meer op EPP en socialisten gebaseerde bipartiete maar van de inmiddels tripartiete meerderheid in het Europees Parlement. U hebt ondanks de uitbreiding van uw meerderheid toch nog met allerlei kunstgrepen uw Duitse en Franse aanduidingen op de EU-topposities slechts met de hakken over de sloot door het Parlement gesleept. Voor de Macron-vondst Ursula von der Leyen hebt u zelfs de 5 Stelle in uw meerderheidsspel moeten betrekken. Ja, zelfs aan een substantieel deel van de Polen uit de ECR heeft zij haar nipte verkiezing te danken.

Een van de sleutels van uw wankelende meerderheid is de aanduiding van uw ECP-voorzitter, in de persoon dus van mevrouw Lagarde. Wat we zeker nu al weten is dat ze een slaaf zal zijn van uw onrealistische eurozonebeleid. Zij zegde de heropstart van het helikoptergeld van Draghi blindelings te zullen steunen, zodat u, dames en heren van deze meerderheid, dit continent verder onder schulden en vooral onder staatsschulden zult kunnen bedelven, en mevrouw Lagarde onder uw applaus dat steeds meer begint te klinken als het orkest op de Titanic. Wij zullen uiteraard tegen stemmen.

Derk Jan Eppink, *namens de ECR-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, de ECB, de Europese Centrale Bank is eigenlijk de machtigste instelling van de Europese Unie. Maar waar staat deze instelling op dit moment? Als we kijken naar vorige week zien we dat ook deze instelling sterk verdeeld is. De eurozone zelf is al verdeeld tussen noord en zuid en verschillende landen, instellingen, politiek tussen landen en binnen landen. Maar vorige week was er een vergadering van de ECB, waar de heer Draghi nog even een slotschot loste en bekendmaakte dat hij doorgaat met het drukken van geld, het maken van meer schulden enzovoort. En natuurlijk de rente zo laag mogelijk houden. Diverse voorzitters van Europese banken, waaronder de Nederlandse en Duitse nationale centrale banken, hebben zich daartegen gekeerd. Zij vertegenwoordigen 60 % van de economische waarde binnen de eurozone: 60 % van de economische kracht heeft zich uitgesproken tegen meneer Draghi, maar meneer Draghi gaat gewoon door. Ik had graag gezien wat mevrouw Lagarde daar nou van vond, maar zij is hier niet. Zij voert de politiek van de lege stoel. En wie zijn de verliezers in dit gehele spel? Dat zijn de spaarders die hun spaartegoeden zien verminderen. Dat zijn de gepensioneerden die hun pensioenen zien krimpen en dat zijn jongeren die niet aan de bak komen en je vraagt je af: waar moet dat naar toe met deze euro? Er is een nakende recessie en de burgers staan weerloos aan die krachten blootgesteld.

Manon Aubry, *au nom du groupe GUE/NGL*. – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, quelle drôle de sensation, pour les nouveaux élus que nous sommes, d'avoir ce débat sur la présidence de la Banque centrale européenne sans que la candidate unique, M^{me} Lagarde, daigne être présente.

Pourtant, il est plus que jamais temps de débattre ensemble sur le rôle de la BCE et les objectifs qu'elle doit poursuivre. Car la monnaie est politique et n'a rien de neutre, ni pour le climat, ni pour les inégalités.

Les inégalités, ce mot que Christine Lagarde connaît bien et qu'elle avait à la bouche quand elle était présidente du FMI, n'apparaît que deux fois dans son questionnaire. En revanche, la stabilité des prix y apparaît 26 fois. Quand on lui parle du climat ou de la réduction des inégalités, elle nous fait la même réponse: stabilité des prix. Résultat: la BCE a injecté plus de 2 000 milliards d'euros sur les marchés, dont à peine 10 % s'est retrouvé dans l'économie réelle. Le reste a alimenté une bulle spéculative.

Voilà trop longtemps que la politique monétaire sert les plus riches. Même Mario Draghi le reconnaissait. Malgré la crise – et l'exemple grec l'aura tragiquement démontré – la BCE ne prévoit toujours pas de mettre sa politique au service du plus grand nombre.

Alors nous avons entendu Christine Lagarde et la Commission européenne parler à l'unisson de Green Deal. Mais est-elle prête à arrêter de financer les responsables de la catastrophe? Non. Est-elle prête à mettre fin aux 63 % de rachats de dettes privées qui bénéficient à des entreprises polluantes? Non. Est-elle prête à prêter directement aux États pour qu'ils financent la transition écologique? Toujours pas. Est-elle prête à privilégier les financements verts? Non. Il ne faudrait surtout pas apporter de distorsion au sacro-saint marché. Et tant pis si la planète doit en payer le prix.

Cette obsession du marché n'est pas adaptée aux urgences de notre temps. Choisissons plutôt une politique monétaire au service de la transformation écologique et sociale, une BCE qui s'assure que l'argent réinvesti dans l'économie réelle cesse de financer les activités polluantes, assume de réguler le marché pour favoriser les actifs verts.

Voilà ce que nous aurions dit à M^{me} Lagarde si elle avait daigné être présente aujourd'hui à nos côtés. Voilà sur quoi devraient porter nos échanges plutôt que de préparer un vote couru d'avance pour une personne condamnée en justice dans son pays.

Comptez sur nous pour ne pas baisser la garde dès aujourd'hui et tout au long du mandat qui s'ouvre pour une politique monétaire qui serve ce qu'elle doit servir en priorité: les peuples et la planète.

IN THE CHAIR: MAIREAD McGUINNESS

Vice-President

Λευτέρης Νικολάου-Αλαβάνος (NI). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, το κεφάλαιο, οι κυβερνήσεις ανησυχούν για μια νέα καπιταλιστική οικονομική κρίση. Προετοιμάζονται θωρακίζοντας το χρηματοπιστωτικό σύστημα, τις τράπεζες, τα μεγάλα μονοπώλια, που την περασμένη δεκαετία έλαβαν εκατοντάδες δισεκατομμύρια σαν ενέσεις ρευστότητας, χρήματα που κόβονται από τους μισθούς και τις συντάξεις, τα δικαιώματα των λαών της Ευρώπης.

Η πολιτική της τραπεζικής ολοκλήρωσης του δημοσιονομικού χώρου απαιτεί ξεκαθάρισμα των τραπεζών από κόκκινα δάνεια, παραχωρώντας τα και σε ιδιωτικά funds, εστιάζοντας στους εκατοντάδες χιλιάδες μικροοφειλέτες σε ολόκληρη την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, που εκβιάζονται με πλειστηριασμούς και κατασχέσεις, αντί στις τεράστιες οφειλές των επιχειρηματιών.

Η ανάδειξη Προέδρου της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας δεν είναι ζήτημα προσώπου. Η δεδομένη αντιλαϊκή αποστολή της Τράπεζας της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης δεν αλλάζει. Όποιος αναλάβει θα εφαρμόσει απαρέγκλιτα την ενισχυμένη εποπτεία, τα ευρωπαϊκά εξάμηνα, τα ματωμένα πρωτογενή πλεονάσματα, ενώ τα όποια σχέδια χαλάρωσης θα αφορούν και πάλι τις μεγάλες επιχειρήσεις. Αυτό είναι το καπιταλιστικό σύστημα.

Οι λαοί της Ευρώπης πρέπει να οργανωθούν και να παλέψουν για τις σύγχρονες ανάγκες τους κόντρα στο κέρδος και την εξουσία των μονοπωλίων σε κάθε χώρα.

Luděk Niedermayer (PPE). – Madam President, I was a central banker for most of my working life so this is an emotional issue for me, in addition to being an issue of very great importance. We were lucky to have excellent chiefs of the European Central Bank (ECB), such as Jean-Claude Trichet and Mario Draghi, and we must keep the standard high. It was said that the European Central Bank has changed in the last decade and so the profile of the appointment has changed. Instead of looking for top-notch academia economists or experienced central bankers, those who make appointments also look for people not just with strong economic backgrounds but with political skills and experience of the financial sector. From this point of view, Christine Lagarde, for me, is an excellent choice and she has my full support.

And I guess her appointment was supported at the lengthy hearing of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, which I had the privilege to chair a few days ago. Still, we have one great risk ahead of us: it seems to me that many ministers and politicians believe that some mysterious magic monetary policy can serve as a replacement for necessary, badly needed economic reforms. That's not right and I believe Christine Lagarde is well-positioned to stress the importance of policies other than just monetary policy. I hope she will be listened to carefully by ministers.

Κώστας Μαυρίδης (S&D). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, θα επικεντρωθώ σε δύο θέματα που αφορούν το μέλλον και τον δίκαιο ανταγωνισμό. Πρώτον, η καθυστέρηση στην ολοκλήρωση της Τραπεζικής Ένωσης με πανευρωπαϊκή εγγύηση των καταθέσεων δεν οφείλεται τόσο σε τεχνικά θέματα, τα οποία υπάρχουν μεν αλλά είναι διαχειρίσιμα. Οφείλεται περισσότερο σε πολιτική εναντίωση από συγκεκριμένα κράτη μέλη. Έχουμε, δηλαδή, τώρα Τραπεζική Ένωση χωρίς κοινή προστασία των μικροκαταθετών. Έχουμε «κοινό σπίτι χωρίς κοινή οροφή». Και αυτό δεν είναι τεχνικό θέμα. Τα κράτη που επλήγησαν ιδιαίτερα από την τραπεζική κρίση αποδέχτηκαν τους δύο πρώτους πυλώνες της Τραπεζικής Ένωσης με τεράστιο οικονομικό και κοινωνικό κόστος.

Και το δεύτερο θέμα αφορά την ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία, η οποία απαιτεί την εξάλειψη των καταχρηστικών πρακτικών, που δυστυχώς χρησιμοποιούνται και επιβιώνουν, ιδιαίτερα, λόγω της δύναμης που έχουν οι τράπεζες απέναντι στους δανειολήπτες. Για αυτό, λοιπόν, αναμένουμε από την Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα να έχει πιο ενεργητικό και δραστικό ρόλο.

Stéphanie Yon-Courtin (Renew). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, il est bien étonnant de préjuger de la politique future de la BCE, alors même que sa nouvelle présidente, Christine Lagarde, ne prendra ses fonctions que dans quelques semaines.

Vous le savez tous ici, si M^{me} Lagarde est confirmée à la tête de la Banque centrale européenne, elle devra composer avec le Conseil des gouverneurs. Ils seront alors vingt-cinq autour de la table, les six membres du directoire de la BCE et les dix-neuf gouverneurs des pays de la zone euro. Ce sera donc, vous le savez, un fonctionnement collégial.

Permettez-moi de vous rappeler que, lors de son audition devant notre commission ECON, M^{me} Lagarde a décrit en trois points la façon dont elle envisageait la fonction. D'abord, elle a rappelé qu'il fallait respecter le cadre réglementaire de la BCE. Elle a ensuite indiqué qu'elle s'adapterait au contexte des bouleversements actuels avec agilité et pragmatisme. Elle a également dit, et cela a été rappelé par notre collègue du PPE, M. Ferber, qu'il fallait davantage inclure la société civile, les jeunes, pour mieux informer l'opinion publique.

Par ailleurs, elle a indiqué que le cœur de son action à la tête de la BCE serait basé sur la prise en compte du risque climatique, qui sera une priorité macro-économique pour la BCE. Celle-ci devra donc progressivement éliminer les titres financiers des entreprises polluantes qu'elle détient dans son bilan. M^{me} Lagarde a également rappelé que des mesures de relance budgétaire seront nécessaires, vu les défis à court terme pour la zone euro. Certes, la BCE mène actuellement une politique de taux d'intérêt très bas, ce qui peut être inquiétant pour les épargnants. Toutefois, cela permet aux citoyens également d'emprunter, à des primo-accédants d'acquérir pour la première fois une propriété et aux entreprises d'emprunter pour investir et créer de l'emploi.

Chers collègues, soyons positifs, en faisant, certes, preuve de vigilance, mais aussi d'audace, car en plus d'être une femme, la première à exercer cette fonction, Christine Lagarde présente un atout fort pour relever les défis de la BCE pour les prochaines années, à savoir son expérience à la tête du FMI et le pragmatisme qui la caractérise. À nous donc de travailler dans un esprit collectif et constructif dans l'intérêt économique, social et écologique de nos concitoyens et de nos entreprises.

Ernest Urtasun (Verts/ALE). – Señora presidenta, con Alemania al borde de la recesión, el riesgo de un *Brexit* duro y la guerra comercial, pedirle en estos momentos al Banco Central Europeo que suba los tipos y no continúe con sus políticas no convencionales es un auténtico suicidio y, además, no seguiría con el mandato que tiene encomendado. Por lo tanto, esas políticas tienen que continuar; desde luego, compensando esos efectos negativos que existen: atajar la burbuja inmobiliaria a través de las orientaciones macroeconómicas y también —cómo no— dejar de comprar activos vinculados al carbono, que en los últimos años no han favorecido la lucha contra el cambio climático. Eso debe hacerse.

Pero también, como han dicho muchos de mis colegas, las medidas del Banco Central Europeo deben ser compensadas con la política fiscal. Esos Estados que tienen margen para gastar deben hacerlo ante el ciclo que se avecina. Y también quiero pedirle al comisario Dombrovskis que abran el debate en la Comisión sobre las normas fiscales. Se lo ha pedido el Consejo Fiscal Europeo; lo dijo incluso el señor Regling, del MEDE, el otro día: que las normas deberían revisarse. No cedan ante algunos Estados miembros ante ese debate y preséntenos una revisión de las normas fiscales, como estaba previsto conforme a la voluntad inicial de esta próxima Comisión Europea.

Antonio Maria Rinaldi (ID). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, vorrei semplicemente fare una considerazione. Negli anni passati tutta l'azione di politica monetaria della BCE si è rivelata essere fallimentare per un motivo molto semplice: non si è riusciti a trasmettere questa enorme capacità di liquidità all'economia reale.

Gli imprenditori di tutta Europa non hanno goduto dell'enorme massa di liquidità anche, ad esempio, con le operazioni di *quantitative easing*. Noi abbiamo bisogno di quello. Poco importa se gli interessi sono zero o addirittura negativi: gli imprenditori europei desiderano avere prontamente un accesso al credito.

La signora Lagarde, in audizione alla commissione ECON, non ha saputo dare delle risposte sufficienti a questa domanda. Certo, le azioni della BCE servono per salvare l'euro, ma non certo le imprese di tutta Europa.

Il nostro voto è certo: per quanto ci riguarda sarà negativo.

Johan Van Overtveldt (ECR). – Voorzitter, mevrouw Lagarde, want zij zal het wel worden, komt naar de ECB op een kritiek moment en dit om drie redenen.

Ten eerste, vorige week donderdag hebben we een toch wel uniek spektakel meegemaakt dat binnen de ECB in termen van economisch gewicht meer dan 50 % tegen het beleid van Draghi gestemd heeft en bovendien ook nog eens twee leden van het directiecomité van meneer Draghi. Dat is nog nooit vertoond.

Tweede punt van groot belang voor mevrouw Lagarde is uiteraard dat het institutionele kader voor de euro nog altijd niet afgewerkt is. De bankenunie is niet afgewerkt. De kapitaalmarktenunie die absoluut noodzakelijk is, dient ook verder in gang gezet te worden.

Derde punt en misschien wel het meest belangrijke is dat de ECB – en mevrouw Lagarde dus – stilaan moeten beseffen dat er meer uitleg dient te komen en meer verklaring over wat ik noem de negatieve neveneffecten van het beleid dat nu al jarenlang wordt volgehouden en vorige donderdag verder geïntensiveerd is. Ik refereer aan het duidelijk verhoogde risico op financiële instabiliteit. Dit beleid zet aan tot de vorming van zeepbellen. Ten tweede: verzekeringsmaatschappijen, pensioenfondsen en banken hebben het alsmaar moeilijker om aan hun verplichtingen te voldoen en zullen dat met de intensivering van beleid nog meer gaan ervaren. Het derde neveneffect is uiteraard de aanslag op de spaargelden van de modale burger. Ten vierde en vaak onderschat, maar zeer reëel: het fenomeen van de *zombie firms* dat verder versterkt wordt en de misallocatie van kapitaal die daarmee gepaard gaat.

José Gusmão (GUE/NGL). – Senhora Presidente, este Parlamento Europeu prepara-se para dar um parecer positivo para que se coloque na posição mais importante para as políticas económicas na Europa uma representante da doutrina económica do choque e pavor, da política económica da salvação pela recessão, que presidiu a programas de ajustamento com consequências tão trágicas do ponto de vista social como contraproducentes do ponto de vista económico e orçamental, e é pena que muitos dos que, mais cedo ou mais tarde, criticaram esses programas de ajustamento estejam disponíveis para esquecer este percurso com base em meia dúzia de declarações públicas mais ou menos simpáticas.

É verdade que não é função da Presidente do BCE libertar a zona euro de uma estratégia de crescimento medíocre viciado em instrumentos, na utilização permanente de instrumentos extraordinários de política monetária, mas sabemos que temos uma crise climática hoje e que vamos ter uma crise económica num futuro próximo, e sabemos também, pelo seu percurso, que Christine Lagarde será uma força de oposição às políticas orçamentais e de serviços públicos que vamos precisar de ter para lhes dar resposta.

Márton Gyöngyösi (NI). – Madam President, as a Hungarian-born Belgian economist, the father of the euro, Alexandre Lamfalussy, made it crystal clear that a single currency cannot be successful without a fiscal union, which entails a common social, labour and – most importantly – wage policy.

Twenty years after the introduction of the euro, the EU and the eurozone are characterised by enormous social differences, mass migration of the work force from the periphery to the core countries, high youth unemployment and the demographic decline. If the European Union and the European Central Bank do not deal with structural differences, social problems will lead to increased state debt – with further instability of the euro – and economic austerity will lead to anti-EU sentiment, weakening European cooperation.

This is why I would like to see in this report some references to how the ECB will mitigate this risk of a social disaster and what the policy recommendations are to reduce the wage gap between the periphery and the core countries, and between the old and the new Member States.

Othmar Karas (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, Herr Vizepräsident, meine Damen und Herren! Viele von uns konnten sich in den Gesprächen mit Frau Christine Lagarde in den letzten Jahren, aber jetzt auch im Wirtschafts- und Währungsausschuss davon überzeugen: Sie ist die richtige Persönlichkeit zur richtigen Zeit am richtigen Ort. Wir brauchen für eine unabhängige Europäische Zentralbank, für eine unabhängige Währungspolitik, Menschen mit Erfahrung und Unabhängigkeit, mit Weitsicht und Augenmaß, mit einer ruhigen Hand und Vertrauen, mit globaler Verantwortung, mit der Bereitschaft, zu kommunizieren, dem Willen, die Entscheidungen verständlich zu begründen, und Konsequenz, Verlässlichkeit und Klarheit. Wir benötigen eine glaubwürdige, entschlossene Sprecherin oder Sprecher, einen General Manager der zweitgrößten Währung der Welt, der gemeinsamen Währung der Europäischen Union, unseres Euro.

Und wir haben es heute schon gesagt: Machen wir es uns nicht zu leicht! Eine erfolgreiche Währungspolitik kann den Mangel an einem gemeinsamen Euro-Budget, an einer fertiggestellten Banken- und Kapitalmarkt-Union, einer gemeinsamen Wirtschaftspolitik, Budgetpolitik, Strukturpolitik nicht ersetzen. Machen wir es uns nicht so leicht, indem wir die Niedrigzinsen kritisieren und auf der anderen Seite damit nur von eigenen Reformen ablenken – machen wir auch unsere Hausaufgaben!

Aurore Lalucq (S&D). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, c'est mon premier mandat en tant qu'eurodéputée, et je dois vous avouer que je suis effectivement un peu étonnée que M^{me} Lagarde ne soit pas là pour pouvoir nous écouter, que ce débat se réduise finalement à une succession de temps de parole. En tant que parlementaire, j'avoue que je suis un peu étonnée, mais c'est ainsi.

Concernant M^{me} Lagarde, son audition était très sincèrement assez séduisante. Deux inquiétudes néanmoins. La première porte sur le fléchage de la politique monétaire. S'il était absolument essentiel de poursuivre une politique monétaire généreuse, il faut absolument s'assurer qu'elle ne vienne pas nourrir la spéculation et qu'elle soit fléchée vers l'investissement vert pour éviter une nouvelle crise à la fois bancaire et financière. Sur ce point, nous n'avons pas assez de garanties.

Autre point justement la gestion des crises. Huit ans c'est long et nous traverserons probablement une crise bancaire et financière. Or, sur ce sujet, Christine Lagarde n'a pas brillé au moment de sa gestion de la crise grecque. Elle a peut-être changé, elle est peut-être sortie de son carcan idéologique, néanmoins, nous n'avons pas assez, me semble-t-il, de garanties sur comment elle va empêcher une crise et comment elle va gérer la prochaine.

Dragoș Pîslaru (Renew). – Doamna președintă, alegerea președintelui Băncii Centrale Europene nu reprezintă doar schimbarea unei persoane, ci și oportunitatea de a avea o nouă agendă la nivel european care să conțină cel puțin trei puncte esențiale.

În primul rând, avem nevoie de un sistem monetar și bancar transparent, care să redea încrederea, să crească încrederea cetățenilor europeni; un sistem care să aibă toleranță zero la corupție și la spălarea de bani și să ofere o viziune nouă cu privire la lucrurile importante de pe noua agendă. Este vorba de schimbările climatice, de digitalizare și, bineînțeles, de incluziunea socială.

În al doilea rând, este nevoie de un plan de acțiuni ferm pentru îmbunătățirea accesului la finanțare al întreprinderilor mici și mijlocii, având în vedere fragmentarea de astăzi și faptul că astăzi antreprenorii sunt descurajați în multe țări europene.

În al treilea rând, este nevoie de a îmbunătăți și a întări sprijinul consolidat pentru țările ce nu sunt încă în zona euro, pentru accesul la această zonă prin îndeplinirea criteriilor de convergență reală și nominală. Este nevoie ca, pentru țări precum România, să fie întărit acest sprijin pentru facilitarea reformelor.

Acestea sunt elementele unei noi agende pe care le dorim de la conducerea doamnei Lagarde.

Stasys Jakeliūnas (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, the financial industry has been playing a destabilising role in the economy for decades now. In some cases it conducts monetary policy itself. I am afraid, on the basis of her hearing and the written answers, that Ms Lagarde doesn't seem fully to understand all that and all its implications. Massive leverage, reckless lending – mortgage lending especially – at teaser rates, variable rates and lending in foreign currencies, especially Swiss francs, contributed to the consumer abuse and also to the global crisis.

Some of the emerging risks have been mentioned already, but I would like to mention the new risks coming with the advent of financial technologies, especially the so-called crypto currencies which are not currencies at all. I'm not sure that Ms Lagarde understands all these emerging risks.

Wishing her well and wishing the European Central Bank well, I think there is work to be done by the ECB, as well as other supervisory institutions and Parliament here, in order to prevent a global crisis and to protect our citizens.

Gunnar Beck (ID). – Frau Präsidentin! Heute wählt das Plenum Christine Lagarde zur EZB-Präsidentin. Im ECON-Ausschuss bekannte sie vor zwei Wochen offen, die EZB hätte seit 2010 die EU-Verträge regelmäßig missachtet, und auch künftig – so Lagarde – seien Transgressionen im öffentlichen Interesse zu erwarten. Das allein macht Lagarde zur ehrlichsten Machtpolitikerin westlich von Prag.

Lagardes Vorgänger, Draghiavelli, hat mehr Geld gedruckt und freudiger Recht gebrochen als irgendjemand irgendwo. Dennoch wuchs die EU langsamer als die gesamte entwickelte Welt ohne Japan, und die Eurozone wächst noch langsamer als die Rest-EU. Die DZ-Bank schätzt Draghis Enteignung der deutschen Sparer allein auf satte 650 Milliarden Euro. Und weil es die Leute um ihr hart erarbeitetes Geld bringt und nur Draghis „cronies“ bereichert, verordnete Draghi dem todkranken Euro letzte Woche noch einmal die doppelte Dosis Medizin.

Der Euro liegt seit 2010 auf der Intensivstation, und dass er nun morphiumabhängig wird, stört niemanden, weil der Patient dort bis zum Exitus nimmermehr fortkommt.

Frau Lagardes Freimut ehrt sie, weil sie die Missachtung des Rechtsstaats in der EU ganz offen eingesteht. Aber im öffentlichen Interesse handelt sie nicht. Die EZB sozialisiert die Kosten unverantwortlicher Regierungspolitik und privater Habgier. Der Euro ist kein öffentliches Gut und die EZB leider nicht mehr als ein Finanzknecht.

Eugen Jurzyca (ECR). – Vážená pani predsedajúca, pri uvoľnenej menovej politike sú vlády demotivované robiť nutné reformy.

Keď máme zlé ekonomické prostredie, napríklad vysokú mieru klientelizmu, pravidiel, pri ktorých sa neoplatí pracovať, alebo podnikateľské prostredie, pri ktorom sa neoplatí investovať, tak musíme mať odbornosť a odvahu tieto nedostatky napravovať my – politici. Nemôžeme sa dlhodobo spoliehať, že túto prácu na mikroekonomickej úrovni za nás vyrieši uvoľnená menová politika. Pri uvoľnenej menovej politike sa málo hovorí o jej negatívnych vedľajších efektoch, o znehodnocovaní úspor, o prežívaní a udržiavaní pri živote zombie firiem a zombie projektov, ktoré až v ťažkých časoch ukážu, ako sú pre ľudí nebezpečné.

Európskej centrálnej banke by pomohla vyššia transparentnosť, napríklad poskytovanie informácií minimálne Európskemu dvoru audítorov tak, aby si cost – benefit analýzy politik ECB mohli robiť aj nezávislé inštitúcie. Obávam sa, že ECB ani po zmene vo vedení nezlepší svoje fungovanie a podľa toho budem aj hlasovať.

Piernicola Pedicini (NI). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, noi abbiamo provato con tutte le nostre forze a trovare anche soltanto un motivo per poter sostenere la nomina di Christine Lagarde a Presidente della Banca centrale europea, senza successo, purtroppo. Perché Christine Lagarde si è resa corresponsabile di tutte quelle politiche che hanno fatto aumentare a dismisura il debito pubblico nell'Unione europea soltanto per salvare le banche private, tedesche e francesi in primo luogo.

E una volta che quel debito pubblico è cresciuto a dismisura si sono giustificate quelle politiche di austerità che poi sono diventate le riforme strutturali che prima ha citato Valdis Dombrovskis, il che vuol dire compressione dei salari, tagli dei servizi, tagli delle pensioni: una gigantesca opera di redistribuzione dal basso verso l'alto, dove i ricchi sono diventati sempre più ricchi e i poveri sempre più poveri.

Adesso ci vengono a raccontare che le cose sono cambiate, che hanno capito di aver sbagliato, ma è troppo tardi! Noi non daremo la fiducia a Christine Lagarde. Aspettiamo prima di vedere che i cambiamenti siano reali e dopo, forse, ne possiamo riparlare.

José Manuel García-Margallo y Marfil (PPE). – Señora presidenta, estoy convencido de que el Consejo ha elegido a la señora Lagarde porque es lo más parecido a Draghi que han podido encontrar en el mercado. Y a mí me alegra, porque sin Draghi hoy no existiría el euro. Y me alegra, porque probablemente estamos en vísperas no solo de una desaceleración, sino de una nueva crisis.

Y dicen los expertos que esta crisis no será una crisis de demanda, como fue la crisis de Lehman Brothers, sino una crisis de oferta propiciada, auspiciada por factores geopolíticos, que yo enumeraría con cuatro letras: A, B, C, I; América, Brexit, China, Irán.

Esos factores geopolíticos pueden generar una ruptura de las cadenas de producción y una caída de la riqueza mundial. Y la respuesta tendrá que ser, a corto plazo, la política monetaria que Draghi y Lagarde propugnan; la política presupuestaria, sobre todo en aquellos países que tienen margen, como Alemania; pero, a medio plazo, será necesaria una política de reformas estructurales holística. Y ahí el Parlamento tiene que estar.

Joachim Schuster (S&D). – Frau Präsidentin! Die Politik der Europäischen Zentralbank gerät zunehmend in die Kritik. Drohen Negativzinsen auch für kleine Sparguthaben? Kann die lockere Geldpolitik ihre Ziele noch erfüllen oder sind nicht neue Gefahren am Horizont zu sehen? Das sind Fragen, die die öffentliche Meinung umtreiben.

Frau Lagarde hat dem Ausschuss erklärt, die Niedrigzinspolitik der Europäischen Zentralbank fortführen zu wollen. Ich bin fest davon überzeugt: Das ist richtig so! Zinserhöhungen oder eine straffere Geldpolitik würden in der aktuellen Lage der Konjunktur den Rest geben. Ein Abgleiten in eine Rezession wäre unvermeidlich.

Aber – und auch das hat Frau Lagarde betont – allein kann es der Zentralbank auf Dauer nicht gelingen, die Konjunktur zu stützen und die Geldwertstabilität zu sichern. Dringend gefordert ist ebenfalls eine expansive Finanz- und Haushaltspolitik, und hier ist gerade Deutschland in der Verantwortung. Das Beharren auf der schwarzen Null ist ökonomisch falsch. Wir brauchen eine deutliche Steigerung der Investitionen, nicht nur um die Konjunktur zu stützen, sondern auch um die Herausforderung des Klimawandels zu bewältigen.

Engin Eroglu (Renew). – Frau Präsidentin! Wir leben in der Eurozone seit mehreren Jahren in einer Zinsphase, die niedriger ist als die Inflation. Inmitten der Banken- und Wirtschaftskrise vor fast zehn Jahren waren Zinssenkungen bei über 2 % ausdrücklich auch angebracht. Angekommen sind wir jetzt jedoch in einer Niedrigzinsphase, einer Negativzinsphase von 0,5 %. Manche Mitgliedstaaten nutzen diese historische Chance jedoch nicht. Sie reden sie sich schön, aber sie nutzen diese Chance nicht. Daher möchte ich die EZB auf die Gefahren hinweisen, die wir in dieser Verbindung haben, nämlich dass Mitgliedstaaten ihre Haushalte nicht in den Griff bekommen, und dass Zinssparer wie auch meine Generation und die Generation der kommenden Kinder bei dieser Zinslast keine vernünftige Altersvorsorge mehr aufbauen können.

Ausdrücklich ist die dritte Möglichkeit, die im Raum steht, dass wir wieder in Wirtschaftskrisen reingeraten. Beispielhaft dafür sind die vergangenen Wirtschaftskrisen, die wir in den USA, Griechenland, Irland und Spanien hatten, die mit einer Negativzinspolitik verbunden waren. Daher möchte ich die EZB unter neuer Führung ausdrücklich darauf hinweisen: Bitte haben Sie Mut, reden Sie mit den Mitgliedstaaten und weichen Sie von dem strikten Kurs von Herrn Draghi ab!

Jordan Bardella (ID). – Madame la Présidente, M^{me} Lagarde a annoncé que, sous sa présidence, la Banque centrale européenne serait, je cite, «plus transparente et plus accessible aux citoyens». Elle a déclaré que le rôle de la BCE était de se faire comprendre des citoyens, pas uniquement des marchés.

Ce sont de bien beaux discours pour une partisane acharnée du libre-échange total. Au-delà des discours, M^{me} Lagarde n'a pas estimé important de se présenter devant les représentants élus des peuples européens. En méprisant le seul organe démocratique des institutions européennes, la présidence de M^{me} Lagarde commence mal.

Il faut rappeler que celle qui a été à la tête de plusieurs autorités politiques et économiques d'envergure n'est jamais passée par un suffrage populaire ou démocratique dans son propre pays, la France. Il faut rappeler que M^{me} Lagarde fut la présidente d'un grand cabinet d'avocats d'affaires international américain et, bien sûr, la directrice générale du FMI. Par conséquent, nous pouvons penser que son regard et ses intérêts se portent ailleurs, bien au-delà de l'Europe.

Plutôt que l'intérêt des peuples, c'est l'intérêt d'une élite mondiale, plus particulièrement celui du monde des affaires anglo-saxon que M^{me} Lagarde défend. Sa volonté affichée de faire du changement climatique un sujet prioritaire pour la BCE est une contradiction fondamentale au regard de la politique de libre-échange mondial menée par l'Union européenne.

Enfin, les peuples européens sont de plus en plus nombreux à constater les inepties de la monnaie commune et ses dégâts sur le pouvoir d'achat. La zone euro est la zone économique qui détient la plus faible croissance au monde et la Banque centrale européenne est pourtant la seule banque centrale au monde à faire de la lutte contre l'inflation son obsession exclusive. Elle doit désormais s'attaquer à la résolution du chômage, à l'investissement massif dans la création d'emplois et au développement de secteurs d'avenir.

Nous avons des questions démocratiques essentielles à poser à M^{me} Lagarde et nous ne pouvons que déplorer son absence et son mépris à l'égard des peuples européens que nous représentons.

Ivan Vilibor Sinčić (NI). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, mi danas razgovaramo ovdje o financijskom *establishmentu* Europe. Prošli put smo razgovarali o političkom *establishmentu*, ali u koju svrhu ako gospođe Christine Lagarde ovdje nema? Mi pričamo o najvažnijoj poziciji u Europskoj uniji, o šefu Centralne banke. Nje ovdje nema. Međutim, pitat ću je isto pitanje koje sam pitao prošli put gospođu von der Leyen, hoće li Europska unija, ovako ustrojena, preživjeti sljedeću dužničku krizu, sljedeću ekonomsku krizu. Ali ne mora mi ona odgovoriti. Ja već unaprijed znam odgovor na to pitanje. Gledali smo ju kao šeficu MMF-a, kao dio trojke kako je radila u Grčkoj. Gledali smo mjere štednje, gledali smo smanjenje mirovina, to da ljudi ne mogu doći do lijekova, gledali smo destrukciju cijelog jednog društva. I sada u to pakleno kolo eurozone, koja će puknuti opet čim dođe nova kriza, želite ugurati i moju Hrvatsku. Pa neće ići!

Ono o čemu smo razgovarali maloprije, a što je izrazito povezano s ovom temom financijskih sustava, je ekonomija, odnosno prelazak na zelene politike. Što usmjerava ekonomske politike? Pa financijski sustav. Znači, da bi prešli na zelene politike, mi moramo reformirati i financijski sustav. Govorimo o zelenoj tranziciji, gdje je monetarna tranzicija, trebamo nove ljude s novim idejama, a Christine Lagarde nije novi čovjek s novim idejama, ona je *establishment*. To je *business as usual* i ta vojvotkinja od mjera štednje neće dobiti moju potporu.

Enikő Győri (PPE). – Elnök Aszony, tisztelt Képviselőtársaim! Én egy olyan ország, Magyarország polgárait képviselem, amely még nem tartozik az euróövezethez. Tervezi a belépést, de tanulva a múltból, csak akkor, amikor arra kellőképp felkészült. Ez folyamatban van, hisz gazdaságunk erősödik, a strukturális reformoknak köszönhetően jelenleg Magyarország gazdasága mutatja a legnagyobb növekedést az Unióban, 5,2%-kal pont a négyszeresét az uniós átlagnak, és ennek előnyeit a polgárok a növekvő munkabérekben keresztül már élvezhetik.

Azt szeretném kérni a központi bank leendő elnökétől, hogy vezetése alatt az intézmény olyan monetáris politikát kövessen, mely tekintettel van az eurózóna- és nem eurózóna-országok érdekére. Mindannyian az egységes piac részesei vagyunk, ezért ne történjen olyan az eurózónában, amely nehezíti a kívül levők életét. Például az önálló eurózóna-költségvetésre vonatkozó javaslat is ilyen. Mérlegelje az új elnök, hogy azt ne a nem eurózóna országoknak járó források terhére alakítsák ki. Végezetül azt kérném, hogy ne gördítsenek mindig újabb feltételeket az eurót majd bevezetni kívánó országok útjába, nem volna fair a feltételek folyamatos változtatása.

Marek Belka (S&D). – Madam President, the President of the European Central Bank is also a caretaker of the euro, as Mr Draghi made clear in 2012.

The euro is, along with the common market, the most important asset that the European Union has ever created. The euro is not only an obligation and a constraint on national economic policy but also 'an exorbitant privilege', to paraphrase the term used in relation to the US dollar. It is the second global currency. Eurozone Member States do not need to worry about a liquidity shortage in time of crisis and they do not need to waste national resources to accumulate international currency reserves, to name just two of the benefits.

The policymakers have to be reminded of this and it has to be preached to the general public.

I'm sure that Christine Lagarde's splendid communication skills can be fully utilised, including in relations with the non-euro countries like Poland. I wish her luck in her job and declare my full support for her.

Roman Haider (ID). –Frau Präsidentin! Die Bilanz der Politik der EZB unter Präsident Draghi ist eine schreckliche: Pleiteregerungen und Spekulanten sind mit billigstem Geld versorgt worden, und Immobilienpreise sind auf einem Rekordhoch. Bezahlt hat das alles der kleine Sparer, dessen erspartes Geld nichts mehr wert ist, der keine Zinsen mehr bekommt und sogar noch fürchten muss, mit Negativzinsen für seine Konsumverweigerung bestraft zu werden. Und was kommt jetzt, nach dem schmutzigen Deal zwischen „lame duck“ Merkel und „Mister Staatsverschuldung“ Macron: Gib mir die Kommission, dann bekomme ich die EZB, dann bekommst du die EZB. Nach diesem schmutzigen Deal dürfen wir uns auf weitere acht Jahre zu Lasten der europäischen Bürger einstellen. Wer spart, verliert; wer nachhaltig wirtschaftet, ist der Dumme.

Dass Frau Lagarde im Ausschuss die Abschaffung des Bargelds und direkte Negativzinsen für Sparer nicht ausgeschlossen hat, nehme ich als gefährliche Drohung. Wenn es dann kein Bargeld mehr gibt, das man verstecken kann, kommt wahrscheinlich doch noch die zehnpromzentige Enteignung aller Vermögenswerte, wie Frau Lagarde ja schon in ihrer Zeit als IWF-Chefin gefordert hat. Mir graut schon jetzt.

Γεώργιος Κύρτσος (PPE). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, στηρίζουμε την κυρία Lagarde και περιμένουμε να στηρίξει και αυτή εμάς, δηλαδή, την ελληνική οικονομία. Θεωρούμε θετική την δήλωση που έκανε στην Επιτροπή Οικονομικής και Νομισματικής Πολιτικής για μελλοντική μείωση των ελληνικών πρωτογενών πλεονασμάτων. Αυτό θα βοηθήσει την οικονομία μας να λειτουργήσει καλύτερα.

Θεωρούμε, επίσης, ότι πρέπει να μας βοηθήσει στην πιο γρήγορη και αποτελεσματική διαχείριση των «κόκκινων» δανείων («non-performing loans»). Νομίζω ότι ο κύριος Ενρίκ, του Ενιαίου Εποπτικού Μηχανισμού, πηγαίνει στην ίδια κατεύθυνση. Στηρίζουμε σε αυτούς για να βοηθηθούν οι ελληνικές τράπεζες που έχουν πρόβλημα και η πραγματική οικονομία. Επομένως, η κυρία Lagarde μπορεί να κάνει πολλά για την ελληνική οικονομία.

Το τρίτο που περιμένουμε είναι να μας εντάξει στο πρόγραμμα ποσοτικής χαλάρωσης, που, δυστυχώς, χάσαμε με ευθύνη της προηγούμενης κυβέρνησης την περίοδο Draghi. Αλλά, βέβαια, για να ενταχθούμε στο πρόγραμμα ποσοτικής χαλάρωσης, που συνεχίζεται, θα πρέπει τα ελληνικά ομόλογα να αποκτήσουν επενδυτική βαθμίδα. Αυτό, ακριβώς, θα επιδιώξουμε. Όσο καλύτερα πάει η ελληνική οικονομία τόσο το καλύτερο για την ευρωζώνη.

Pedro Silva Pereira (S&D). – Senhora Presidente, a Sra. Christine Lagarde tem, obviamente, as qualificações e a experiência pessoal e política para ser Presidente do BCE, mas os socialistas votarão a favor da sua nomeação por três razões fundamentais: primeiro, porque defende a continuidade da política monetária de Mário Draghi, e nós precisamos à frente do BCE de quem esteja disposto a vencer as resistências para fazer o que for preciso para salvar o euro, mesmo que seguindo uma política monetária não convencional; segundo, porque já está a ser uma voz a favor de uma política orçamental da Comissão e dos Estados mais amiga do crescimento; e terceiro, porque se apresenta como uma aliada do Parlamento na reforma da União Económica e Monetária, na conclusão da União Bancária e no reforço da legitimidade democrática da governação económica europeia. Foi isso que a Sra. Lagarde prometeu a este Parlamento, e é isso que exigiremos que cumpra.

Alfred Sant (S&D). – Madam President, mine is another voice in support of the nomination of Madame Lagarde to the governorship of the European Central Bank, even if I disapprove of her political orientation and part of her political record. I agree too that fiscal policy is needed to bolster growth at eurozone level, otherwise Madame Lagarde will face an impossible task. Monetary policy on its own cannot respond to the challenge of sustaining growth and creating worthwhile jobs.

However, I must highlight an issue that is forgotten when the European Central Bank makes decisions: the plight of medium to smaller banks in the euro zone, some operating in the smaller Member States. They are considered systemic banks, or almost systemic banks. Their areas of activity relate to niche national markets in which larger banks have scant interest. They service many SMEs in their home markets which would otherwise struggle to find working capital. These banks are being burdened with the full weight of centrally established regulations on a one-size-fits-all basis under SGP and banking union procedures. They are being rendered less and less profitable, and we shouldn't view this as a minor problem.

Frances Fitzgerald (PPE). – Madam President, firstly I would like warmly to welcome the appointment of Ms Lagarde to the European Central Bank. With her appointment we now have women as presidents of two of the most important institutions in Europe, the ECB and the Commission. This is huge progress for gender equality in Europe.

Clearly, major challenges remain, not least in the economic and financial areas. Recently, at the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, Ms Lagarde made a very important point: the ECB needs to understand and explain itself to people, not only to the markets. That should be a critical and crucial guiding principle for the ECB: listening to our citizens. Trust in the EU institutions has been below 50% since 2008, a clear sign that the Union was still suffering from the after-effects of the financial crisis.

In Ireland, our population went through enormous pain during the crisis, and legacy issues remain. Irish variable mortgage rates are double the eurozone average rates, our banking system is highly concentrated, with little outside competition, and we face the challenges of Brexit. I would conclude by saying that I want to express my appreciation to Ms Lagarde for her help to Ireland during the very difficult years of the financial crisis.

Esther de Lange (PPE). – Voorzitter, ik denk dat de verschillende standpunten in dit debat twee dingen laten zien. Allereerst de enorme uitdaging waar Christine Lagarde voor staat. En als er iemand geschikt is voor deze baan, dan is zij het wel. Negentien lidstaten in de eurozone, 28 (tussen haakjes 27) in de Europese Unie met uiteenlopende economieën. Zij zal dan toch uiteindelijk met Europese oplossingen moeten komen. Het tweede dat dit debat laat zien, is volgens mij dat wij terecht hebben gekozen voor een onafhankelijke Europese Centrale Bank, die niet aan de leiband loopt van de politiek.

Dat gezegd hebbende, moet mij toch één ding van het hart: de neveneffecten van het beleid van de Europese Centrale Bank, raken mensen het hardst die hard gewerkt hebben, die zelf hun pensioen hebben opgebouwd en die gespaard hebben voor hun oude dag en voor hun kinderen. Christine Lagarde heeft in haar hoorzitting aangegeven dat zij oog wil hebben voor deze neveneffecten van het beleid. Vervolgens heeft Mario Draghi maatregelen genomen die de banken ontzien, maar niet de pensioenfondsen. Dat zou dus mijn oproep zijn in dit debat, om ook te kijken naar de neveneffecten op pensioenfondsen. Want laten we wel wezen: er wordt dezer dagen veel gesproken over de Europese manier van leven, en dan is mijn vraag: is de Europese van manier van leven het opbouwen van schulden en het opzadelen van de volgende generatie met een schuldenlast die ze nooit aankunnen of is dat ook het waarden van de hardwerkende middenklasse die zelf spaart voor hun pensioen? Ik hoop het laatste.

Catch-the-eye procedure

President. – I would like to thank everyone for cooperating with the electronic tests that we have run. I received seven, and I will take everyone who is on the list.

Peter van Dalen (PPE). – Voorzitter, voor mij is de kernvraag: welk beleid gaat de nieuwe ECB-voorzitter voeren? De ECB heeft zeven jaar geleden een bijdrage geleverd aan het tot stand brengen en een halt toeroepen aan de financiële, economische crisis, maar vervolgens werd dat het crisisbeleid onverkort doorgezet, jammer genoeg. Er werd 260 miljard euro besteed aan risicovolle staatsobligaties en meneer Draghi wil nu dat beleid zelfs intensiveren. Gelukkig vertrekt hij.

Er is momenteel goedkoop geld genoeg tegen een rente van vrijwel nul, maar daardoor komen mensen die pensioen genieten in de problemen, is sparen zinloos geworden en voeren diverse zuidelijke lidstaten in de eurozone noodzakelijke hervormingen niet uit. President van de Nederlandse Centrale Bank Klaas Knot heeft hier met enkele collega's terecht tegen geageerd: stoppen dus met dit beleid. En ik hoop dat mevrouw Lagarde het roer omgooit.

Pedro Marques (S&D). – Madam President, contrary to the position of some Members of this Parliament, we consider that it is of the utmost importance the fact that Ms Lagarde pledged to maintain the current monetary policy of the ECB, particularly the non-traditional instruments adopted in these last few years and also as recently as last week. That policy saved the euro and we can't afford to go back into times of adventure, so we backed the nomination of Ms Lagarde, but I wonder if the hawks of monetarism are biting at several Groups in this European Parliament, namely, but not surprisingly, the PPE.

We do need an active monetary policy of the kind we've had from 2014. However, as the candidate for President of the ECB referred, it is also time for fiscal policy to do its part. Countries with strong macroeconomic surpluses have to do more on the eve of a possible stagnation of the European economy. But in the long term, more has to be done. We need to swiftly complete the banking union and need...

(The President cut off the speaker)

Helmut Geuking (ECR). – Frau Präsidentin, sehr geehrte Damen und Herren! Vom Grundsatz her erst einmal: Verantwortungsvolle Politiker sollten aufhören, den Euro öffentlich schlechtzureden, denn der Euro ist besser, als er hier schlechtgeredet worden ist. Angesichts dieser globalen Welt ist er alternativlos.

Frau Lagarde von der EZB sage ich: Die Draghi-Politik in diesem Sinne sollte nicht weitergeführt werden. Ich glaube, das muss jedem klar sein. Ungehinderter Konsum in unserer Gesellschaft erzeugt neue Blasen. Diese Blasen werden die nachfolgenden Generationen entsprechend abtragen müssen. Frau Lagarde steht dafür, diese Politik weiterzumachen. Wir sollten jedoch hier unsere Chancen nutzen, mit neuen Impulsen, sprich einer neuen Leitung in der EZB, die Abkehr von der jetzigen Finanzpolitik einzuleiten und entsprechend wieder die Sparer zu stärken und nicht die Schuldner, und dass wir hier einen Ausgleich entsprechend finden, um europaweit ...

(Die Präsidentin entzieht dem Redner das Wort.)

João Ferreira (GUE/NGL). – Senhora Presidente, o BCE, o FMI e a Comissão Europeia constituíram a troika que interveio em Portugal, na Grécia e na Irlanda. A Sra. Lagarde – que vai do FMI para o BCE – foi grande defensora da chamada «austeridade expansionista» que inspirou os programas da troika, programas cujos resultados foram devastadores do ponto de vista económico e social.

Ora, perante o desastre, a Sra. Lagarde desculpou-se com multiplicadores, mas não mudou as suas convicções. Ainda não há muito tempo juntou-se às ameaças da Comissão Europeia para avisar Portugal que não podia relaxar na sua política orçamental, defendendo a manutenção ou o reforço das restrições orçamentais.

Ora, é esta a candidata que, aqui, no Parlamento – a direita, os socialistas e, surpresa, ou talvez não, até os Verdes – se preparam para apoiar. Há uma certeza que temos: na próxima crise do euro, para Lagarde e para quem a apoia, esgotados que estão alguns dos instrumentos, os salários e o emprego serão os fatores de ajustamento. Ora, a banca e a moeda são coisa demasiado séria para estarem debaixo do controlo da Sra. Lagarde só ...

(A Presidente retira a palavra ao orador.)

Franc Bogovič (PPE). – Spoštovana predsedujoča, euro je močna valuta, ki jo uporablja kar 330 milijonov Evropejcev v 19 državah. To je valuta, ki pokriva 16,5 % svetovnega bruto družbenega prihodka, 30 % svetovne trgovine. Poleg močnega eura potrebujemo tudi strukturne reforme po državah, ki bodo zagotavljale stabilno politiko, tako gospodarsko kot socialno, in dajale še večjo stabilnost življenju znotraj posameznih držav.

Potrebujemo močne bančne sisteme v posameznih državah, ki ne bodo imeli terjatev in na koncu slabih bank, kot smo bili temu priča v času krize. Euro in pa Centralna banka sta se že dokazala pri reševanju problemov v Grčiji, na Irskem, verjamem, da bosta kos izzivom tudi v prihodnjih letih, tudi v primeru krize.

Gospa Christine Lagarde je strokovna, izkušena oseba, ki uživa veliko zaupanje, zato bo tudi dobila moj glas pri glasovanju.

Erik Bergkvist (S&D). – Fru talman, ledamöter. Europa står inför stora ekonomiska utmaningar och vi kan samtidigt se att penningpolitiken har sina begränsningar och det måste vi komma ihåg. Vi kan inte som Trump säga att det är Federal Reserves fel eller att det är penningpolitikens fel. Vi ser i dag att vi har både historiskt låga räntor inom ECB-området och att stödköpsprogrammen kanske inte har fått den effekt vi ville ha alla gånger utan till och med lett till ökad ojämlikhet.

Man kan inte sänka räntan så mycket mer under noll och vi vet också att det har väldigt lite effekter. Det här konstaterade John Maynard Keynes redan för 80 år sedan. Vad som återstår då är att vi måste ta både debatter och diskussioner och tänka efter ordentligt i parlamentet om hur vi använder finanspolitiken. I dag är den lite samordnad och ibland inte alls. Den kan till och med vara kontraproduktiv mot penningpolitiken. Ska vi lyckas nu när vi ser att ekonomin mattas av och vi kanske till och med är på väg in i en lågkonjunktur, då måste vi hitta sätt att få en finanspolitik som fungerar ihop med penningpolitiken i eurozonen och i hela Europa. De utmaningar vi står inför: klimat, ekonomi, sociala frågor, migration, kräver mer samarbete, inte mindre samarbete.

Δημήτριος Παπαδημούλης (GUE/NGL). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, θα ήθελα να εκφράσω την λύπη της Ευρωομάδας της Αριστεράς γιατί η κυρία Lagarde σήμερα αποφάσισε να απουσιάσει και να ονομπάρει το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο. Ίσως είναι συνηθισμένη από τον τρόπο που λειτουργούσε ως επικεφαλής του Διεθνούς Νομισματικού Ταμείου. Αλλά εδώ η Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα οφείλει να ενισχύσει τη δημοκρατική λογοδοσία.

Δεν μπορούμε να υπερψηφίσουμε την κυρία Lagarde. Ως Ευρωομάδα της Αριστεράς δεν θα την ψηφίσουμε γιατί είμαστε αντίθετοι με τις συνταγές που εφάρμοσε ως επικεφαλής του Διεθνούς Νομισματικού Ταμείου, σε χώρες όπως η Ελλάδα, οι οποίες προκάλεσαν απίστευτη ύφεση, τριπλάσια ανεργία και τεράστιο κοινωνικό πόνο. Δεν έχουμε πειστεί ότι θα εφαρμόσει θετικές πολιτικές.

Είναι όμως αλήθεια ότι, εκτός από τις πολιτικές της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας, είναι η ώρα και τα κράτη μέλη να εφαρμόσουν μια επεκτατική δημοσιονομική πολιτική υπέρ της ανάπτυξης.

Stanislav Polčák (PPE). – Paní předsedající, já podpořím jmenování paní Lagardeové do Evropské centrální banky, protože je to skutečně odborník s mezinárodním renomé. Pro mě je důležité, že obhájí dokončení bankovní a měnové unie a také, že chce vysvětlit velmi složitou měnovou politiku lidem. Myslím, že lidé by měli být srozuměni se základními pilíři naší měnové politiky. Česká republika ještě nemá jednotnou měnu euro, ale já vnímám euro jako hodnotnou a stabilní měnu.

Byla zde vyslovena teze, že fiskální politika by měla podporovat vždy růst. Já bych proti ní chtěl postavit tezi o stabilitě systému, byť používá ECB třeba v poslední době určité netradiční nástroje, tak ta stabilita systému je pro mě důležitá a je spojena se jménem paní Lagardeové. Takže já ji rozhodně podpořím a jsem velmi rád, že ta diskuse dnes svědčí v její prospěch.

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Doamna președintă, domnule comisar, stimați colegi, desigur, Banca Centrală Europeană este importantă pentru dezvoltarea economică și stabilitatea monedei. Doamna Christine Lagarde are pregătirea necesară și a prezentat în cadrul comisiei competențele pe care le deține pentru acest post. Eu am criticat și mulți dintre noi am criticat Banca Centrală Europeană de multe ori pe bună dreptate din cauza politicilor pe care le-a avut. Eu cred că doamna Christine Lagarde, dacă va primi votul Parlamentului, are în față noi provocări.

Eu vin dintr-o țară care nu este în zona euro, dar, cu toate acestea, înregistrează a doua creștere din Uniunea Europeană și cred că managementul care trebuie făcut acum la Banca Centrală, ținând cont și de previziunile unor experți, că poate să vină o nouă criză financiară, este acela de a nu împărți Uniunea Europeană în două: zona euro și zona non-euro. Trebuie să se gândească cum poate sprijini, mai ales pe cei mici, întreprinderile mici și mijlocii, și cum poate să facă politici care să nu ducă la acea dobândă negativă pe care domnia-sa ... (Președinta a retras cuvântul vorbitoarei)... și-a asumat-o.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Valdis Dombrovskis, Vice-President of the Commission. – Madam President, as this House knows the Commission is not involved in the appointment process of the President of the European Central Bank (ECB). We do, however, have a keen interest in this process and in listening carefully to your views on macroeconomic policymaking in the euro area and in the EU.

We're happy that the Council named a person with all the relevant credentials to be a successful ECB President. We also welcome the fact that for the first time this person is a woman.

President. – Commissioner, a moment please, because this is very disrespectful. Colleagues who have just entered the Chamber, would you mind listening, or at least sitting down in your seats quietly, without conversation. And perhaps, Commissioner, you could bring your microphone a little closer and we will try and resume your speech.

Valdis Dombrovskis, Vice-President of the Commission. – Madam President, the new ECB President has a challenging task ahead, both in the immediate future and in the longer term. In the immediate future, in the event that ECB intervention is needed to avert a slowdown in economic activity, we share the view expressed by Christine Lagarde during her hearing that there is a need to reconsider whether the past overburdening of monetary policy can be improved upon by better support of structural reforms and fiscal policy. We also share the conviction that ...

President. – Commissioner, I am sorry.

Colleagues, I do not want to name and shame because I don't know all of your names, but I would ask you please ... Colleagues to my right, I'm really sorry, I am trying to keep order. I'm not going to do 'Order, order!' because I'm not in the House of Commons – although I would love to have that same voice and influence. Perhaps you would just please sit down quietly in your seats. Commissioner Dombrovskis is responding to our debate.

I won't resume the debate unless there is quiet. This is just not good enough.

Valdis Dombrovskis, Vice-President of the Commission. – Madam President, we also share the conviction that the deepening of economic and monetary union will be beneficial for the functioning of the euro area, making it more resilient and it will also foster the international standing of the euro.

After an exchange of views with the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs earlier this month on the candidacy of Christine Lagarde, it is clear that Parliament also shares this assessment.

I hope that this alignment of views will pave the way to continuing the excellent cooperation among the three institutions, in full respect of their respective roles, under the ECB Presidency of Christine Lagarde.

President. – Thank you, Vice-President, for your forbearance.

The debate is closed.

Written statements (Rule 171)

Nicola Beer (Renew), schriftlich. – Wir haben heute als Abgeordnete der Freien Demokraten im Europäischen Parlament gemeinsam mit unserer Renew Europe-Fraktion der Nominierung von Christine Lagarde zugestimmt. Frau Lagarde bringt internationale Erfahrung auf höchster Ebene mit und ist zweifellos qualifiziert für das Amt der EZB-Präsidentin. Wir werden über die Ausrichtung der Geldpolitik mit ihr streiten und haben klare inhaltliche Erwartungen an ihre Amtsführung. Es bedarf der möglichst kurzfristigen Ankündigung einer schrittweisen Beendigung der zu lange zu freigiebigen Geldpolitik. Was in einer Krise vielleicht notwendig und richtig war, muss endlich zurückgeführt werden, um Schäden zu vermeiden und die EZB handlungsfähig zu halten.

Stets mehr und billigeres Geld hat die Regierungen in den Mitgliedstaaten in ein Wachkoma versetzt und Sparer enteignet, statt die Wirtschaft voranzubringen, Arbeitsplätze zu sichern und zu schaffen. Es fehlt heute an Strukturveränderungen, um staatliche und private Investitionen in die Zukunft anzukurbeln. Angesichts eines sich abzeichnenden Abschwungs in Europa müssen die Mitgliedstaaten bessere Rahmenbedingungen für Wachstum, Innovation und Investitionen schaffen; die Flutung des Geldmarkts durch die EZB läuft dem entgegen. Daher werden wir als Freie Demokraten im Europäischen Parlament Frau Lagardes Vorhaben und ihre Umsetzung kritisch begleiten und darauf achten, ob diese zu einer Erneuerung Europas und zur Sicherung des Wohlstands auf dem Kontinent beiträgt.

Csaba Molnár (S&D), írásban. – A legutóbbi Eurobarometer felmérés szerint az Európai Unió állampolgárainak 62%-a vélekedik pozitívan az Európai Gazdasági és Monetáris Unió működéséről és az euró bevezetéséről. A legtöbb, még euróvezeten kívül eső ország célja, hogy a bevezetés feltételeit minél hamarabb teljesítve az eurózóna tagjává váljon. Figyelembe véve a világgazdaság jelenlegi helyzetét, ahol a gazdasági növekedés folyamatos visszaesése figyelhető meg, növelve ezzel egy újabb gazdasági válság kockázatát, még inkább sürgetőbb a közös valutához való csatlakozás. Vannak viszont olyan tagállamok, ahol az euró bevezetését nem az uniós szerződésekből fakadó kötelezettség teljesítéseként, hanem politikai kérdésként látatják.

Miközben Románia, Horvátország és Bulgária kifejezett céldátummal rendelkezik az euró bevezetését illetően és mindent megtesznek az euróvezethez való csatlakozásért, addig vannak olyan tagállamok, köztük Magyarország, akik bár szintén kötelezettségként vállalták a közös valutához való csatlakozást, nem rendelkeznek még céldátummal a végrehajtást illetően. Az Európai Unió és az uniós állampolgárok közös érdeke, hogy ne lehessen mondvacsinált politikai okokra hivatkozva távol maradni az eurózónától.

Marco Zanni (ID), per iscritto. – La signora Lagarde: nel valutare la sua nomina a Presidente della BCE, non possiamo non ricordare il suo ruolo negli ultimi otto anni al Fondo Monetario Internazionale. Lei ha imposto e avallato politiche economiche che hanno aggravato la situazione di paesi in difficoltà. Abbiamo ancora in mente la crisi della Grecia e le indicazioni dell'FMI che hanno aumentato disoccupazione e povertà tagliando la spesa pubblica, dalla sanità alle pensioni. Ma la contrarietà alla sua nomina deriva anche dalle poche risposte che ci ha fornito in audizione. Il fallimento delle politiche monetarie degli scorsi anni circa l'obiettivo statutario della BCE è sotto gli occhi di tutti. Il tanto agognato target d'inflazione inferiore ma prossimo al 2% è sempre più lontano segnalandoci un forte rallentamento dell'economia dell'area Euro. Nonostante la politica monetaria accomodante di questi anni – tagli ai tassi, LTRO, TLTRO, quantitative easing – è palese il malfunzionamento dei canali di trasmissione dalla politica monetaria all'economia reale. Il risultato è aver inondato di liquidità il sistema bancario, salvando l'Euro e le banche, ma lasciando in ginocchio imprese e cittadini. Lei non ha fornito elementi che possano far pensare a un cambio di rotta. Per questo il mio voto e quello del mio gruppo è negativo.

VORSITZ: OTHMAR KARAS

Vizepräsident

4. Modificación del orden del día: véase el Acta

5. Composición del Parlamento: véase el Acta

6. Turno de votaciones

Der Präsident. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Abstimmung.

(Abstimmungsergebnisse und sonstige Einzelheiten der Abstimmung; siehe Protokoll.)

6.1. Nombramiento del presidente del Banco Central Europeo – Candidata: Christine Lagarde (A9-0008/2019 - Roberto Gualtieri)

6.2. Nombramiento del vicepresidente del Consejo de Supervisión del Banco Central Europeo (A9-0007/2019 - Roberto Gualtieri)

6.3. Establecimiento del intercambio automatizado de datos respecto a los datos de matriculación de vehículos en Irlanda (A9-0003/2019 - Juan Fernando López Aguilar)

Der Präsident. – Damit ist die Abstimmungsstunde geschlossen.

7. Explicaciones de voto

8. Correcciones e intenciones de voto: véase el Acta

(Die Sitzung wird um 12.06 Uhr unterbrochen.)

VORSITZ: OTHMAR KARAS

Vizepräsident

9. Reanudación de la sesión

(Die Sitzung wird um 15.01 Uhr wieder aufgenommen.)

10. Aprobación del Acta de la sesión anterior: véase el Acta

11. Interferencia electoral extranjera y desinformación en los procesos democráticos nacionales y europeos (debate)

Der Präsident. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärungen des Rates und der Kommission zur Einmischung des Auslands in demokratische Prozesse der Mitgliedstaaten und Europas und entsprechender Desinformation (2019/2810(RSP)).

Tytti Tuppurainen, President-in-Office of the Council. – Mr President, honourable Members, almost four months have passed since the European Parliament elections, which were combined in several Member States with other elections. No major interference campaign was identified, but fact-checkers and academia have nonetheless flagged malicious activity from foreign sources to influence turnout and voter preferences. We have to be constantly prepared. We should make sustained efforts to raise awareness, increase preparedness and strengthen the resilience of our democracies to hybrid threats, including disinformation. This is a priority for our presidency.

Long-term efforts are needed to enhance the resilience of our democratic societies since disinformation and hybrid threats in general are a permanent part of our security environment. The evolving nature of the threats and the growing risk of malicious interference and online manipulation associated with the development of artificial intelligence and data-gathering techniques require continuous assessment and an appropriate response.

The Council welcomes the Commission's intention to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the implementation of commitments made by online platforms and other signatories under the code of practice. The Council is monitoring the implementation in its working parties and will be ready to examine action that could be proposed by the Commission by the end of the year.

Before the end of the year, we expect the Commission report on the 2019 European Parliament elections, which should pay particular attention to preparedness and resilience, geared to withstanding interference in elections. More broadly, it will be interesting to hear the thoughts of the Commission on possible further initiatives it might take.

We attach great importance to this subject, as has been repeatedly underlined by the European Council, including in the new Strategic Agenda. The EU institutions and the Member States have an important role to play, in terms of their respective remits, in the protection of democratic processes. This requires concerted efforts by the EU and the Member States and also by civil society and the private sector. Our response has to be comprehensive, with the focus on both the internal and external dimensions of the threat.

Since the conclusions the Council adopted in March on securing free and fair European elections, which welcomed the Commission electoral package and the Joint Action Plan Against Disinformation, much has been done both by the EU institutions and in individual Member States: the organisation of regular meetings of the European Election Cooperation Network, in which Member States share expertise and good practice and jointly identify threats; the setting up of the Rapid Alert System whereby national contact points in Member States rapidly share information on disinformation campaigns; the enhancement of strategic communication on European values and policies; the strengthening of the European media ecosystem by facilitating networks of independent fact-checkers; the promotion of media and digital literacy and awareness-raising activities to protect the integrity of the electoral process, together with the private sector and civil society; the assessment of cyber-threats in the electoral context and of the measures to address them and preserve the integrity of the electoral system; the monitoring, as already mentioned, of the implementation by social media platforms of the code of practice; and, finally, cooperation with the relevant international actors. So much has been done.

To contribute to these efforts, the Romanian Presidency prepared a report to the last European Council on countering disinformation and on the lessons learned from the European elections. Continuing that work, one of the top priorities of our presidency is to enhance the resilience of our democratic societies against foreign interference, through coordinated and coherent action across all relevant policy fields in order to strengthen the comprehensive security of our citizens.

I want to underline that all this work to protect our open, democratic societies must be carried out while fully respecting the fundamental rights of our citizens, including freedom of expression. In this context, our presidency places particular emphasis on strengthening the EU's capabilities in countering hybrid threats and building resilience in the EU and Member States. Already in July, a permanent Council working party with a horizontal mandate was established and held its first meeting.

It is also essential to continue developing partnerships, especially our cooperation with NATO. The Helsinki-based European Centre of Excellence for countering hybrid threats also contributes to fostering cooperation in this field.

Disinformation strategies by foreign state and non-state actors are also deployed beyond our EU borders. Alongside tackling the problem within the Union, the Action Plan Against Disinformation outlines our significant interest in working with partners in the EU's eastern and southern neighbourhood and in the Western Balkans. Exposing disinformation and strengthening media, information and digital-literacy skills in our neighbourhood are key elements in this regard.

We need to act together in a structured and coordinated way in order to tackle these challenges. Protecting elections is at the core of defending our European values.

Věra Jourová, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, respect for democracy, fundamental rights and the rule of law are the three common values which bind the Union together. We should not take them for granted. President-elect von der Leyen has announced that protecting European democracy will be a priority for her Commission. She underlined that our democratic systems have come increasingly under attack from those who wish to divide and destabilise the Union. Therefore, we need to do more to protect ourselves from external influences.

The spread of disinformation and the influence of dark money affect policymaking processes by skewing public opinion and distorting the debate. Domestic and foreign actors can exploit this to manipulate policy, societal debates and behaviour in areas such as climate change, migration, public security, health and finance. Manipulation can also diminish trust in science and empirical evidence.

The conduct of free and fair elections is primarily the responsibility of Member States. Nevertheless, a European approach is necessary, given the cross-border dimension of efforts to manipulate democracy and the importance of joining efforts to address the threats. What affects one Member State can affect all.

Through the electoral package in September 2018, the Commission took determined action to support Member States' efforts to protect the integrity of elections and combat disinformation. Implementing the package, the Commission encouraged national electoral networks to identify best practices for the management of risks to the electoral process.

Cooperation between Member States was fostered by the newly established European cooperation network on elections, which allowed exchange of best practices and creation of operational links between Member States. The network met four times in the run-up to the elections and had a first stocktaking meeting immediately after the elections.

It brought together representatives from the national networks, who had fruitful exchanges among themselves and with representatives of other institutions, including Parliament and civil society. Its activities cover all aspects of this complex area, from exchanges on awareness-raising for citizens and cooperation with platforms, to the mapping of legal instruments applicable to foreign funding. It also included a table-top exercise at European level to help Member States assess and potentially strengthen their resilience to cyber-attacks.

Member States engaged actively in the European cooperation network and expressed their desire for both the national and the European networks to continue their work beyond the European elections in order to support Member States' efforts to increase the resilience of their electoral systems.

Our preliminary assessment on the implementation of these efforts in the context of the recent European elections is quite encouraging. The coordinated EU approach helped to ensure stronger preparedness and coordination in the fight against manipulation and disinformation. As was done for previous elections, we are currently conducting a thorough examination of the conduct of the elections to the European Parliament.

We are also cooperating with international partners through a range of forums, including NATO and the G7, as well as with individual states. This reflects a comprehensive and coordinated approach among democracies to tackle disinformation and foster resilient electoral processes. International cooperation ensures that the tools and unique capabilities of all actors act in unison, in full respect of fundamental rights, in particular the freedom of expression and of association.

As announced by President-elect von der Leyen, the Commission – if confirmed by Parliament – will aim to put forward a European democracy action plan addressing the threats of external intervention in our European elections. If confirmed in the vice-president role by this House, I will coordinate the work on this plan. Building up the resilience of our democratic systems and countering of disinformation and fake information are necessities of our current situation. Not less important, the freedoms of expression and of the press in the landscape of media pluralism will also be pursued and protected by the next Commission.

In all these efforts – again, if confirmed in my future role by this House – I will work closely with Parliament, with the Member States, with citizens and with stakeholders on protecting and nurturing democracy in Europe.

Julian King, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, I'm going to focus on the challenge of disinformation. As we've already heard, fortunately during the recent European parliamentary elections, there was no large-scale, coordinated disinformation attack. But that does not mean, unfortunately, that those elections were a disinformation free zone. They were not. There are myriad reports from across Europe of different sorts of disinformation. For example, to take an example from another Member State, let's take an example from Germany. There are well-researched reports that show that online promotion for one of the German parties represented up to 86% of all party activity on Facebook. Four times the comments, six times the shares of all other political parties combined. Many of these likes and shares came from a cluster of 80 000 suspicious accounts, with random two-letter first and last names, that each mutually liked hundreds and thousands of pieces of content. Large-scale automated propaganda and disinformation is unfortunately a fact. It's a fact of our modern political life, and if the platforms can't figure out that thousands of coordinated accounts with random two-letter names are suspicious, then we have a problem.

I don't know about you but I don't think we can accept this as the new normal. We need to do more to work together to close down the space in which hostile and bad actors are trying to do this disinformation and to build our resilience to make it harder to do and to allow us to resist its impact.

Which is why we, together with the Member States and a number of other partners, have been working on at least four areas.

First, as has been mentioned, we've established a rapid alert system bringing the EU institutions and the Member States together to work to spot and tackle coordinated disinformation campaigns. We're working to reinforce this mechanism. We're doing a series of consultations at the moment to enhance how we do information exchange between the Member States, the institutions and with the platforms, as well as civil society researchers, and to build a strengthened hub for research and analytics of disinformation.

Second, over the past two years in fact, we have mobilised a community of fact checkers, researchers and civil society, to help detect and analyse disinformation campaigns and to discuss how we design our responses. To boost the impact of this work, of this community, we will soon deploy a new European online platform to bring together 38 fact-checking organisations from across 17 Member States, working on this platform funded through the Connecting Europe Facility programme.

But if they're going to do this work effectively, we also need the platforms to play their part. We need them to provide secure access to data for these trusted fact checkers and researchers to enable them to do their research, to enable us together to unlock better responses. All the time, of course, making sure that we respect the necessary ethical and professional standards, which brings me to the third point we've been working on.

We've pushed the big Internet platforms to sign up to a code of practice on disinformation, as has already been set out. We finalised that work in September last year. The initial signatories – Facebook, Google, Twitter, Mozilla, trade associations from the advertising sector – have, I'm glad to say, now been joined also by Microsoft.

So this is a serious group of people. They took together a list of commitments – 15 different commitments – and we are monitoring the performance against those commitments. By the middle of September — anytime now – we are going to see the signatories deliver their own self assessment to us. Then we are going to work with a number of third-party consultants to deliver an independent third-party review of performance against those commitments by the middle of October.

Building on those reports, we'd expect to communicate our overview of where we are on implementation of the code before the end of October. Then the final step, our full assessment, will come in the form of a Commission communication which is planned to be published at the beginning of next year after further consultations with independent experts as well as Member States in the European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services.

As Commissioner Jourová, as I and as Commissioner Gabriel have said on a number of occasions, should the results prove unsatisfactory we think that we need to look – or be ready to look – at further actions, including, if necessary, the possibility of regulation.

Indeed there have already been a number of proposals, legislative and otherwise, put forward in various Member States. For example the UK Government has set out its intentions in the Online Harms White Paper, while in France there's a push for a framework to make platforms more accountable.

We encourage the Member States in these efforts and stand ready to assist where we can.

Fourth and finally, we have worked to empower citizens, including by promoting, as we've heard, media literacy and increasing awareness across society on the positive impact of EU policies, Union values, to strengthen our citizens' resilience against the negative effects of disinformation.

Overall I think I'd have to say that we've done some good work. We've come some way, but frankly there remains a lot still to be done, which is why, like Věra Jourová, I'm very pleased to see that the incoming Commission, the incoming President-elect, have underlined the importance of this work. In addition to the point that's already been mentioned, if confirmed it's in the programme, the President-elect has said that she wants to bring forward legislation for a coordinated European approach on the human and ethical implications of AI, which would be very relevant to this debate, and she's proposed a new digital services act to upgrade liability and safety rules for digital platforms, services and products – again, very relevant to this debate.

And these efforts, combined with the others that we have been discussing, are going to be absolutely key if we are to ensure a prosperous, safe and democratic digital future for all our citizens.

(Applause)

Tomas Tobé, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Mr President, this debate is about fundamental European values. It's about the rule of law, freedom and our democratic elections. I think it's very important that this Parliament, after this debate, comes together with a very strong resolution.

It's very important that in Europe we stand up for free and democratic elections without interference from foreign states. Unfortunately, that is not the situation in Europe today and I think it's important that the European Parliament is not afraid to talk very clearly about this. It is very well known that Russia in particular is conducting a low intense information war against Europe. Their state-sponsored media and their troll factories try to undermine democratic debates in Europe. But we also see other totalitarian states, such as China, Iran and North Korea, trying to weaken our democratic decision-making. I think it is important that we try to defend our values and make sure that, if you are aggressive towards our democratic institutions, there must also be consequences.

In this plenary we disagree a lot. It's called democracy. It is OK to disagree, but I think it's very important that we agree that if we leave democratic decision-making open to foreign interference, we will also lose our self-determination. So I think it's important that we come together in a common resolution in the coming weeks and stand up for European values.

Kati Piri, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, in a democracy, fair and free elections are crucial and yet, unfortunately, they are not self-evident and cannot be taken for granted.

In recent years, millions of Europeans have been exposed to massive disinformation campaigns during election time as a result of foreign interference. Cyber-attacks have risen to an unprecedented level, with dangerous access to strategic infrastructure and data. Crucial electoral rules on the financing of political parties by third countries have been either breached or circumvented. In July, Italian media revealed a plan by Russians to fund Matteo Salvini's League. That is only the latest incident and, as we know, this goes well beyond just Russia or just Italy.

This House was vocal on the issue of interference during the last parliamentary term and so was the European External Action Service and the Commission. I am happy to hear that the Finnish Presidency is also taking it up as one of its priorities.

I'm proud that the S&D Group managed to gain widespread political support for this important topic to be on the agenda this week. I'm also pleased to hear that there is widespread support for seeking a strong resolution: we need serious answers on how to prevent third parties from undermining our democratic systems. To address this challenge effectively, my Group proposes to establish a special parliamentary committee so that European democracy, in which elections are always free and fair, is and remains self-evident and once again can be taken for granted.

Pascal Durand, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Ministre, vous avez commencé votre intervention en expliquant et en vous réjouissant que les élections européennes s'étaient bien passées et qu'il n'y avait pas eu d'attaque à ce moment-là – et je me réjouis effectivement que les élections européennes se soient bien passées.

Cela étant, les élections en général, et les élections européennes en particulier, ne sont pas toute la démocratie. Et ce que M. King et M^{me} Jourová ont très bien expliqué, c'est que notre démocratie, telle que nous la concevons en Europe, est en danger. Elle est en danger, effectivement, à cause des phénomènes de désinformation que vous avez notés et que vous avez eu raison de relever, Monsieur le Commissaire. Mais elle est également en danger à travers les financements des partis politiques – cela vient d'être évoqué et il est très important de le dire –, c'est-à-dire du socle de la démocratie en Europe.

Nous savons que des puissances étrangères qui ne veulent pas de bien à l'Union européenne – nous avons parlé de la Russie, il n'y a pas que la Russie, mais la Russie, c'est clair, c'est établi, c'est défini – ont financé, à hauteur d'un milliard d'euros, des éléments d'information, des financements de nos partis politiques, essentiellement ceux qui veulent détruire l'Union européenne et qui se retrouvent à l'extrême droite de cet hémicycle, aussi bien en Italie qu'en France ou ailleurs.

Nous devons donc effectivement combattre le financement des partis politiques et la résolution est très importante. Nous devons nous donner les moyens et donner les moyens à StratCom, qui dispose de trois millions d'euros par an. Trois millions d'euros... cinq millions – cela a été augmenté, vous avez raison, Monsieur le Commissaire, de le relever –, mais face à un milliard. Soyons sérieux, donnons-nous les moyens de pouvoir agir sur les éléments de désinformation. Donnons-nous les moyens d'interdire les financements étrangers de notre démocratie européenne et de nos partis politiques, et donnons-nous les moyens d'une indépendance technologique.

Parce que si nous devons systématiquement nous tourner vers l'extra-Union européenne pour pouvoir contrôler, nous allons au-devant d'une difficulté majeure: celle de l'indépendance et de notre capacité à agir.

Reinhard Bütikofer, *im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, verehrte Ratspräsidentschaft, Herr Kommissar, werte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ich möchte mich bei der finnischen Ratspräsidentschaft ausdrücklich dafür bedanken, dass Sie dieses Thema so ernst nehmen. Ich möchte mich auch bei der Kommission dafür bedanken, dass Sie sich diesem Thema so intensiv widmen. Das Europa, das schützt, muss in allererster Linie seine eigenen Werte und das heißt auch, seine Demokratie, schützen und die europäische Souveränität. Darum geht es in dieser Auseinandersetzung.

Wir müssen nicht nur in eine Richtung umsichtig und vorsichtig sein. Es gibt nicht nur aus Russland nachgewiesenermaßen Einmischungsversuche, es gibt solche auch von Herrn Erdoğan aus der Türkei. Die totalitäre Führung Chinas möchte gerne ökonomische Abhängigkeiten ausnutzen, und auch reaktionäre Kreise aus den USA haben schon versucht, sich in die europäische Demokratie zu unserem Nachteil einzumischen. Ich glaube, es ist ein Teil einer großen Auseinandersetzung zwischen einer sich entwickelnden autoritären Internationalen und dem internationalen Eintreten für Demokratie.

Damit wir das nicht verlieren, dürfen wir aber nicht nur darauf sehen, welche anderen sich bei uns einmischen wollen, sondern wir müssen selber dafür sorgen, dass in Europa keine Spaltungslinien entstehen, die durch andere ausgenutzt werden können – das gehört auch zu dieser Verteidigung unserer Demokratie und Souveränität.

Marco Campomenosi, *a nome del gruppo ID*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, il discorso di oggi è abbastanza surreale. Alcuni riferimenti fatti all'inizio sull'importanza della cibersicurezza ci vedono favorevoli: è un tema importantissimo, pensiamo alla NATO, a Israele, a che ruolo possono avere in questo senso.

Tuttavia qui c'è qualcuno che forse fa finta di poter continuare a portare avanti quel gioco che vi ha trincerato dietro i vostri nove voti di maggioranza per la signora von der Leyen, perché chi parla di *fake news* siete voi, o meglio chi le diffonde siete esattamente voi. Spesso tanti di questi casi che citate sono stati smentiti dagli stessi media che li avevano tirati fuori, per non parlare di quanto avvenuto in Italia, ovvero non è avvenuto assolutamente nulla e avremo presto certezza anche di questo, ci sono dei tribunali che faranno chiarezza.

Ma cosa c'è dietro a questa vostra necessità? C'è la scusa per poter magari ingabbiare Internet, frenare la libertà di Internet – l'abbiamo visto con l'assurdo dibattito sulla direttiva sul *copyright*, sul finire della scorsa legislatura. Perché? Perché voi non comprendete più i cittadini, non comprendete più gli elettori. Quindi c'è un voto sulla Brexit e vi sorprende, c'è un voto sulle presidenziali americane e vi sorprende, c'è un voto per il Parlamento europeo che vede raddoppiare le nostre forze e non capite come mai. Perché? Perché siete chiusi qua dentro e non avete alcun rapporto con la realtà dei fatti.

Del resto sono i vostri documenti, questo è l'Ufficio di presidenza di questo Parlamento: nel 2018 avete stanziato 33,3 milioni di euro per – voi sì! – influenzare le elezioni europee. Dite che non bisogna solo portare gli elettori ai seggi ma anche convincerli a sostenere il progetto europeo, che dà un senso allo stesso Parlamento europeo. Da che pulpito potete parlare di ingerenze esterne!

Nicola Procaccini, a nome del gruppo ECR. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, condivido pienamente il senso di questa risoluzione. Tuttavia non condivido questa ricerca ossessiva, direi compulsiva, da parte del Parlamento europeo di un nemico. Questo è qualcosa che non comprendo.

Mi spiego: io ritengo che sia necessario difendere la nostra sicurezza democratica, sociale ed economica con infrastrutture migliori e con strumenti legislativi migliori – penso anche alla rivoluzione del 5G, che sta arrivando e che chiaramente va governata con grande attenzione, selezionando bene gli interlocutori economici. Dicevo però che, se comprendo il merito di questa risoluzione, fatico a comprendere il metodo, perché ritengo sia molto più importante concentrare la nostra attenzione sul potenziamento delle agenzie europee competenti in questa materia piuttosto che non divagare nella ricerca compulsiva di nemici contro cui scagliarsi politicamente.

Mick Wallace, on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group. – Mr President, Liberals – the centre right and left – struggle to believe that they are losing segments of elections to the far right and, much like the Democrats in the US, are more interested in endlessly talking about Russian interference than addressing their own failings. The real electoral interference in the US was the Democratic Party stealing the election from Bernie Sanders and putting forward a figure that made Trump sound OK.

The real source of the swing to the right in Europe is not outside interference. It's a decade of crushing austerity, the neo-liberalisation of the labour sector, the rise of inequality and the theft of the economic resources of the global south through financial imperialism, coupled with our imperialist military campaigns that create the conditions that drive people out of their homes looking for a liveable existence.

America has been meddling and interfering in other countries' elections and democratic processes for over a hundred years and has done so in a ruthless and brutal manner that makes the alleged Russian interference in the 2016 elections in America look like child's play.

Miroslav Radačovský (NI). – Vážený pán predsedajúci, po vypočutí si a po preštudovaní správ ohľadom dezinformácií a hybridných vojen som nadobudol dojem, akoby sme mali všetci obliecť uniformy, nasadnúť do lietadiel, zaútočiť na Moskvu.

Nepovažujem za správne, že by tak v tejto správe, ako aj v iných správach, sa za primárneho nepriateľa Európskej únie považovalo za Rusko. Rozdeľovanie Európy na Východ a Západ je neprípustné, je to cesta do pekla. Európania nie sú čerti, Európania sú homo sapiens. Už veľkí ľudia Európy – Charles de Gaulle, Michail Gorbačov, Ján Pavol II – hovorili o Európe od Uralu k la Manchu. Rozdeľovanie Európy sankciami, raketami je neprípustné. Je neprípustné a pamätajme na históriu. Milióny umučených Židov v koncentračných táboroch, milióny umučených Slovanov, to bolo dôvodom delenia Európy na Východ a Západ. Európsky dom je jeden a spoločný. Takéto správy sú neprípustné, pretože sú pre militantov, militantne naladených ľudí a viete, k čomu to v histórii viedlo.

Karoline Edtstadler (PPE). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar! Der Versuch der Einflussnahme auf Entscheidungen und Wahlen in der Europäischen Union ist kein Phänomen mehr, das wir rein den Science-Fiction-Romanen zuschreiben könnten. Nach Wahlmanipulationen in den USA und auch in Frankreich ist dieses Phänomen nunmehr auch in Österreich angekommen. Erst vor wenigen Wochen hat ein Hackerangriff auf die Zentrale der Österreichischen Volkspartei stattgefunden. Eine unvorstellbare Datenmenge von 1,3 Gigabyte wurde gestohlen und jedenfalls teilweise weitergegeben – und das nur wenige Wochen vor den Wahlen zum Nationalrat.

Essenziell ist natürlich eine lückenlose und rasche Aufklärung. Die politischen Gegner haben tatsächlich die Echtheit dieses Angriffs bezweifelt. Für die hochspezialisierten Ermittler der Polizei steht aber mittlerweile fest, dass es sich um einen groß angelegten und professionellen Hackerangriff handelt. Erste Spuren führen zu ausländischen Servern. Für mich ist klar, dass parteitaktisches Kalkül hintanzustellen ist, wenn es um einen derart schweren Eingriff geht. Es geht nämlich hier nicht nur um einen Angriff auf die Österreichische Volkspartei, sondern auf die Demokratie im Ganzen.

Desinformation verhindert eine freie Willensbildung und gefährdet damit eine demokratische Wahlentscheidung. Daher halte ich die heutige Debatte und die demnächst zu entscheidende und beschließende Entschließung für so wesentlich, denn es gilt jetzt, hier europäische Lösungen zu finden, um unsere Wahlen vor derart kriminellen Machenschaften zu schützen. Es geht um nichts Geringeres als um unsere Grundwerte, um unseren *way of life* in Europa. Diesen müssen wir mit aller Vehemenz und mit allen Mitteln verteidigen.

Brando Benifei (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, aumentano le indagini giudiziarie e le inchieste giornalistiche sull'esistenza di influenze straniere, in particolare della Russia, ma non solo, dietro campagne mirate a inquinare il dibattito elettorale e i processi democratici in Europa.

Pensiamo al caso del *Front National* nel 2014, all'FPO austriaco e, da ultimo, all'inchiesta sui finanziamenti russi per la campagna elettorale della Lega in Italia, su cui Matteo Salvini non ha ancora riferito in Parlamento, dopo aver mentito ripetutamente sui suoi rapporti con il faccendiere Gianluca Savoini e senza aver fornito tutte le informazioni neppure al governo di cui faceva parte, come ha riferito il presidente del Consiglio Conte.

Faremo piena chiarezza sui tentativi di destabilizzazione dell'Europa. Oggi alcuni politici europei fungono da esecutori nazionali di queste manovre, parlano da rappresentanti del popolo ma sono dei passacarte di potenze straniere, dei burattini. Non permetteremo più a questi nemici della nostra sovranità, a Marine Le Pen o a Matteo Salvini, di mentire ai cittadini e di lavorare contro gli interessi degli europei. La misura è colma!

Questo Parlamento deve dare mandato a una commissione speciale che indaghi sui tentativi di influenzare i processi democratici in Europa per difendere il diritto dei cittadini a un dibattito pubblico ed elettorale libero da ingerenze, perché chi è complice ora dovrà rendere conto a quest'Aula e a tutti gli europei, finalmente!

Dragoș Tudorache (Renew). – Domnule președinte, aș vrea să mulțumesc în primul rând doamnei comisar Jourová și domnului comisar King pentru intervențiile de mai devreme și, în general, aș vrea să salut eforturile Comisiei Europene de a contracara ingerințele externe în alegerile europene din 26 mai. Democrațiile noastre depind de credibilitatea proceselor electorale și de aceea trebuie să ne pregătim cu măsuri eficiente pentru a gestiona riscurile evidente pe care le avem.

Susțin întru totul intervenția colegului meu Durand de mai înainte, care cerea creșterea finanțării alocate structurilor pe care le-am creat pentru a se contrapune forțelor externe care investesc sistematic și proactiv pentru a ne șubrezi coeziunea politică la nivel național și la nivel european. Comisarul King ne avertiza săptămâna trecută în LIBE că numărul de activități de dezinformare pro-Kremlin s-a dublat anul acesta comparativ cu aceeași perioadă a anului trecut.

Mai mult, numărul net de conturi false de pe rețelele de socializare este în constantă creștere, ajungând anul acesta doar pe Facebook la 20 de milioane. Salut pe această cale inițiativa Comisiei de a aduce giganții IT la aceeași masă. Aștept cu interes evaluarea de la sfârșitul acestui an și aștept propuneri legislative.

Terry Reintke (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, we live in stable, resilient, liberal democracies. Ten years ago, I would probably have signed a statement like this for all members of the European Union and I would have believed that this is something that, in the course of my lifetime, was not going to change.

Today, I would honestly be more cautious about this statement. Yes, we still live in stable, resilient democracies, but honestly these democracies are under attack. Disinformation is being spread, scapegoating, for example, minorities and marginalised groups. There are smear campaigns against, for example, sexual and reproductive rights or the Istanbul Convention, partly funded through very blurry channels with money from abroad, not only Russia, but also, for example, the United States.

These tactics are already showing their consequences. They are destabilising our democratic decision-making processes. We have to stand up for our rights and our democracies through empowering civil society, but also through taking steps to defend our discussion space without at the same time undermining the very basis of our democracies, which is freedom of speech.

(Applause)

Laura Huhtasaari (ID). – Arvoisa puhemies, EU:n tulisi vahvistaa sananvapauttaan, jos olemme oikeasti demokratian puolella. On selvää, että Venäjän ohella myös Yhdysvallat ja Kiina haluavat vaikuttaa omalla tavallaan eurooppalaisiin vaaleihin. Muutama vuosi sitten Obama kävi kiristämässä brittejä kauppasopimuksilla, jotta eivät äänestäisi väärin. Kiristys ei onnistunut.

On äänestäjien aliarvioimista väittää, että brexit, Trumpin valinta ja lukuisten kansallismielisten puolueiden voitto johtuisi salaliittoteorioista, vihasta, Venäjästä ja sometrolleista. Voitto johtuu siitä, että kansa aidosti haluaa lopettaa haitallisen maahanmuuton, pysäyttää islamisaation, he haluavat puolustaa kansallisvaltioiden itsemääräämisoikeutta, rajojaan, kulttuuria ja kristillisiä arvoja. He haluavat laittaa oman kansan ensin. Riippumatta siitä, ovatko nämä edellä mainitut asiat valtavirtapuolueiden mielestä hyviä vai huonoja asioita, niin sen takia meitä kansallismielisiä puolueita äänestetään. Ja oikea syy ja tarve tälle keskustelulle täällä tänään on se, että liberaalit häviävät vaaleja, ettekä te suostu hyväksymään sitä, että kansallismielisiä puolueita äänestetään oikeiden asioiden takia. Siksi te EU:ssa haluatte lähteä sensuurin tielle. Te haluatte sellaisen poliittisesti korrektin totuuskomission, joka ennakkosensuroi. Näin saadaan kerrottua kansalle, mitä heidän tulee ajatella ja tahtoa. Demokratia ei ole kriisissä eikä demokratia kuole, jos liberaalit häviävät vaaleja.

Anna Fotyga (ECR). – Mr President, with due respect to all measures taken within the portfolios of Commissioner Jourová and Commissioner King, I would like to stress that we discuss the external aspect of EU relations, namely foreign interference into our democratic processes.

Yes, we have to strengthen resilience and further build democracies, but we have to know the policies of external actors. During the eighth legislature we presented reports on this, naming predominantly the Russian Federation, but also actors like China, Iran and North Korea. Their actions, a low intensive information war, are many times tailored-made – cut and made – vis-à-vis each Member State. So building our cooperation is very important. Yet in order to act successfully, we have to know narrative policies, I would like to praise East StratCom, located within the European External Action Service (EEAS).

Alexandra Lesley Phillips (NI). – Mr President, online payment systems, social media and informal campaigns do indeed open doors to people who want to abuse democracy across the political spectrum, but something else is also afoot: an appetite to spread conspiracy for political ends and a desire to delegitimise election results because the loser doesn't consent.

I have seen both Leave campaigns for Brexit face numerous court cases and accusations long since debunked. A young campaigner in the UK was threatened with prison for two years before charges were dropped. My own party, at the whim of an embittered ex-Prime Minister claiming we received foreign money, had our offices raided, only for that investigation to be terminated because no evidence was found. The list goes on.

It's patently clear to me that the biggest threat to democracy is opportunism and the gender-driven conspiracy by politicians themselves to discredit campaigns that they don't favour. It's irresponsible, it's feckless and it creates mistrust between the voter and the result, laying fertile ground for extremism. Like the boy who cried wolf before calling foul, check your facts or you become the problem, not the solution.

(The speaker agreed to take a blue-card question under Rule 171(8))

Julie Ward (S&D), *blue-card question*. – Would Ms Phillips please comment on the secret campaign work she did for the disgraced data-mining and campaigns consultancy Cambridge Analytica during the Kenyan presidential election in 2017, for which I was an election observer for this Parliament, and also comment on the subsequent lies she told about her involvement in that?

Cambridge Analytica was hired by President Kenyatta's governing Jubilee Party prior to the campaign which reignited tribal divisions in the country, resulting in dozens of politically motivated killings and the mysterious torture and murder of Chris Msando, the head of IEBC, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission...

(The President cut off the speaker)

Alexandra Lesley Phillips (NI), *blue-card answer*. – My colleague is embodying exactly what I have just said. I worked for a British consultancy as a freelance contractor, which she well knows later folded into the American company Cambridge Analytica.

It is funny; she could contact me in person to ask about this rather than taking her information from conspiracy theories on Twitter and FBPE hashtag people who want to stir up misinformation. I am proud of the work I did for a progressive African president. That work is on record with the European Parliament. And, can I just say, if that is not for political ends, why didn't she knock on my office door?

Андрей Ковачев (PPE). – Г-н Председател, демокрацията предполага и поощрява свободата, толерантността и плурализма на мненията. Когато обаче имаме опит за подмяна на демокрацията с други авторитарни форми на управление или промяна на геополитическата ориентация на една суверенна държава, границата на търпимост явно е прекрачена.

Парадоксално е, че неограничената толерантност рано или късно води до изчезването на толерантността. Аз тук бих задал парадоксалния може би въпрос: ако гласуваме в този Парламент дали демокрацията означава свобода да лъжеш или лъжата не е част от свободата на мнение, какъв ли би бил резултатът?

Ние не трябва да сме наивни и трябва ясно да осъзнаваме сериозността от заплахите от трети страни. България е само една от страните, които през 2015 година по време на последните местни избори беше атакувана, бяха атакувани сайтовете на Централната избирателна комисия и на други ключови по отношение на изборите институции.

Но това далеч не изчерпва само дестабилизиационните опити на трети страни в нашите общества да забият клин в единството на Европейския съюз. В моята страна стотици анонимни сайтове без ясна собственост, организации без ясно финансиране, хиляди фалшиви профили в социалните мрежи водят координирана информационна война срещу Европейския съюз, злоупотребяват с най-чувствителните теми за хората, като религия, традиции и ценности.

Демокрацията трябва да има инструменти да се защити. Приветствам и призовавам за сериозни ресурси за защита и преодоляване на този тип хибридни заплахи.

Ораторът се съгласява да отговори на въпрос по процедурата „синя карта“ (член 171, параграф 8 от Регламента)

Maria Grapini (S&D), *Întrebare adresată conform procedurii „cartonaşului albastru”*. – Stimate coleg, veniți din Bulgaria, eu vin din România. Sigur că înțeleg perfect ce ați spus. Tema este foarte importantă. Întrebarea mea este: ca europarlamentar vechi, vedeți soluții în a rezolva problema pusă în discuție? Pe de altă parte, libertatea de exprimare, eliminarea interferenței în actul electoral. Care ar fi propunerile dumneavoastră concrete pentru a putea să le și adoptăm, pentru că dacă dezbatem și nu găsim și soluții înseamnă că ne vom regăsi în aceeași situație și anul viitor.

Andrey Kovatchev (PPE), blue-card answer. – Yes, this is a general question about what we are going to do together. Only with coordinated actions, together with the Commission, the Council and the Member States, can we achieve some limitation of this disinformation campaign from third countries, but also from inside the European Union. The right step forward is to ask the platforms to follow codes of conduct, to support good objective journalism, for journalists to have professional training on this, and many things, but we also need resources. Democracy needs to have an immune system.

Claude Moraes (S&D). – Mr President, today we call for tougher action at European level to defend our elections against foreign interference and manipulation and to win the fight against offline and online disinformation.

We are doing so because the facts indicate that it is actually happening. And I should indicate to everyone in the House, including new Members, that we have been doing this for some months now. The Commissioner indicated that action is already being taken, the Presidency is joining us, and what we in our group want to happen today is a call for a special committee to deepen this action. We are doing this because our Member States are not resilient enough. We have two big problems, which in the next few seconds I will explain.

Our citizens are voting in elections where we have far-right parties – I see it in my own country – who are being funded and receiving loans from foreign state actors. Secondly, we have deep electoral interference. Offline electoral safeguards are needed, and the banning of profiling for electoral purposes, social media platforms shared by bots need to be removed and fake accounts need to be removed. These practical actions need to happen and need to happen now.

Michal Šimečka (Renew). – Vážený pán predseda, naozaj zasahovanie zahraničných aktérov do demokratických volieb dnes už nie je nič nové, nie je to nová hrozba, už sme niekoľko zažili takých volieb, do ktorých zasiahli tieto dezinformačné kampane s cieľom rozdeliť spoločnosť, polarizovať ju a ovplyvniť tým preferencie voličov.

To neznamená, že to môžeme akceptovať a ja som rád, že aj fínske predsedníctvo, aj Komisia sa s tým chystá ďalej pracovať. Lebo naozaj je to niečo, čo ohrozuje samotnú podstatu demokracie, pretože bez zmysluplnej debaty, diskusie opierajúcej sa o fakty neexistuje žiadna demokracia. Zároveň ale treba povedať, že to skutočné riziko nie je iba zopár konšpiračných webov alebo ruské peniaze, ale aj politici, ktorí účelovo s dezinformáciami pracujú, využívajú tieto taktiky a túto emóciu, či v mojom regióne, v strednej Európe sú dokonca niektorí aj premiéri, ktorí verejne opakujú konšpirácie, pracujú s nimi a útočia na politických súperov, alebo menšiny, alebo Európsku úniu, a to je ešte toxickéjšie pre demokraciu.

Scott Ainslie (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, freedom, fairness and transparency: these are the foundations on which democracy is built. But in recent years these principles have come under attack. Big money and the digital age have particularly fuelled the far right, unleashing propaganda campaigns that have no place in a modern, inclusive and progressive society.

Electoral interference and disinformation have poisoned our political discussions. Groups have spread messages of hatred with the aim of dividing our communities and eroding trust in our political systems. These untruths have plunged my country into a constitutional crisis, putting the rights and well-being of millions of people in the UK and beyond on the line.

The Chair of the House of Commons Digital Culture, Media and Sport Committee has said that – I quote – ‘our democracy is at risk and our electoral regulations are hopelessly out of date for the internet age’, and this from the so-called Mother of all Parliaments.

We can't sit in this elected chamber and turn a blind eye as the very fundamental values of this institution and all our parliaments back home come under siege from characters who want to disrupt our democracies for their own political or financial gain. We need more robust, legally binding protections so that citizens are empowered to decide their own fates, not external powers or those with the deepest pockets.

(Applause)

(The speaker declined to take a blue-card question from Belinda De Lucy)

Jean-Paul Garraud (ID). – Monsieur le Président, le code de bonnes pratiques contre la désinformation établi par la Commission se veut attentif à la liberté d'expression et à un internet ouvert. C'est ce qui est écrit dans le texte.

Ce code de bonne conduite a été approuvé par Facebook, Twitter, Google. Ces hébergeurs sont tenus pour responsables du contenu des publications des internautes. Ils n'hésitent donc pas à censurer les propos pouvant être considérés comme de la désinformation.

Nous savons tous que l'internet est en quelque sorte capable du meilleur comme du pire. Sauf qu'en l'occurrence, sous prétexte de lutter contre la désinformation, on ne compte plus le nombre considérable d'internautes qui ont été censurés d'une minute à l'autre et sans aucun avertissement parce qu'ils avaient propagés, non pas des «fake news», mais parce qu'ils avaient émis des opinions divergentes et critiques vis-à-vis, en particulier, de l'idéologie européiste et immigrationniste de la Commission.

Même des journaux d'information sont censurés comme, en France, Valeurs actuelles, à l'encontre duquel Facebook a supprimé autoritairement un article relatant la propagande de la télévision publique française en faveur des migrants au motif que son contenu était soi-disant haineux.

L'enfer est toujours pavé de bonnes intentions, les meilleures pensées peuvent conduire aux pires résultats. En voulant lutter contre les fausses informations, il ne faut surtout pas aboutir à l'instauration d'une sorte de ministère de la vérité tel que défini par George Orwell dans son roman «1984».

En 2019, la tentation est grande pour les tenants du système en place, adeptes de la mondialisation et de ses considérables moyens financiers, de stopper par tous les moyens la montée de ce qu'ils appellent avec dédain, les populistes. La censure des moyens de communication est utilisée depuis la nuit des temps par tous les régimes totalitaires. Pour les tenants de l'idéologie mondialiste, tous ceux qui s'opposent à elle doivent être bloqués.

Ici même, dans ce Parlement, un «cordon sanitaire» a été employé pour écarter de toute responsabilité tous les députés défiant cette idéologie. Malgré tout, nous poursuivrons notre combat en lien avec les aspirations profondes des peuples que nous, nous respectons!

Jorge Buxadé Villalba (ECR). – Señor presidente, como ustedes saben, el partido al que representó —Vox— está radicalmente en contra de cualquier injerencia extranjera en los asuntos internos de nuestro país. Nosotros creemos —obviamente— en la soberanía de las naciones y de los Estados miembros, y me alegro de que, aunque sea por una sola vez, en este Parlamento, otras opciones políticas vengan a defender la soberanía y considerar que la misma es intocable. Aunque sí quiero poner de manifiesto que, hasta que se demuestre lo contrario, en el Tratado de la Unión Europea no se habla de la soberanía europea, sino exclusivamente de la soberanía de los Estados miembros.

Como a muchos de ustedes, a nosotros no nos gusta que Rusia pueda enredar en procesos electorales, pero tampoco nos gusta que el señor Macron o 52 diputados de la Asamblea Nacional francesa enreden en las decisiones electorales que se adoptan en España, decidiendo apoyar o criticar a uno u otro país, a uno u otro partido de mi país.

Señorías, no nos gustan las injerencias extranjeras, pero tampoco queremos que esto sea la excusa para la creación de una comisión de la verdad, como esa de Orwell en 1984 y que nos digan desde instituciones supranacionales aquello que debe o no ser dicho por los nacionales de cada uno de los Estados.

Jérôme Rivière (ID). – Monsieur le Président, nous sommes dans cette Assemblée à l'instant pour faire un débat sur les fausses nouvelles, à l'instant, vous venez d'indiquer que les membres du parti Brexit feraient partie du groupe Identité et démocratie. Ça n'est pas le cas. Je crois qu'avant tout, pour ne pas débattre de fausses nouvelles, nous devrions faire attention à nous respecter nous-même. À aucun moment ces parlementaires ne sont dans notre groupe et donc je considère comme un déni de démocratie de ne pas avoir donné l'occasion d'accepter ou non le carton bleu.

Der Präsident. – Herr Kollege! Über die blauen Karten entscheidet der Präsident. Es gibt klare Regeln für den Ablauf der blauen Karten. Daher habe ich sie abgelehnt.

Jeroen Lenaers (PPE). Voorzitter, vrije en eerlijke verkiezingen zijn het fundament van onze democratie. Die moeten we koesteren en beschermen. Eenieder die probeert dat fundament aan te tasten moeten we keihard aanpakken. En we zullen een tandje bij moeten schakelen als we voorbereid willen zijn op een toekomst waarin onze sociale interactie nog meer dan nu online zal plaatsvinden. Op een toekomst waarin het met nieuwe technologie zoals *deep fakes* steeds moeilijker wordt om echt van nep te onderscheiden en een toekomst waarin – als we niks doen – in 2021 al mensen meer nepnieuws dan echt nieuws zullen consumeren.

Er staat nogal wat op het spel en bedrijven als Facebook en Google spelen daarbij een cruciale rol. Of beter gezegd, ze zouden een cruciale rol moeten spelen. Want ik heb niet het gevoel dat die samenwerking op dit moment van harte gaat. Het doet mij een klein beetje denken aan de manier waarop ik vroeger op school mijn huiswerk deed: precies genoeg om geen strafwerk te krijgen, maar zeker niet meer dan dat. Daar kom je misschien bij wiskunde op de middelbare school mee weg, maar in onze strijd tegen desinformatie zullen we tekortschieten.

Daarom is mijn vraag: moeten we niet veel duidelijker dat strafwerk in het vooruitzicht stellen, willen we dat die bedrijven meewerken? Zouden we niet toe moeten naar een systeem van regulering, in plaats van de huidige halfslachtige zelfregulering? Mijn vraag is ook, commissaris King, u merkte dat al op: in veel Europese landen wordt wetgeving gemaakt, wordt over wetgeving nagedacht. Hoe zorgen we er nou voor dat die wetgeving ook op elkaar afgestemd is, zodat we niet met 28 verschillende regels in 28 verschillende landen te maken hebben?

Pedro Silva Pereira (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, a manipulação da opinião pública, através da circulação de notícias falsas nas redes sociais, com meios cada vez mais sofisticados e dissimulados, é uma das mais sérias ameaças às nossas democracias e um instrumento de obscuros interesses políticos, por vezes sediados no estrangeiro.

O plano contra a desinformação da Comissão Europeia está a dar os primeiros passos e é uma boa iniciativa. Tal como as plataformas gestoras de redes sociais precisam de ser chamadas às suas responsabilidades, e os jornalistas devem cumprir o seu papel de informar com rigor e denunciar as informações falsas, estas ameaças requerem uma resposta à altura das circunstâncias, e neste Parlamento precisamos também de uma comissão especial que nos permita reforçar a defesa da nossa democracia. É o que prevê este relatório e é por isso que votaremos a favor.

Fabienne Keller (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, Mesdames et Messieurs les Commissaires, vous l'avez évoqué les dernières élections ont fait l'objet de tentatives de déstabilisation, d'ingérence d'acteurs étatiques et non étatiques – plusieurs collègues en ont parlé – sans précédent.

Monsieur Julian King, vous avez rappelé qu'il y avait plusieurs dizaines de milliers de faux comptes à l'appui de vastes campagnes de désinformation. Madame Věra Jourová, Monsieur Julian King, vous avez pris une initiative en septembre 2018 avec les États membres pour armer l'Europe contre la désinformation et la cybercriminalité mais cela n'est pas suffisant.

Quelles sont les prochaines étapes, les prochaines initiatives pour renforcer la convergence des stratégies nationales? Comment renforcer aussi le rôle et les moyens de l'Agence européenne de cybersécurité pour créer un bouclier européen? Enfin, notre groupe soutient la création d'une agence européenne de protection des démocraties contre les attaques. Êtes-vous prêts à soutenir une telle initiative?

Jérôme Rivière (ID). – Monsieur le Président, loin de moi l'idée de vouloir revenir sur les prérogatives du président de séance, mais vous avez fondé explicitement votre décision de refuser le carton bleu sur le fait que ce parlementaire appartenait à notre groupe.

Admettez au moins qu'il s'agissait d'une erreur, sinon c'est encore une fois une fausse nouvelle alors que nous participons à un débat de lutte contre les fausses informations.

Der Präsident. – Ich habe zu dieser Frage bereits Stellung genommen, und ich wurde darüber so informiert. Es kann ja auch sein, dass es sich bei der Fragenden um ein Missverständnis gehandelt hat. Aber gehen wir jetzt in der Tagesordnung weiter.

Markéta Gregorová (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, disinformation campaigns, hybrid threats, information warfare: the modern conflict is being led in new fields, and liberal democracy and our free and fair elections are being used against us by foreign forces with an increasing intensity and efficiency. We must create a functional system of deterrence as part of our defensive strategy. However, we must remain equally wary of measures that can also destroy the very foundation of our democratic societies. Free speech cannot be defined by commercial monopolies. It is far too valuable to be defined by online platforms and upload filters. Lawmakers must be in the lead on combating election interference and propaganda. Equally, technologies that allow behavioural prediction and manipulation on a mass scale are threatening the very basis of free and fair elections, and we must update our legislation to safeguard European citizens but with regard to the very democratic principles we are trying to protect. Let's finally step into the 21st century.

Christine Anderson (ID). – Herr Präsident, wert Kollegen! Wir reden heute über den Aktionsplan der EU-Kommission gegen die Verbreitung von Desinformationen. Ist das eigentlich ein Witz? Ausgerechnet die EU-Kommission hält sich also für geeignet, Fake News bekämpfen zu wollen – ist sie doch das Hauptquartier aller Fake-News-Produktionsstätten! In der von der EU-Kommission herausgegebenen Broschüre „60 Gründe für die EU“ bekommen die europäischen Völker auf 64 Seiten eingetrichtert, welche Vorteile ihnen die EU und Euro bringen. So heißt es auf Seite 16: „Dank der Geldpolitik der EZB haben die Mitgliedstaaten im Jahr 2016 50 Milliarden Euro gespart.“ Das sind Fake News! Denn es ist eine bewusste Irreführung der europäischen Völker, um darüber hinwegzutäuschen, dass diese bejubelte Ersparnis in Wahrheit eine Enteignung ihrer Vermögen ist. Ist das ein tragischer Einzelfall? Nein, keineswegs.

Wenn Frau Kommissionspräsidentin in ihrer eigenen Agenda für Europa schreibt – und ich zitiere: „Für meine Generation stand Europa für das Versprechen von Frieden, Wohlstand und Einheit, und wir haben es durch unsere Gemeinschaftswährung, durch Freizügigkeit und Erweiterung Wirklichkeit werden lassen“, dann ist das die Mutter aller Fake-News-Kampagnen. Frieden und Wohlstand wurden uns versprochen. Erhalten haben wir die EU, ein bürokratisches Irrenhaus, in dem eine vom Bürger gänzlich entrückte Politelite die europäischen Völker durch Verordnungswahn und Regulierungswut gängelt und schikaniert.

Was die europäischen Völker von dieser tollen EU-Zwangsgemeinschaft halten, sieht man überall dort, wo man sie mal fragt: in Frankreich, in den Niederlanden, in Griechenland, und die Briten haben ihren besonderen Unmut zum Ausdruck gebracht. Aber der Aktionsplan der Kommission ist richtig und wichtig, deshalb werden wir es unterstützen und verhindern. Ich fange heute an!

(Die Rednerin zerreißt die Broschüre „Eine Union, die mehr erreichen will – Meine Agenda für Europa“.)

(Die Rednerin lehnt eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“ von Lukas Mandl ab.)

Reinhard Bütikofer (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident! Zur Geschäftsordnung: Frau Anderson hat gerade dieses Haus „ein bürokratisches Irrenhaus“ genannt. Das ist eine Beleidigung des Europäischen Parlaments. Ich bitte Sie, das Protokoll zu studieren und entsprechend zu reagieren.

Der Präsident. – Für diese Anregung und dass Sie das so aufmerksam beobachtet haben, vielen Dank, das wird in dieser Form geschehen.

Charlie Weimers (ECR). – Herr talman! Utländsk inblandning i demokratiska processer är förkastligt. Det är förkastligt när Kreml försöker köpa inflytande genom europeiska partier, liksom när de anställer socialdemokratiska före detta regeringschefer för att lobba för exempelvis Nord Stream. Men det är också förkastligt när EU använder skattemedel för att påverka utfallet i Europaparlamentsvalet.

Det här läckta dokumentet från EU-parlamentets ledning visar hur man planerade att spendera 350 miljoner kronor för att exempelvis sponsra lobbygrupper och kampanjer som exempelvis ”Det här gör EU för mig” i syfte att få EU-federalistiska väljare till valurnorna och förminska väljares inflytande om de föredrog nationalstat framför federalism. Så låt oss jobba emot otillbörlig inblandning i demokratiska processer. Men låt oss vara konsekventa.

Radosław Sikorski (PPE). – Panie Przewodniczący! To moje inauguracyjne wystąpienie na tej sali, dlatego bardzo się cieszę, że przypadł mi tak ważny temat, bo sam byłem ofiarą grupy Fancy Bears. Dostałem te same maile, które potem dostał pan Podesta w Stanach Zjednoczonych, i wiemy, jaki to miało wpływ na tamtejszą kampanię wyborczą.

Padły tu już przykłady zewnętrznych ingerencji w politykę we Francji, w Wielkiej Brytanii, we Włoszech. Także w moim kraju niedawno ukazała się książka renomowanego dziennikarza, pana Grzegorza Rzeczkowskiego, pod tytułem „Obcym alfabetem”, i chciałem z tego miejsca zaapelować, aby nasza prokuratura w Polsce potraktowała poważnie te bardzo niepokojące informacje o zagranicznym ingerowaniu w polską politykę.

Co robić? Przede wszystkim czego nie robić? Uważam, że upolitycznianie mediów, które powinny być publiczne, upartyjnianie ich burzy zaufanie i ułatwia działanie tym, którzy chcą w nielegalny sposób wpływać na wybory. Powinniśmy zwiększyć budżet na walkę z dezinformacją, powinniśmy budować możliwości dla mediów tradycyjnych, a więc poprzeć program „Kreatywna Europa”, i wreszcie powinniśmy uregulować kwestię działalności mediów społecznościowych.

Der Präsident. – Herr Kollege! Ich muss Sie bitten, von der Tribüne keine Beifallskundgebungen durchzuführen. Das ist mit der Geschäftsordnung dieses Hauses nicht vereinbar.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señor presidente, comisario King, Presidencia finlandesa, si hace diez años, cuando entró en vigor el Tratado de Lisboa con la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea, nos hubieran dicho que habría sido un objeto de debate prioritario para este Parlamento Europeo la amenaza de los troles, los bots, los actores no estatales o estatales y grupos no estatales vinculados a Estados, como es el caso de Rusia, contra los procesos democráticos a través de la interferencia y la intoxicación, no nos lo hubiéramos creído.

Pero la amenaza es real. Y no es neutra ni inocua ni puede ser subestimada. No es neutra, porque favorece la dispersión de discursos extremistas y populistas. No es inocua, porque se ensaña a menudo con minorías y grupos vulnerables. Y no puede ser subestimada, porque no afecta solo a los Estados miembros que la padecen, sino al conjunto de la Unión. Y es la Unión la que tiene que proveer la respuesta, con reglamentos y recursos adecuados.

Por eso exigimos inversiones para eliminar cuentas falsas y para articular una respuesta de significado europeo que fortalezca la democracia y el Estado de Derecho. Y el instrumento es una comisión especial que investigue a fondo y extraiga las consecuencias y las lecciones, y las traiga a esta Cámara como recomendaciones.

Bernard Guetta (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, la liberté d'expression est le pilier de la démocratie, nous le savons tous. Mais son revers est connu: la désinformation, qui a pris une nouvelle ampleur grâce à la perversion d'internet et des médias sociaux.

Nous pourrions n'avoir encore vu que le début de ce phénomène, auquel il est urgent de s'opposer. Merci donc à la Commission d'avoir entamé la bataille. Mais comment contrôler la véracité de l'information sans renouer avec les bureaux de la censure? Nous marchons là sur des œufs, mais après tout, il y a longtemps que les démocraties ont appris à lutter contre la diffamation sans porter atteinte à la liberté d'expression.

La même tâche nous attend aujourd'hui: définir le délit et le sanctionner par la loi, qu'applique une justice indépendante. C'est là notre devoir de législateur. Mais les journalistes – j'en suis un – ont à réinventer, pour leur part, une presse dont les engagements, la vigueur et la clarté ne laissent ni place ni séduction aux déstabilisations organisées de l'étranger (ou pas).

Annalisa Tardino (ID). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, siamo tutti concordi nel ritenere che le *fake news* e la disinformazione costituiscano un rischio concreto, capace di influenzare il convincimento dei cittadini in occasione delle competizioni elettorali da parte di chi è in costante campagna elettorale, così come si cerca di fare anche in quest'Aula, riproponendo notizie manipolate come quelle sui fondi russi, su cui si esprimeranno i tribunali.

Nel demonizzare l'avversario, come si usa purtroppo fare, si deve prestare molta attenzione a non ledere il grande valore democratico rappresentato dalla rete e dalla libera circolazione delle idee, fondamento della conoscenza e dell'emancipazione dell'uomo.

Sembra invece che la Commissione, con il pretesto di combattere la disinformazione, incoraggi ulteriormente comportamenti di censura delle opinioni dissenzienti, come già accade sui *social network*. Mi chiedo quindi se sia il caso che un operatore privato, come può essere Facebook, abbia l'autorità di censurare un cittadino senza intervento alcuno di un ente terzo pubblico in grado di proteggerlo. Credo che sia il caso di prendere dei seri provvedimenti.

Lucia Ďuriš Nicholsonová (ECR). – Pán prezident, je úplne jedno z akej frakcie pochádzame. Myslím si, že pred nami všetkými leží tá istá úloha, a to je správne identifikovať, kto je ten agresor, kto sa opakovane uchýľuje k dezinformačným kampaniam, ktoré oslabujú demokracie v našich národných štátoch, ale aj v rámci Európskej únie. A všetci vieme, že tieto dezinformačné antikampane nevznikajú na Marse, ani v Bolívii, ani v Indii, a preto si myslím, že by sme sa mali držať faktov a tie fakty hovoria jednoznačne, že za týmito dezinformačnými kampaňami jednoznačne je Putinova administratíva, Rusko pod Putinovou administratívou. Napríklad, český tím expertov na boj proti hybridným hrozbám zverejnil čísla, že od roku 2014 až 16 volieb a referend v rámci Európskej únie bolo priamo ovplyvnených Putinovou administratívou, a to buď cez štátne médiá alebo cez rôznych trollův na sociálnych sieťach. Čo je horšie, tí trollovia sa nám dostávajú do našich národných vlád a do našich národných parlamentov.

A preto vás všetkých vyzývam, aby sme odložili politickú korektnosť a aby sme veľmi jasne pomenovali, že agresorom v tomto prípade, pokiaľ ide o dezinformácie, je Putinova administratíva.

Vladimír Bilčík (PPE). – Mr President, hybrid warfare, and the spread of disinformation and fake news in particular, threaten our democratic institutions across Europe. We need free and fair elections, just like we need free and fair referendums, and since the bulk of political campaigns has moved to social media, we have to ensure that the internet is able to face up to the spread of disinformation timely and effectively. As just the most recent hybrid hacker attack on Austria illustrates, smaller European democracies are especially vulnerable to foreign interference in national elections and, I should add, the subsequent spread of disinformation as we see it in Austria today.

At the same time, smaller European democracies possess more limited resources to communicate effectively with global internet platforms about how best to fight against disinformation attacks. Therefore, in order to protect democracy across Europe, we need a strong and common European political approach in managing our communication and cooperation with social media in our struggle against disinformation campaigns. I therefore urge the Commission and also the Finnish Council Presidency to take up this issue seriously. We have to be united in this.

Raphaël Glucksmann (S&D). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, oui, notre mode de vie démocratique est menacé, mais non, il n'est pas menacé par les exilés que nous laissons mourir en Méditerranée. Il est menacé par les forces qui s'ingèrent dans nos élections et dans nos débats publics.

Affaire Strache, en Autriche, affaire du financement de la Lega, en Italie, affaire Cambridge Analytica, affaire des banques russes du Front national... Toutes ces affaires montrent les liens financiers et les rapports de vassalité qu'entretient l'extrême-droite, ici présente, avec le régime de Vladimir Poutine. Elles montrent aussi la vulnérabilité de nos systèmes démocratiques face aux ingérences extérieures. Au lieu de nous inventer des ennemis imaginaires, traitons de cette menace bien réelle.

Voilà pourquoi je vous demande solennellement aujourd'hui, chers collègues, la mise en place de cette commission spéciale chargée de faire la lumière sur ces ingérences et leurs relais et de définir les moyens de les contrer. Il y va de la survie même de nos démocraties. Ne nous laissons plus marcher dessus, il est temps de réagir.

Nils Torvalds (Renew). – Mr President, just before coming here I had a short exchange of views with Jessikka Aro. Jessikka Aro was the Finnish journalist who revealed what was actually going on behind the walls of a Russian address, 55 Savushkina Street in St Petersburg. What she experienced thereafter was something terrible because the family of trolls, Russian or their friends, actually tried to do something nobody in this House would like to experience, because they were trying to destroy her as a personality. She was too strong for that, but she had one question for you: give Interpol enough money to be able to fight this sort of criminal act.

Zdzisław Krasnodębski (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Ja myślę, że możemy się zgodzić, że ingerencja państw trzecich w wewnętrzne unijne procesy wyborcze przez dezinformację to jest wielkie zagrożenie dla procesu demokratycznego, dla podstawowych praw obywateli, dla wolności, rzetelnej informacji oraz dla suwerenności, przede wszystkim dla suwerenności państw członkowskich. Musimy się też zgodzić co do tego, że rzeczywiście nieprzypadkowo mówimy tu głównie o jednym państwie – o Rosji. I na pewno nie tylko państwa Unii Europejskiej, ale też państwa Partnerstwa Wschodniego padają ofiarą takich kampanii. Powinniśmy może im pomagać w walce z tego rodzaju dezinformacją.

Natomiast trzeba powiedzieć jeszcze dwie rzeczy. Po pierwsze – że oczywiście źródłem dezinformacji i „fake news” są również inne podmioty, inne państwa, podmioty niepaństwowe, a także państwa członkowskie i ich media próbujące ingerować w procesy demokratyczne krajów sąsiednich. Chciałem powiedzieć też jeszcze o jednym efekcie patologicznym, mianowicie, że dzisiaj wyraźnie widać to, że ci, którzy zwalczali teorię konspiracji, sami dzisiaj ulegają teoriom konspiracji. Widzą wszędzie Putina i jego trolli wtedy, kiedy mają do czynienia z wynikami wyborczymi, które nie odpowiadają ich gustom.

Paulo Rangel (PPE). – Senhor Presidente, queria deixar claro essencialmente um ponto: o trabalho que temos de fazer contra a manipulação e a desinformação, nomeadamente nas questões eleitorais, não é um trabalho para se fazer só nas vésperas das eleições. É um trabalho contínuo, até porque a manipulação da opinião pública é muitas vezes feita com tempo e é feita com insistência nas redes sociais, nas plataformas tecnológicas, nos meios convencionais, e por isso nós temos de ter uma resposta que seja uma resposta contínua.

Por um lado através do Serviço Europeu de Ação Externa, onde eu penso que há muito a melhorar; por outro lado através das plataformas tecnológicas, e não apenas da sua cooperação espontânea mas da sua colaboração com as instâncias europeias e com as instâncias nacionais; e também através de uma formação dos cidadãos, e este é o ponto que me parece essencial: a formação dos cidadãos. E aqui eu digo: formação dos políticos, porque os políticos contribuem para as «fake news». Formação dos líderes religiosos e dos líderes de opinião, porque eles contribuem para credibilizar as «fake news». Formação, em particular, dos jornalistas e dos jornalistas de todos os meios existentes. A formação destes operadores será essencial para detetar as «fake news», a instrumentalização e para impedir o outro risco, o risco do outro lado que é a censura, e que nós também queremos banir.

Carlo Calenda (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la democrazia liberale è sotto attacco e rimarrà sotto attacco per i prossimi dieci anni.

È sotto attacco dall'interno, da parte di partiti come la Lega e il Movimento 5 Stelle in Italia che la vogliono demolire, e a questo attacco si risponde con le elezioni, perché la democrazia si difende con la democrazia.

Ma è anche sotto attacco dall'estero, e questo attacco dall'estero si salda con i partiti che la attaccano dall'interno e, in questo caso, non può bastare la democrazia a difendere la democrazia, serve una commissione speciale per appurare in che modo ci siano state interferenze pesantissime da parte di quei partiti che pretendono di difendere l'interesse nazionale ma vendono l'interesse nazionale a paesi esteri. Questo non è tollerabile e l'Europa deve sapersi difendere!

La democrazia è rispettosa, la democrazia è aperta, ma la democrazia non è debole. La democrazia è forte e sa rispondere. Concludo dicendo che gli interventi dall'altra parte dell'emiciclo sembrano molto quel detto latino «*excusatio non petita, accusatio manifesta*».

Klemen Grošelj (Renew). – Spoštovani predsedujoči, gospod komisar, vpletanje tujih, bodisi državnih bodisi nedržavnih akterjev, v volitve in še posebej v predvolilne in druge za demokratične družbe ključne procese v Evropski uniji, državah članicah in tudi širše, je dobilo razsežnosti, ki spodjedajo temelje naše demokratične ureditve.

Obseg premišljenih, ciljno usmerjenih in zelo dobro organiziranih ter usklajenih dejavnosti postaja grožnja, na katero se moramo odločneje odzvati. Gre za preplet zlorabe novih tehnologij in z njimi povezanega dostopa v naše domove na eni strani ter informacijskih potreb, sodobnih, demokratičnih, odprtih in na resnični svobodi govora temelječih družb na drugi strani.

Pri tem se uporablja vrsta propagandnih metod in tehnik, a še pogosteje prefinjenih metod, s katerimi se izkrivlja resnica oziroma se ustvarja lažni vtis resničnosti posredovanih informacij in podatkov, s katerimi se ogrožajo demokratične volitve ali usmerjajo javne razprave v naših družbah. Odziv na to grožnjo je nujen, saj so ogrožene naše temeljne vrednote, a mora hkrati biti premišljen, temelječ na doslednem spoštovanju vladavine prava in demokratičnih vrednot ter standardov.

Predvsem pa mora temeljiti proaktivnem delovanju zoper to grožnjo s posredovanjem kredibilnih in preverljivih informacij, ki bodo onemogočile manipulativno dejavnost tujih akterjev.

Roberts Zīle (ECR). – Cienījamā prezidentūra, komisāra kungs! Īstenībā apdraudējums, par ko mēs runājam, ir daudz dziļāks nekā tikai dezinformācija, un mums — patīk vai nepatīk — jāatceras, ka Eiropas Savienība kā tāda nav globālais līderis ne datu vākšanā, ne mākslīgā intelekta attīstībā, ne arī izpratnē, kā cīnīties ar dezinformāciju un citām metodēm, kas grauj demokrātijas pamatus.

Ko mums darīt šajā situācijā? Es redzu, ka mums būtu jākoncentrē resursi, kas mums ir, un jāuzlabo sadarbība. Jautājums, vai mēs to darām. Mēs šeit dzirdējām par aicinājumu veidot jaunu Eiropas demokrātijas aģentūru, bet mēs aizmirstam — un šeit nekur neizskanēja —, ka mums šeit pat, Eiropas galvaspilsētās, ir NATO Stratēģiskās komunikācijas ekselences centrs Rīgā, mums ir NATO Kiberdrošības ekselences centrs Tallinā, kas ir ar mūsu pašu ekspertiem, tur strādā vairums šo valsts pārstāvju ekspertu, un viņu iestrādes ir daudz, daudz dziļākas. Paskatāmies uz to un izmantojam šo resursu. Kaut vai publiskā informācijā par apdraudējumu vēlēšanās ir Somijas, Zviedrijas, Latvijas, Igaunijas pieredze, un tas ir jāizmanto šajās lapās.

Isabel Benjumea Benjumea (PPE). – Señor presidente, señores representantes del Consejo y de la Comisión, verdaderamente las noticias falsas tienen un efecto nocivo sobre las democracias liberales y constituyen uno de los retos más importantes que tenemos que afrontar como sociedad. Este tipo de noticias —las *fake news*— crean confusión entre los ciudadanos, erosionan la confianza en las instituciones e inducen al engaño del ciudadano y, lo que es más importante, generan inestabilidad política.

Lo cierto —y no nos debemos llevar a engaño— es que las noticias falsas son el instrumento de los enemigos de las sociedades abiertas, son el instrumento de los regímenes autoritarios que dirigen a las opiniones públicas desde el poder o de las fuerzas populistas que buscan condicionar los debates públicos para alcanzar sus objetivos.

Dos ejemplos claros de esto son lo que hemos vivido recientemente con el *Brexit* o lo que ocurrió recientemente, lo que sufrimos en España, durante la crisis del desafío secesionista ocurrido en el año 2017. En aquella ocasión el independentismo catalán mostró su maestría en el uso de la propaganda, la manipulación y la difusión de falsedades, tratando de proyectar una imagen negativa de España que en nada corresponde a la realidad.

Toda esta situación no se soluciona ni con la censura, ni con límites a la libertad de expresión. Este fenómeno lo que pone en evidencia es la necesidad de contar, ahora más que nunca, con unos medios de comunicación que garanticen la calidad de la información que ofrecen a los ciudadanos. Y, así mismo, tenemos que incidir en la educación, formando a ciudadanos responsables y con espíritu crítico. También hay que incidir en las humanidades y en la formación en las capacidades de los jóvenes.

Esto es un enfoque a largo plazo, es un enfoque ambicioso, pero creo que ahí está la clave para enfrentarnos con rigor al fenómeno de las noticias falsas.

Sven Mikser (S&D). – Mr President, while I think it is important that we hold this debate today, I believe that this alone is not sufficient given the magnitude of the challenge. Therefore, I strongly support the proposal to set up a special committee tasked with looking into external interference in our democratic processes and elections.

Russian attempts to meddle in our elections and engage in other malicious influence activities have been well documented, and some have been mentioned here today. The regime in the Kremlin, as well as other illiberal and non-democratic regimes, have made no secret of the fact that they detest our core European values and our representative democracy. So it should not be entirely surprising that they support, financially or otherwise, political forces in our countries that share their disgust of liberal values.

It's not, however, limited just to that. Perhaps even more importantly, they want to undermine the trust of European citizens in our democratically elected institutions and to discredit the whole concept of liberal democracy. This is an existential threat to our Union and must be treated as such by us. Setting up a special committee is therefore a step in the right direction.

Stanislav Polčák (PPE). – Pane předsedající, přes snahu zatemnit toto téma rozmělněním diskuse, já se budu věnovat především roli ruské propagandy, protože jak známo, kremelská propaganda má velmi významný vliv v roli fake news a samozřejmě se také v průběhu let zásadně zdokonalila, dokonce získala i rozpočtové prostředky navíc. S ruskými dezinformacemi máme ostatně v Česku a dříve v Československu zásadní zkušenosti, kdy např. invaze v roce 1968 byla vydávána za bratrskou pomoc. Nebo např. nejnověji máme zde spor o pomník maršála Koněva, který je účelově podsouván pouze jako ryze kladná dějinná postava, a víme, že tomu tak není, např. při potlačení maďarského povstání.

Ruským dezinformátorům bychom se měli rozhodně postavit, jestliže se zdokonalují oni, musíme se zdokonalit i my. Leccos jsme už v tomto směru podnikli, v letošním roce bylo zavedeno dobrovolné reportování online platforem o dezinformacích. A také vytvořen systém rychlého varování, který má usnadnit zaprvé sdílení poznatků členských států týkajících se těchto dezinformačních kampaní a také koordinovat reakce na ně, to je velmi důležité. Nyní však záleží na tom, jak vše toto dokážeme převést do praxe a účinně s tím pracovat. Já mám velká očekávání od právě nově jmenované místopředsedkyně Komise paní Jourové, která má právě boj proti dezinformacím a fake news na starosti, takže budu jí držet palce.

(Řečník odmítl otázku, kterou chtěla zvednutím modré karty položit Anna Bonfrisco.)

Tonino Picula (S&D). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, hvala. Razvojem digitalizacije informacije očekivano postaju sve dostupnije platformama za komunikaciju. To je naravno zakonito.

Međutim, razvijenu interakciju ne prati adekvatna razina zaštite privatnih informacija niti provjera istinitosti informacija koje se plasiraju. Skandal Cambridge Analytica pokazao je način kako se osobne informacije zloupotrebjavaju, koriste u propagandne svrhe i za oblikovanje političkih kampanja. Eurobarometar iz studenoga prošle godine ističe da je gotovo dvije trećine građana zabrinuto stranim utjecajem i mogućnosti manipuliranja izbornim rezultatima.

Komisijin preliminarini pregled europskih izbora pokazuje da su skupine povezane s trećim zemljama i razni nedržavni akteri radili na narušavanju kredibiliteta Europske unije putem društvenih medija. Dovoljno je dokaza da ova tema postane jedan od naših prioriteta i zato podržavam osnivanje posebnog odbora. Također smatram da je potrebno proširiti raspravu i na financiranje političkih stranaka, one direktno povezano s trećim zemljama, njihovim utjecajem na sadržaj kampanja pa tako i na rezultate izbora.

Hvala.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Mónica Silvana González (S&D). – Señor presidente, necesitamos una Europa que proteja a las personas, y proteger a las personas significa reforzar, y este Parlamento debería enviar un mensaje muy claro a la Comisión de proteger sociedades e instituciones europeas.

Los contenidos de desinformación, polarizantes y basados en nacionalismos, en sentimientos religiosos, se ensañan con ciertos colectivos -colectivos como las personas migradas o las personas de diferente orientación religiosa, personas LGTBI, etcétera-, promoviendo un discurso del odio que, lamentablemente, está extendido, y a España también ha llegado. Y en las últimas elecciones vemos cómo este discurso del odio se ha convertido en una apología política, ensañándose con las personas LGTBI y las personas migrantes, con falsedades como acabar con el fin de la identidad cristiana, etcétera, etcétera.

Se buscan chivos expiatorios y se buscan chivos expiatorios en quienes defendemos a estas personas y sus derechos. Se nos etiqueta como los enemigos. Estos populismos están financiados, obviamente, por entidades extranjeras.

Por eso necesitamos que, de este Parlamento, salga una resolución contundente de protección a las personas y, concretamente, se ha incluido a los colectivos. Queremos crear una comisión especial justamente para la investigación y para lograr más coordinación entre los Estados.

Puhetta johti HEIDI HAUTALA

varapuhemies

Petras Auštrevičius (Renew). – Madam President, for a moment I invite you to imagine the European Union, which is known for setting global standards of quality of life in democracy, falling into the following situation: less independent and no investigative media, our citizens living in a post-truth society and dangerously exposed to outside manipulation and national populists are generously financed by foreign subjects. As a result, we're living according to the national interest of such countries as Russia, China or probably any extremist group.

I am convinced that none of us wants this, and it is high time to review the EU and national legislation in regard to foreign financing of political parties campaigning or individual candidates, and also to install screening mechanisms for strategic foreign investments. This is how I imagine the European way of life can be sustained.

Jérôme Rivière (ID). – Madame la Présidente, j'ai écouté la Commission avec attention et j'ai bien entendu qu'elle était particulièrement satisfaite d'elle-même dans sa lutte contre les fausses informations. Pour autant, la réalité est bien différente.

J'entends bien des pays ou des formations politiques pointés du doigt, mais qu'en est-il de ses propres interférences vis-à-vis des nations membres de l'Union européenne? Les Britanniques ont fait le choix de quitter l'Union européenne; tout est fait aujourd'hui, y compris par de fausses informations, pour bloquer cette décision souveraine. En Italie, la voie de la démocratie serait le retour aux urnes: là encore, la Commission encourage par de fausses nouvelles, de fausses rumeurs, une union politique contre nature.

La Commission passe son temps, contre les avis des peuples, à interférer dans des affaires des nations de l'Union européenne sur des sujets qui ne sont pas de sa compétence, bafouant ainsi nos traités. Encore une fois, aujourd'hui, notre assemblée agite de grandes idées, mais ne balaye pas devant sa propre porte.

Clare Daly (GUE/NGL). – Madam President, I find a real irony in the idea of electoral interference in the democratic processes of the European Parliament when we all know the democratic deficit that exists, and you'd wonder why anyone would bother!

But the reality is that foreign electoral interference has been going on since there were elections. The USA has been interfering on a grand scale not just in South America or the Middle East but actually in the heart of Europe itself. And the only reason we're now invoking the spectre of Russian interference is to blame somebody for the catastrophic electoral failures of the establishment parties in Europe and the failure of neoliberal policies that have left millions of European citizens behind, have left them demoralised and disillusioned.

These are the real reasons for the election of Trump, for Brexit and for the rise of the far right, but of course it's far easier to pretend that it's a conspiracy by an official enemy and that citizens are too stupid to know what's good for them.

If we're really concerned about electoral interference, let's address the vast and constant interference in the democratic process by lobbyists, by billionaire newspaper owners, by transnational corporations. Fix that and you won't have to worry about internet memes and Facebook 'likes' that nobody outside this bubble cares about.

Marina Kaljurand (S&D). – Madam President, I would like to thank the Commissioners and the Finnish Presidency and I would like to express my hope that we will negotiate and adopt a strong resolution on this important topic.

Foreign electoral interference attacks one of the most sacred and universal principles of non-interference articulated in the UN Charter. This interference has different aspects, as we have already heard, and I would like to underline the importance of tackling attacks against technical infrastructure essential to democratic processes, in other words, attempts to hack democracy. In order to tackle these attacks, we need strong national measures as well as EU-wide and international cooperation. Here the EU should be a leader: vocal, united, strong and committed. We should be crystal clear that foreign interference is not acceptable and that appropriate measures will be taken against those who violate it.

(Pyynnöstä myönnettävät puheenvuorot päättyvät)

Julian King, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, I would like to thank honourable Members for this important and timely debate. As a number of you have underlined, disinformation campaigns are designed to hamper the ability of our citizens to make informed choices, to divide our society and our communities, and to call into question the outcomes of our electoral processes and the integrity of our democratic institutions. I don't think that we can accept this as a new normal. We must be ready to do more to counter it.

Part of the problem comes from outside of the EU. A number of you have mentioned Russia. Let me be clear: there is a team – it's been referred to in the institutions – whose job it is to monitor pro-Kremlin disinformation campaigns, and they report – this is publicly available – that, over a recent period when they checked, the amount of pro-Kremlin coordinated disinformation across our Member States had doubled compared with a year ago. So this is a real problem, and we should not duck that. Let me also be clear that others have learned from the Russian playbook, so we have to build our resilience – we have to build our counter-measures to resist and counter disinformation, wherever it comes from.

That's why we've put in place – from the Commission's side, working with the Member States and with civil society – a series of measures. But I am not pleased, and we are not resting on our laurels: we say we need to do more. We need to do more on tackling online disinformation, and we need to do more on reinforcing the resilience of our elections. In the coming weeks and months, we will review the Code of Practice on Disinformation to ensure that we can do better to protect the integrity of our democratic societies, and we will report to you on this by the end of October.

Let me just say, in response to one or two of the comments, that this Code of Practice on Disinformation which we are pursuing with the social media platforms has absolutely nothing to do with censorship. It has absolutely nothing to do with the idea of a Ministry of Truth. It is not about determining that a particular political comment is good or bad, true or false. It is about shining a light on the provenance of political debate. It is about transparency, so that our citizens know when they see information where it comes from, who's paying for it, and whether it's a human or an artificial machine that is circulating that information. I think that is essential, if we're going to be able to equip our citizens to make good choices.

We will also come back to you to report on the conduct of the European Parliament elections and the implementation of the election package of measures on free and fair elections. Again, we will work on a European democracy action plan to build the resilience of our democratic systems, and we expect to put forward – subject to confirmation – legislative proposals to ensure greater transparency on paid political advertising and clearer rules on the financing of European political parties. Alongside this, at the same time, we will continue to work with fact-checkers, researchers and civil society, as well as the Member States and online platforms, so that together we can make the progress we need to ensure a prosperous, safe and democratic future for Europe and our citizens.

Tytti Tuppurainen, President-in-Office of the Council. – Madam President, thank you for the opportunity to participate in this debate. It is on a very topical issue and one which is a priority for our Presidency. I would like to thank Members for their very active participation.

The resilience of our Union is based on unity. The more united we are, the better we can withstand the spread of disinformation. It is our obligation to spare no effort to protect our elections and more generally our democratic systems from foreign interference, and we have to do it in full respect of fundamental rights such as freedom of speech, the media and association.

We will continue working horizontally across sectors, across borders, learning from each other through the exchange of information and best practices. And progress has been made. However, as Commissioner Jourová and Commissioner King and many of you here said, we must remain vigilant, and as I reiterated, the Presidency has placed significant emphasis on hybrid threats.

We also look forward to the new initiatives announced by the Commission. And let me once again point out that general awareness of the hybrid threats among our citizens is essential. While open societies and public administrations provide correct information, there won't be lasting room for disinformation. So thank you again for this interesting and important debate.

Puhemies. – Työjärjestyksen 132 artiklan 2 kohdan mukaisesti käsiteltäväksi jätetyt päätöslauselmaesitykset ilmoitetaan myöhemmin.

Keskustelu on päättynyt.

Äänestys toimitetaan seuraavalla istuntojaksolla.

(Istunto keskeytettiin hetkeksi.)

Kirjalliset lausumat (työjärjestyksen 171 artikla)

Joachim Stanisław Brudziński (ECR), na piśmie. – W dzisiejszej debacie mówimy o tym, jak ważne jest utrzymanie i obrona suwerenności naszych krajów, również prawa do wolnych wyborów, których w krajach dokonujemy. Manipulowanie opinią publiczną jest ogromnym zagrożeniem dla procesu demokracji. Dywagujemy nad tym, czy szereg krajów spoza UE miało wpływ na wyniki wyborów lub na opinię publiczną. Istnieją obawy takich działań – ale pewności nie mamy, nikomu tego nie udowodniono.

Natomiast znamy przykłady, gdy wielokrotnie i czynnie włączały się w ostatnią kampanię wyborczą osoby, które z racji piastowanego urzędu nigdy robić tego nie powinny. To nie kto inny jak wiceprzewodniczący KE pan Frans Timmermans, który czynnie uczestniczył w Polsce w konwencjach wybranych partii na kilka dni przed majowymi wyborami do PE. I to nie kto inny jak wiceprzewodniczący Komisji Europejskiej, komisarz ds. lepszej regulacji, rządów prawa i Karty praw podstawowych. Podobnie też brał udział w kampanii wyborczej przewodniczący Rady Europejskiej pan Donald Tusk, również czynnie włączając się w kampanię Koalicji Obywatelskiej. To kolejna osoba, która z racji piastowanej funkcji powinna zachować apolityczność i reprezentować wszystkich obywateli UE, nie zaś promować wybranych.

Dlatego ważna jest walka z zakamuflowanymi działaniami państw trzecich, ale równie ważne – jeśli nie ważniejsze – jest zachowanie należytych standardów na naszym wewnętrznym gruncie państw Unii Europejskiej.

Klára Dobrev (S&D), írásban. – Döbbenetes, hogy a Földön a racionalitás szerepét mennyire átvették az indulatok, a nem létezőtől való félelmek, egyes nemzeteken belül egymás gyűlölete mindent elönt. A technikai fejlődés egyik hátrányaként a társadalmak szisztematikus félrevezetése, manipulációja az az eszköz, amellyel hatalmuk növelésére törekvő államok becsapják, félelembé szorítják, így megzsarolják a polgárokat. Miközben ez egyre nyilvánvalóbban egy világprobléma, lásd, ahogy Putyin Oroszországa hol kisebb, hol nagyobb sikerrel befolyásolja saját érdekeinek megfelelően korábban csillogó demokráciák döntéseit, – gondolok itt akár az USA elnökválasztására, vagy a brexitre, és sok más hasonló esetre – itt Európában is egyre inkább a körünkre ég ez a dezinformáció.

Sőt! Látszólag itt a jó európai államok küzdenek a demokráciát befolyásoló elemekkel, mindeközben a valóság az, hogy van olyan EU-s tagállam, amely saját maga gyártja az álhíreket, terjeszti azokat az állami élet minden eszközével, félelmet kelt a választókban, majd nagylelkűen felajánlja a védelmüket, ha rá szavaznak. Szomorúan kell Önöket tájékoztatnom arról, hogy ez az EU-s tagállam a saját hazám, Magyarország. Támogatom az előterjesztést. De miként lehet a tagállamokat cselekvésre felszólítani, amikor éppen egy tagállam egy fő elkövető? A harc az álhírekkel szemben csak akkor lehet sikeres, ha a legerősebb elkövetőkkel, így a magyar kormánnyal szemben is fellépünk.

Evin Incir (S&D), *skriftlig*. – Under de senaste åren har flera val utsatts för manipulation utifrån, och regler för val blivit brutna i ett flertal medlemsstater. Under 2020 kommer mer än 50 olika val hållas i EU:s medlemsstater och utländsk påverkan kommer fortsätta vara en utmaning. Utöver att störa val, urholkar desinformation förtroendet för det allmänna och den offentliga debatten. Undersökningar visar att manipulation ofta används för att så split i samhället, genom att utpeka vissa grupper som ett hot. Minoritetsgrupper angrips särskilt ofta. Dessa desinformationskampanjer kommer inte bara utifrån utan används också av högextrema grupper och partier inom Europa för att stärka sina positioner. På sikt hotar detta det demokratiska samhället och jag anser att mer behöver göras. Jag stöder kommissionens åtgärder och anser att nätjättar behöver ta ett större ansvar för hur hat, hot och falsk information sprids på sina respektive nätverk.

Sandra Pereira (GUE/NGL), *por escrito*. – A obsessão da União Europeia (UE) relativamente à eventual interferência de países terceiros nos processos democráticos dos seus Estados-Membros é, mais que tudo, um exercício de cinismo, quando se sabe que é ela própria, a UE, uma fonte constante de ingerência na soberania de outros países. Não é estranho, portanto, que esta resolução seja useira de acusações sem sustentação e vezeira no apoio a organizações que visam a desestabilização dos países terceiros, no controlo sobre os dados e as informações pessoais dos cidadãos, na afirmação dos interesses militares e geoestratégicos de uma UE sempre mais preocupada com os mercados que com a democracia. As fake news, a qualidade da informação e a literacia informacional devem ser questões que nos preocupem a todos. Mas temos de reconhecer que, frequentemente, é a UE e as instituições europeias que promovem as fake news. Enfrentar este problema não se faz com a invenção de um inimigo externo; faz-se com a democratização dos órgãos de comunicação social, com o fim da concentração em grandes grupos dos meios de comunicação, com o fim da submissão dos conteúdos aos interesses dos grandes grupos económicos, com o reforço dos meios públicos de comunicação social, com a valorização das condições de trabalho dos profissionais do setor.

ΠΡΟΕΔΡΙΑ: ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΣ ΠΑΠΑΔΗΜΟΥΛΗΣ

Αντιπρόεδρος

12. Incendios forestales en la Amazonia (debate)

Πρόεδρος. – Το επόμενο σημείο στην ημερήσια διάταξη είναι η συζήτηση επί των δηλώσεων του Συμβουλίου και της Επιτροπής σχετικά με τις δασικές πυρκαγιές στην περιοχή του Αμαζονίου (2019/2811 (RSP)).

Tytti Tuppurainen, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, I believe I am not alone in saying that the matter that is before us today, the forest fires that are currently ravaging the Amazon region, is deeply worrying for us all. The fires are a tragedy, not only for the people directly affected but also, more broadly, for our planet and the climate.

It cannot be overstated how important preserving the Amazon rainforest is for effective global climate action. The Amazon rainforest is also uniquely rich and diverse. It is home to one in ten species on Earth. Deforestation, mainly caused by human action and climate change, is a serious threat. It causes a drastic loss of species and tropical rainforest.

These fires are directly related to intentional deforestation. Unfortunately, we note with concern that they have been even more severe in recent days in the rainforest of Brazil and across the border in Bolivia and Paraguay. These fires are severely polluting the air, they are killing many species of rainforest plants and animals and they are expelling indigenous people out of their territories.

The EU's leadership in global climate action and the protection of forests are among the priorities of the Finnish Presidency. Forest fires have devastating consequences for human and animal life. We depend on forests to preserve biodiversity, to limit global warming and to provide people with jobs and livelihoods. Forests will also make an essential contribution to the EU's aspirations of achieving climate neutrality by 2050. This House discussed the preparations for the UN Climate Action Summit this morning and our debate this afternoon is very relevant to this indeed.

Despite the actions taken so far at EU level and the commitments undertaken at international level, deforestation and forest degradation remain on the rise. The devastating fires in the Amazon region have made the need to step up this effort even more pressing.

In April 2019, the Council adopted conclusions on the progress made in the implementation of the EU forest strategy. On that occasion, the Council stressed the importance of the strategy to ensure the coherence and coordination of the EU and Member States' policies affecting forests and to promote further the sustainable management of forests. The Agriculture and Fisheries Council will hold a debate next month on the need for a new strategy beyond 2020, building on the same principles but also considering the new policy developments at Member State, EU and international level.

The Council and Parliament have recently received a long-awaited communication from the Commission on stepping up EU action to protect and restore the world's forests. We will examine in detail the list of priority actions proposed in this report and we look forward to your ideas on this matter. The Council is working to provide some feedback to the Commission's communication in the form of Council conclusions that we hope to adopt in December 2019.

Given that drivers of deforestation go beyond the forestry sector, our intention is to involve, in this exercise, policy experts from connected areas such as environment, agriculture and trade. We look forward to your reactions to this communication too and trust that they will make a valuable contribution to the future course of action.

Let me conclude by underlining that the forest fires in the Amazon region are an urgent global crisis which requires an effective international response. Close cooperation with the countries of the Amazon region is crucial. These countries, such as Brazil, have the full right to lead the response but they need to live up to their commitments. I strongly appeal to the countries in the Amazon Basin and their leaders for urgent action. We are ready to work together with Mr Bolsonaro and others. The EU is ready to support but we need action now.

As the Council Presidency, Finland stands ready to support the EU's reflection on how it can best contribute. On Finland's initiative, the EU Foreign Ministers discussed the issue at their informal meeting in Helsinki at the end of the August. The Foreign Ministers agreed on the gravity of the situation and stressed the need for a coordinated and comprehensive EU approach to address the crisis. As the Council Presidency, we will continue to do our best to contribute to ensuring united, consistent and effective EU action on this matter.

Karmenu Vella, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, today we are facing a global biodiversity and climate crisis which is affecting our lives, it is affecting our economies, and it is also affecting our future.

Current forest fires across the globe are releasing great amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, deepening that crisis, not only in the Amazon, but also in other parts of the world, such as Siberia. But the Amazon is a unique forest, unique for the oxygen that we breathe, unique for the biodiversity that it hosts and unique for the health of our planet. I am, therefore, grateful that you have put this issue high on your agenda. Halting deforestation is key and is essential for three main reasons: to stop biodiversity loss, to address climate change and to achieve the 2030 agenda for sustainable development and our commitments under the Paris Agreement.

The degradation and loss of forests have major consequences on stability and security, on human rights, the climate, biodiversity and the health and livelihoods of both local communities and the wider planet. The European Commission is helping address the situation in the Amazon countries affected by forest fires, and is in regular contact with the relevant authorities, including those in Brazil. A number of operational instruments have already been activated to improve the current situation. Following Bolivia's request, the Emergency Response Coordination Centre has already sent a team of fire-fighting experts to the country. Such assistance could be provided to any affected country upon official request. Also, the Copernicus emergency mapping system has been activated and maps are being produced for the fires in Brazil, in Bolivia and affected parts of Peru and Paraguay. These are in the public domain. The European Union is already financing development projects which are related to forest and land use in the Amazon basin, including in Brazil – for a total of EUR 128 million – and is planning new actions for a total of EUR 28 million. We are in close

contact with the Chilean authorities and the Colombian authorities who have been active in coordinating regional efforts to address the situation. At the recent G7 summit, we were engaged in the preparations for a high-level meeting on the Amazon region on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly. While the immediate priority is fighting wildfires, it is necessary to address the underlying structural causes, such as agricultural expansion. In July, the Commission adopted the communication stepping up EU action to protect and restore the world's forests. The communication outlines a comprehensive set of actions, including support for sustainable land-use practices. This entails working with partner countries to reduce pressures on forests and to encourage forest restoration.

For the European Union's part, we are addressing our consumption footprint on land; we are assessing additional demand-side, regulatory and non-regulatory measures to minimise the risk of importing products associated with deforestation and forest degradation. We are also working to improve the availability and the quality of information on forests and commodity supply chains, *inter alia*, by establishing an EU observatory on deforestation and forest degradation. Sound scientific information is an important element of the EU's strategy; collaboration with partner countries is also key, *inter alia*, to identifying the long-term economic consequences of further deforestation. The Commission is committed to sustained action against deforestation and we stand ready to assist those affected by the recent forest fires in the Amazon and across the globe, in any way that we can, and in close cooperation with these countries' authorities.

Mairead McGuinness, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Mr President, I want to thank in particular Ms Tuppurainen. She has particular knowledge on forests so we are very happy that under her Presidency we're having this debate, and indeed the detail which the Commissioner has delivered to us.

I dare say many of the visitors in the Chamber will have seen the forest fires in the Amazon. It's what motivated me to hold this debate and I am glad that the Group supported us talking about this issue. It really is a question of how globally we can work together, because no nation on its own can solve this problem. But at a time when nations want to be sovereign, is it possible for multilateralism to be strengthened rather than weakened? And pointing the finger at countries doesn't help. We have to show where the failings are but also acknowledge where progress has been made. So to Brazil, for example, there is action recently around the Leticia Pact with seven other South American countries, Operation Law and Order Guarantee and Operation Green Brazil, but this comes after pressure from the international community. We will all suffer if the Amazon dies and it is already under threat. You have outlined that in great detail.

I was pleased the Commissioner mentioned the need to look at policy coherence around the fact that land is being, if you like, brought into production and forest destroyed for agriculture reasons, and we've signed a deal, the Mercosur trade agreement, and we must make sure that the climate and biodiversity commitments contained in that deal with our Mercosur counterparts are honoured. I think that for us in this House will be key.

We do need a carrot and stick approach to this issue. We should also as Europeans put our own hands up and say that we have not always valued forests or biodiversity or done the right thing for the environment, and perhaps in that place of humility we can work better with our colleagues in South America and elsewhere, because in the Arctic, in Indonesia, in the Congo Basin, there are fires burning, turf fires which are releasing massive amounts of carbon. This debate is timely and I thank all those who take part in it.

Iratxe García Pérez, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señor presidente, señor comisario, los incendios en la selva amazónica de este verano han sido una verdadera tragedia, un acontecimiento que ha entristecido y movilizado a la comunidad internacional. Y es que el impacto medioambiental, social y económico de esta tragedia va mucho más allá de la cuenca amazónica.

La Amazonia es el pulmón de la tierra, produce el 20 % del oxígeno de nuestro planeta y alberga más especies vegetales que cualquier otro ecosistema. Además, es la casa de más de un millón de indígenas que llevan viviendo allí de forma sostenible desde hace generaciones, y ahora su patrimonio natural tiene que ser defendido. Y conozco perfectamente esta realidad, porque tuve la gran oportunidad de estar durante un mes trabajando como voluntaria con organizaciones no gubernamentales que apoyan a estas comunidades indígenas, que necesitan tener alternativas sostenibles a su medio de vida.

No puedo imaginar cómo se encontrarán hoy tras ver esta situación tan trágica. No es la primera vez que la Amazonia es devorada por las llamas, es cierto, pero este año han aumentado más de un 80 % respecto al año pasado y en las zonas protegidas no deja de aumentar. La búsqueda de oro aumenta la deforestación y el mercurio que se usa contamina el agua, el aire y el alimento de las personas y de los animales.

Esta catástrofe responde a las políticas irresponsables, impulsadas por negacionistas del cambio climático, y lo conocemos perfectamente. El señor Bolsonaro está promoviendo una nueva fiebre del oro, con el apoyo de acaparadores de tierras, al mismo tiempo que ignora la protección del medio ambiente. Para no tener que escuchar la verdad el señor Bolsonaro ha despedido a los responsables del Instituto de Investigación Espacial de Brasil y el Instituto de Medio Ambiente y de Recursos Renovables.

Señor presidente, es el punto de no retorno para el Amazonas y casi el 20 % de la Amazonía ya ha sido deforestada. Porque, más allá del drama medioambiental, los socialdemócratas también estamos muy preocupados por el destino de las poblaciones indígenas y de sus tierras. Estamos presenciando una escalada de violencia en los territorios indígenas en todo Brasil, los asesinatos de líderes indígenas y activistas, como Emira Waiâpi, Dilma Ferreira Silva y Claudionor Costa da Silva.

Desde la Unión Europea seguimos de cerca los esfuerzos regionales por encontrar soluciones y proteger tanto a las personas como al medio ambiente. Tienen todo el apoyo de nuestro grupo y seguiremos colaborando. Pedimos al señor Bolsonaro que cumpla las obligaciones internacionales del Acuerdo sobre el clima de París y las cláusulas medioambientales que se establecen en el Acuerdo con Mercosur. Si el Gobierno hace oídos sordos, aislará a Brasil del resto de la comunidad internacional. Y creo que viene muy a cuento en este debate recordar un proverbio indoamericano: «solo cuando el último árbol este muerto, cuando el último río esté envenenado, el último pez sea atrapado, nos daremos cuenta de que no podemos comer el dinero».

Martin Hojsík, on behalf of the Renew Group. – Mr President, this summer was a summer of horror with regard to forest fires. We all stood in shock as we watched the Amazon burn, but the shock got even bigger when we heard Brazilian President Bolsonaro blaming it on the NGOs who were trying to protect the Amazon rainforest, when in reality it was his reckless policies that contributed to the havoc that we saw.

But let's be honest: the forest was not burning only in the Amazon. This summer, we saw forests burning from Siberia to Alaska, destroying precious habitats and, effectively, the Earth's lungs. We have to be clear: forest destruction is a global problem. But it is also time for us to admit that we are part of the problem – that not only our contribution to greenhouse gas emissions, but also our own policies, our own trade and our own law enforcement are to blame.

It is time to change that. It is time for this House to act. We need to say that the Mercosur Agreement is a bit problematic as it stands, but it would be very cheap to say, 'let's just shoot down the Mercosur Agreement and everything is solved'. We need to go much deeper. The new incoming Commission claims that the European Green Deal is the top priority. It should not be only about Europe; it needs to go beyond that. It needs to impact the entire world. If we are serious about saving our planet, and indeed our civilisation, we need to ensure that our agriculture policies do not contribute to deforestation, because right now they do – also in the Amazon. We need to ensure that our trade policies don't contribute to deforestation, because right now they do. We need to ensure that our energy policies don't contribute to deforestation, because, also, right now they do. What we need is to change all this – for our own sake, and for the sake of our children.

Heidi Hautala, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group. – Mr President, the mostly intentional forest fires in the Amazon have been a wake-up call and now we know better that they are happening elsewhere, to mention the hot spots: Central Africa, South-East Asia, just to mention the most important ones. We also know that to tackle climate change, we need to capture carbon dioxide with all possible means, and the only viable large-scale way available is with the help of forests.

However, forests are being converted to agricultural land and – let us be clear – the Mercosur agreement is intended for exports of beef, soy, coffee and other forest-risk products that drive deforestation and endanger the Amazon region. The Mercosur deal currently does not have a viable mechanism to ensure that the Paris Climate Agreement and other international environmental commitments would be respected. It has no teeth.

There are no sanctions in that sustainable-development chapter and let me say that, as I understand it, the Commission's communication on deforestation and forest degradation contains one promise and that is to look into regulatory measures on the demand side, because we need badly European legislation which makes it sure for the European consumers that they are not buying deforestation.

We are also complicit, and I would like to put a question to the Finnish Presidency because I know that it has now been decided that the Agriculture Council will deal with the communication on deforestation and forest degradation. How come only the Agriculture Council? Why not the Environmental Council, for instance?

André Rougé, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, la forêt amazonienne brûle, provoquant la catastrophe écologique que nous connaissons tous. Par la voix du président Macron, la France s'est émue, et nous nous associons tous à cette émotion.

Pour autant, le rassemblement national aurait aimé que le président Macron s'émeuve de la même façon des incendies au moins aussi graves qui dévastent les forêts d'Afrique subsaharienne. À l'issue d'une passe d'armes de cour de récréation, indigne des chefs d'État des sixième et neuvième puissances mondiales, Emmanuel Macron a menacé de ne pas signer le Mercosur. Chacun sait que la culture sur brûlis sert à l'alimentation du bétail canadien du CETA, traité catastrophique pour les éleveurs français.

Le Rassemblement national et sa présidente Marine Le Pen se sont opposés au CETA, tout comme nous sommes opposés au Mercosur, parce que c'est un traité désastreux pour les agriculteurs français.

Le président Macron a fini par effectuer le même constat et, de la façon la plus cynique, s'est emparé du désastre amazonien pour menacer de ne pas signer le Mercosur. Personne n'en disconvient ici, l'écologie et l'environnement sont des sujets trop sérieux et trop engageants pour l'avenir de la planète pour que l'on en use à des fins de manœuvres politiciennes intérieures.

En la matière, charité bien ordonnée commençant par soi-même, nous aimerions du président Macron qu'il mette fin au démantèlement de l'ONF, qu'il se préoccupe du traitement des déchets à l'île de la Réunion, qu'il se préoccupe de la montée des eaux à Mayotte, qu'il se préoccupe du risque radioactif induit par le dôme américain des îles Marshall menaçant nos compatriotes de Polynésie française, qu'il se préoccupe davantage de l'environnement de nos compatriotes de Guyane en préservant au mieux la part française de l'Amazonie, qu'il se préoccupe enfin de la catastrophe environnementale des algues sargasses en Martinique et en Guadeloupe.

Malheureusement, après toute cette agitation et tous ces effets de manche, Emmanuel Macron ne fera rien sur ces sujets et finira par signer le Mercosur.

Puhetta johti HEIDI HAUTALA

varapuhemies

Hermann Tertsch, *en nombre del Grupo ECR*. – Señora presidenta, yo estoy oyendo mucho aquí hablar de Bolsonaro. Se está culpando a Bolsonaro de toda la tragedia que está sucediendo. Y nos estamos olvidando —creo que hay una especie de ojo tuerto en este Parlamento— de las cosas que están pasando realmente. Porque de lo que se está hablando, por ejemplo —hablaban de ello ahora los socialistas españoles— es de la búsqueda del oro y de la devastación de la búsqueda del oro. Esa se está produciendo sobre todo en el Amazonas de Venezuela, se está produciendo bajo el control del señor Maduro, bajo el control de los grupos guerrilleros del ELN colombiano, que están allí gracias al régimen comunista del señor Maduro y del chavismo.

Tenemos en este momento ardiendo en Bolivia —han ardido ya— dos millones y medio de hectáreas; en Bolivia, no en Brasil, en Bolivia. Nadie habla de Bolivia, porque el señor Morales, que ha aumentado y disparado el cultivo de la coca para la fabricación de la cocaína, ha empezado a quemar los rastrojos, y de ahí vienen gran parte de las catástrofes. Y aquí parece que solo pensamos en Bolsonaro.

Δημήτριος Παπαδημούλης, εξ ονόματος της ομάδας GUE/NGL. – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, όσα μας είπε το Συμβούλιο και η Επιτροπή αλλά και όσα μας λένε οι επιστήμονες και η ίδια η πραγματικότητα επιβάλλουν σε εμάς όχι μόνο να λέμε λόγια αλλά και να αναλάβουμε δράση. Δεν αρκεί μια συζήτηση. Χρειάζεται να καταλήξουμε σε συμπεράσματα. Να λάβουμε μέτρα. Να ασκήσουμε πίεση για να σταματήσει η αποψίλωση του Αμαζονίου και η καταστροφή του μεγαλύτερου πνεύμονα του πλανήτη. Και για αυτόν ακριβώς τον λόγο πιστεύω ότι, όταν οι αριθμοί δείχνουν ότι επί της θητείας του Bolsonaro έχει αυξηθεί κατά 80% μέσα σε ένα χρόνο η αποψίλωση του Αμαζονίου και όταν μέσα σε λίγους μήνες ο Αμαζόνιος έχει αποψιλωθεί περισσότερο από ό,τι τα τελευταία τρία χρόνια, πρέπει να προβούμε σε περισσότερες ενέργειες.

Και είναι ντροπή για το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο ότι η συζήτηση αυτή δεν θα καταλήξει σε ψήφισμα με ευθύνη μιας συμμαχίας των πολιτικών ομάδων της δεξιάς και της ακροδεξιάς. Πιστεύω ότι πρέπει να καταλήξουμε σε μέτρα και να αξιοποιήσουμε και το εργαλείο της Mercosur για να ασκήσουμε πίεση στον ακροδεξιό Bolsonaro.

Κωνσταντίνος Παπαδάκης (NI). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, η τεράστια περιβαλλοντική καταστροφή στο δάσος-παγκόσμιο πνεύμονα του Αμαζονίου είναι αποτέλεσμα της επιδρομής μεγάλων καπιταλιστικών αγροτοβιομηχανικών επιχειρήσεων, εξορυκτικών δραστηριοτήτων, ομίλων ξυλείας, καθώς και χρηματοπιστωτικών ιδρυμάτων που τις χρηματοδοτούν. Η αντιδραστική κυβέρνηση Bolsonaro κλιμακώνει την αντιπεριβαλλοντική πολιτική προηγούμενων κυβερνήσεων, έχοντας παραδώσει την περιοχή στην επιχειρηματική εκμετάλλευση για παραγωγή βιοκαυσίμων, αγροτοβιομηχανικών προϊόντων αλυσίδας, εξορύξεις και ανεξέλεγκτη υλοτομία.

Η αποψίλωση του Αμαζονίου φέρει και τη σφραγίδα ευρωενωσιακών μονοπωλίων. Για αυτό είναι υποκριτική η ανησυχία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και των κυβερνήσεών της, που έχει να κάνει και με αντιθέσεις σχετικά με τη συμφωνία ελεύθερων συναλλαγών μεταξύ της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και της Mercosur. Είναι ενδεικτικό ότι, παρά τα παχιά λόγια για την κατάσταση του κλίματος, το Ευρωκοινοβούλιο – και με την ψήφο του Ευρωπαϊκού Λαϊκού Κόμματος – αρνήθηκε ακόμα και να εκδώσει ψήφισμα για τον Αμαζόνιο.

Στηρίζουμε την πάλη για να διατεθούν όλα τα αναγκαία μέσα, οι υποδομές και οι πόροι για την κατάσβεση των πυρκαγιών στον Αμαζόνιο, την αποκατάσταση των καταστροφών και την αναδάσωση των καμένων εκτάσεων. Να σταματήσει, άμεσα, στην περιοχή κάθε επιχειρηματική δραστηριότητα!

Peter Liese (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Waldbrände im Amazonas sind eine riesige Katastrophe. Ich will das nur an einem Beispiel deutlich machen: Beim Pariser Klimaabkommen hat sich Brasilien ja nicht verpflichtet, wesentlich die Emissionen aus der Industrie oder aus anderen Bereichen zu reduzieren, sondern die wesentlichen Verpflichtungen Brasiliens im Pariser Abkommen sind im Bereich Wald – Schutz des Waldes und Wiederaufforstung. Und wenn das dann überhaupt nicht funktioniert, dann ist das ein ganz großes Problem auch für das Weltklima.

Aber: Es gibt auch Waldbrände andernorts, und darüber sollten wir mindestens genauso intensiv sprechen. Die Brände in Sibirien und Alaska sind für das Klima eine riesige Bedrohung, weil dort auch große Mengen Methan entweichen, das noch schädlicher für das Klima ist als CO₂. Also jetzt keine primitive Diskussion: Einige verlangen, Mercosur zu stoppen – man könnte theoretisch den ganzen Handel mit diesen Ländern stoppen, aber sind wir dann einen Schritt weiter? Haben wir dann noch ein Druckmittel? Haben wir dann unter Kontrolle, was China und andere machen? Ich glaube, der Weg des Dialoges – natürlich Druck ausüben und auch Mercosur nicht unkritisch durchwinken, aber offen damit umgehen und sehen, wie wir das Problem wirklich an der Wurzel packen können.

Und wir müssen auch selbst Verantwortung übernehmen. Wir haben gestern über die Wälder in der Europäischen Union gesprochen. Wir müssen unseren Wald schützen, vielleicht auch sogar in Europa über Wiederaufforstung reden, und für beides brauchen wir ein Follow-up. Es ist vielleicht gut, dass wir jetzt heute zu beiden Themen – Wälder in Europa und Wälder international – keine Entschließung haben, aber bei beiden Themen müssen wir handeln, sorgfältig überlegen, was richtig ist, und dann entscheiden, und das sollten wir in den nächsten Wochen gemeinsam tun.

Miriam Dalli (S&D). – Madam President, what we are speaking about today is the world's largest rainforest approaching the point of irreversible destruction. The Amazon matters to us because it matters to the global climate. It's a carbon sink that can mitigate global warming. If the Amazon rainforest were to die, the large amount of greenhouse gas it would release would speed up the climate change process. Of further concern are the hundreds of fires that have been recorded this year in the Arctic and subarctic. It is estimated that these fires alone have produced about 100 million tonnes of CO₂.

But this is a vicious circle: if the international community and the European Union does not step up its work to cut greenhouse gas emissions, the rate of global warming will not slow down and these fires will continue to spread. Provisions to protect the Amazon rainforest are part of the agreement reached between the EU and Mercosur, and it is in everyone's interest that such provisions are enforced. In the same spirit, rich signatories of the Paris Agreement who pledged to pay developing ones to plan and plant carbon-consuming trees have to do so. Finally, all of us have a responsibility in helping to change current consumption patterns, which are harmful. It is strong European global collective action that is required.

Nicolae Ștefănuță (Renew). – Madam President, the gallery, as you see, is packed with young people and they care more than all of us about climate change. Forest fires and natural disasters are no longer an issue for individual countries to tackle in isolation. Unfortunately, Amazon fires are part of a greater global trend. The number of global fires increased compared to last year and that has happened exponentially. August 2018 saw 16 000 fires, August 2019 saw 79 000 fires – that is an increase of more than 400%.

Europe cannot be on the sidelines when other countries suffer from disasters and need help. No country in the world is immune to such disasters. No country in the world can handle them on their own. It is essential to have concerted action to stop and recover from these calamities. They accelerate global warming and increase the overall temperature of the planet. We need to strengthen our own civil protection response and boost our ability to deal with natural disasters. We have to be ready to complement national capacities when they are overwhelmed. I'm saying this because just now, the Council has cut these funds and we need to re-establish them. It's not just about forest fires; it's about people, it's about their future. It's about the future of these young people over there.

Yannick Jadot (Verts/ALE). – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Commissaire, il y a deux façons d'aborder cette question.

La première, c'est évidemment l'émotion et la dénonciation. Comment ne pas pleurer cette forêt magnifique qui se détruit et les peuples qui y habitent qui disparaissent? Comment ne pas dénoncer Bolsonaro, un climato-sceptique qui veut vendre son pays et l'Amazonie à l'agro-business, dont le gouvernement comme le précédent est corrompu par JBS, le leader mondial de la viande bovine, et qui est xénophobe, homophobe, sexiste?

Puis il y a une autre façon d'aborder la question, qui ne supprime ni l'émotion, ni la dénonciation: c'est de voir quelle est notre responsabilité dans ces feux de forêt qui n'ont rien de conjoncturels.

Monsieur le Commissaire, vous avez réussi l'exploit de ne pas dire «Mercosur» ni «politique agricole commune». J'ai entendu les représentants du PPE, de Renew, même des sociaux-démocrates, nous dire: ce serait bien, quand même, de respecter l'accord du Mercosur.

Mais si vous ne voyez pas que l'accord du Mercosur – que le Brésil a signé parce qu'il va exporter du soja et de la viande bovine – est structurellement destructeur de l'Amazonie et structurellement climaticide, si vous ne voyez pas que la proposition de la politique agricole commune, portée par la Commission et que vous soutenez, va renforcer les importations de soja brésilien, à ce moment-là, vous ne voyez pas votre responsabilité, vous ne participez pas à l'arrêt des feux de forêt, de la destruction de l'Amazonie et des peuples qui y habitent! Alors un peu de sérieux dans ce Parlement!

Malin Björk (GUE/NGL). – Fru talman! Amazonas står i lågor. Dessa världens lungor som avgör huruvida vi kommer att klara klimatet, eller inte. Fortsätter avskogningen i den här takten kommer vi att få en uppvärmningseffekt som inte går att stoppa. Och det kommer att vara katastrofalt för den biologiska mångfalden.

Brasiliens president Bolsonaro är medskyldig till den här situationen. Han för inte bara en politik som är farlig för kvinnorrättsaktivister, HBTQ-personer, ursprungsbefolkningar och fattiga brasilianare. Hans politik är en fara för hela världen – hans avskogningspolitik. Det är därför inte konstigt att det är många som har reagerat och som kräver att vi agerar. Jag håller med föregående talare. Det krävs att vi agerar nu. Det finns flera sätt att göra det, men ett uppenbart sätt att göra det är naturligtvis att frysa förhandlingarna om Mercosuravtalet. Frysa det och skriva in att Parisavtalet måste respekteras, att det ska vara bindande och avskogningen av Amazonas måste sluta. Det ska bli bindande. Nu inleds en veckas aktioner av unga människor. De kräver av oss att vi gör allt som står i vår makt. Ja vi tänker i alla fall göra det.

Eleonora Evi (NI). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, siamo noi europei corresponsabili degli incendi in Amazzonia e nel resto del mondo. I nostri consumi di carne, di olio di palma, l'importazione di mangimi per allevamenti intensivi, in particolare di soia e di mais, in larga parte OGM, tutto questo contribuisce a creare un'elevata pressione sulle foreste nei paesi terzi ed accelera la deforestazione.

La priorità numero uno quindi deve essere ridurre l'impronta dei consumi dell'Unione europea che hanno un impatto diretto sulla deforestazione, e non è retorica ricordare che nel mondo ci sono 820 milioni di persone che non hanno cibo da mangiare e, viceversa, fino a poco tempo fa un miliardo di persone era in sovrappeso. Oggi le ultime rilevazioni ci dicono che sono due i miliardi di persone in sovrappeso e 4 milioni muoiono per troppo cibo.

Nel mondo si produce tanto, troppo cibo insostenibile e malsano, cibo spesso sprecato, cibo spazzatura che mette a rischio le persone e il pianeta. La nuova Commissione dovrà affrontare questi problemi alla radice, nella PAC e nella politica commerciale dell'Unione europea se vogliamo veramente impegnarci seriamente per il raggiungimento degli obiettivi di sviluppo sostenibile e dell'agenda 2030 e se vogliamo davvero impegnarci per ridurre povertà, fame, disuguaglianze e sfruttamento indiscriminato delle risorse nel mondo.

Adam Jarubas (PPE). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Amazonia – płuca świata i rezerwar bioróżnorodności – jest wycinana, pada ofiarą pożarów. Większość z nich jest z premedytacją zaprzeczana, by zyskać miejsce pod uprawy, również paszowe. Ta sytuacja musi ulec zmianie. Jednak dotychczas nie byliśmy w stanie wpłynąć na państwa, na terenie których dochodzi do wylesiania.

Wspomniana już dzisiaj została umowa handlowa z państwami Mercosuru, która może być wykorzystana do wyegzekwowania przestrzegania przez te państwa zapisów porozumienia paryskiego i wstrzymania wylesiania Amazonii. Jeśli umowa ma być przyjęta i przynieść pożądane efekty, państwa Mercosuru nie tylko muszą spełniać kryteria klimatyczne i zrównoważonego rozwoju, ale również muszą wdrożyć równoważne z europejskimi kryteria dobrostanu zwierząt, bezpieczeństwa żywności, jakie musi spełnić rolnik francuski, niemiecki czy polski.

Ale umowa ta nie jest jedyną formą presji, którą posiadamy. Wiemy, że europejskie banki inwestują miliony euro w południowoamerykańskie niespełniające kryteriów zrównoważoności, prowadzące do wylesiania Amazonii uprawy soi. Bez odrobienia lekcji na naszym podwórku negocjacje z krajami Mercosuru nie będą skuteczne. Musimy wstrzymać pożary Amazonii, ale nie możemy dopuścić do tego, by kosztem było wpuszczenie do Europy nieuczciwej konkurencji w rolnictwie oraz narażenie zdrowia Europejczyków przez dopuszczenie do obrotu żywności o niesprawdzałnej jakości.

Kati Piri (S&D). – Madam President, these horrible forest fires turned the spotlight on the plight of the Amazon basin's 2.7 million strong indigenous population. These 350 ethnic groups – of which 60 remain largely isolated – strongly rely on the rainforest's incredible richness, but their living conditions are in steep decline. Government-sponsored intruders looking to capitalise on the rainforest's resources are destroying their ways of life through logging, fire and farming. These fires were not an accident: they were deliberately set to make way for agriculture, mining, and other developments. Neither is it accidental that the number of forest fires increased sharply since President Bolsonaro took office. His development policy rests on making indigenous people leave their ancestral lands.

The protests of hundreds of indigenous activists against these discriminatory policies have fallen mainly on deaf ears, and we must amplify their voices. We must therefore continue to use our economic power, but also our foreign policy tools, to defend human dignity, biodiversity and our planet. Let me end with a statement made by Marcos Mayoruna, leader of the Matsés tribe: 'The forest isn't just for us indigenous. It's for everyone.'

Antony Hook (Renew). – Madam President, the skies over São Paulo have turned black from the smoke of the Amazon rainforest burning. These rainforests are the lungs of our world, which we all need for an atmosphere to breathe.

The indigenous people who live there want only the basic human right to be left alone, and these fires are destroying their homes. Many people in South East England have contacted me about this. The UK Parliament has been shut down, but this Parliament still gives us a voice. Brazil's economy is growing – GDP per person has grown by almost a quarter in ten years – and indeed, whether the Mercosur agreement can survive this inferno will be in question.

Mr Bolsonaro, if you burn this rainforest, you will burn Brazil's chance for good relations with Europe. It is not necessary to burn the forest to make wealth; it is necessary to put the fires out to save our planet.

(The speaker agreed to take a blue-card question under Rule 171(8))

Molly Scott Cato (Verts/ALE), blue-card question. – *(inaudible)* cross-party letter to Commissioner Malmström, signed by many people in this Parliament, and it drew attention to Bolsonaro's ecocidal policies and said that we should not sign up to the trade agreement unless there were legally binding environmental and human rights standards. At that point, members of the Liberal Group did not sign up to that letter, and so I would like to ask Mr Hook: is he ready now to pledge to vote against the EU-Mercosur trade deal as long as it does not include legally binding provisions on environmental protection and human rights?

Antony Hook (Renew), blue-card answer. – I'm afraid I do not know of the letter of which my colleague speaks. I think this is a matter that is too complicated to be reduced to a yes-or-no question or a single letter; it needs to be looked at in detail. But I'm certainly an advocate that our trade agreements in Europe should be used to promote human rights, to promote liberal values, and to promote fairness and indeed protection of the environment.

Anna Cavazzini (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin! Der Amazonas brennt, und jede Minute stirbt ein Stück der grünen Lunge unseres Planeten. Brasiliens rechtsextremer Präsident Bolsonaro legt mit seiner Politik gegen das Pariser Klimaabkommen, gegen Menschenrechte und gegen Indigene die Lunte für die zerstörerischen Brände im Amazonas.

Doch auch die europäische Politik trägt Verantwortung. Allein im letzten Jahr importierte die EU aus Brasilien 60 000 - Tonnen Ethanol, 70 000 Tonnen Rindfleisch und fast fünfeinhalb Millionen Tonnen Soja. Für diese wahnsinnigen Größenordnungen wird jeden Tag kostbarer Regenwald gerodet.

Die Erde steht in Flammen, und wir zündeln weiter, denn das Mercosur-Abkommen ist ein Brandbeschleuniger. Noch mehr Rindfleisch, noch mehr Ethanol – das bedeutet noch mehr Abholzung und noch mehr Brände im Amazonas. Und Bolsonaro und die Agrarlobby sagen danke.

Wir müssen jetzt Verantwortung übernehmen für unseren Planeten und für unser Klima. Die Proteste auf der Straße, zum Beispiel der globale Klimastreik diese Woche, zeigen doch, dass wir als Parlament Verantwortung übernehmen müssen. Wir müssen Mercosur stoppen, und wir müssen unsere Lieferketten freihalten von Entwaldung, von Menschenrechtsverletzung und von Ausbeutung. Wir haben hier im Parlament die Möglichkeit, Globalisierung gerecht zu gestalten. Jetzt ist Zeit dafür!

Martin Buschmann (GUE/NGL). – Frau Präsidentin! Seit Wochen wüten im brasilianischen Regenwald so viele Feuer wie niemals zuvor. Der Hauptgrund ist unser maßloser Fleischkonsum, für den diese Weide- und Ackerflächen gerodet werden. Diese verbrecherische Brandrodung wird seit Jahren betrieben; sie vernichtet wertvolle Tier- und Pflanzenarten sowie den Lebensraum indigener Völker. Die unzähligen Tiere, die qualvoll in den Flammen gestorben sind, die verbrannten Pflanzen und die Menge an CO₂, die dabei freigesetzt wurde, sind einige schlimme Folgen.

Die erhebliche Beschädigung, Zerstörung oder der Verlust von Ökosystem hat einen Namen: Ökozid. Wie Völkermord, Kriegsverbrechen und Verbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit war der Ökozid von den Vereinten Nationen als Völkerrechtsverbrechen definiert worden, doch die USA, England, Frankreich und die Niederlande bestanden darauf, Ökozid aus der Liste der Völkerrechtsverbrechen zu streichen. Die Konsequenzen sind katastrophal: Umweltsünden werden lediglich mit Bußgeldern bestraft. Diese riskieren die Konzerne aber gerne, denn ihr Raubbau bringt ihnen ein Vielfaches ein. Das muss ein Ende haben!

Christophe Hansen (PPE). – Madam President, this summer, our planet was ablaze. Wildfires wiped out forests in the Amazon, in Asia and in Africa. In Europe, three times more wildfires occurred than in every single year between 2008 and 2018. In the Arctic region, burning peat urges us to swift action. We need to tackle this disaster for all of humanity at global level. Rather than scapegoating trade agreements, as done by Mr Jadot, who has already left after having done his show, we should use this sense of urgency to advance the debate on how to better leverage trade policy to export our environmental standards and fight climate change on a global scale. The prospect of the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement is a unique opportunity to hold Brazil to its commitments under the Paris Climate Agreement, such as to restore and reforest 12 million hectares and to attain zero illegal deforestation by 2030, as already stated by my colleague, Peter Liese. Trade policy is no silver bullet for these problems, but it sure can be helpful. For example, through plurilateral agreements on trade in environmental goods, it now lies in our hands to work on the appropriate flanking measures, such as monitoring and certification schemes. Not blame games, but cooperation is the way forward. Not defeatism, but the conviction that this man-made disaster has man-made solutions should guide us.

Jytte Guteland (S&D). – Fru talman, herr kommissionär! Skogen är våra gröna lungor. Världens skogar spelar en helt avgörande roll för framtiden, för klimatet, för vår möjlighet att ställa om till en hållbar framtid. Vi vet att den ena lungan är att skogen med sina växande träd absorberar och tar upp koldioxid från atmosfären och spelar därmed en helt avgörande roll för att vi ska kunna leva upp till Parisavtalets temperaturmål. Men vi vet också att skogen med den andra lungan kan bidra med en ny teknik som också är väldigt viktig för vår omställning. Men just nu så handlar det med rätta om Amazonas regnskog som är särskilt viktig.

Det är inte för inte som just Amazonas regnskog kallas för världens lungor. Den här skogen absorberar två miljarder ton koldioxid om året. Ni hörde rätt. Det motsvarar fem procent av världens samlade utsläpp. Det här är den absolut viktigaste källan för att vi ska kunna leva upp till Parisavtalet, att vi respekterar regnskogen. Bränderna i Amazonas är ett hot mot vår framtid. Vi behöver agera ansvarsfullt och se till att ta ledartröjan i att försvara regnskogen.

Stéphane Bijoux (Renew). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, je viens de l'outre-mer français et je veux porter ici le cri d'alarme, toujours aussi persistant, des peuples d'Amazonie, toujours autant menacés par des feux de forêt dévastateurs.

Toute l'humanité est concernée, nous l'avons dit, mais en première ligne, il y a près de 300 000 Européens. Ils vivent en Guyane française, dans la forêt amazonienne. La France et donc l'Europe, nous avons une frontière commune avec le Brésil, qui brûle, et cela nous donne une légitimité et même une responsabilité augmentée pour agir et pour protéger l'Amazonie.

Comme d'habitude, il y a bien évidemment le fond et la forme. Agir vite et bien, c'est une question d'urgence, mais agir dans le cadre d'une procédure, d'une démarche parlementaire structuré, déterminée, coordonnée, c'est une question de cohérence et d'efficacité.

Je nous demande d'utiliser tous les leviers disponibles pour qu'en Amazonie, nous ayons une stratégie et une exigence de respect, de respect, bien évidemment, des objectifs de développement durable, de respect de la fragilité de la biodiversité, de respect de la force des populations locales et de leurs cultures ancestrales et de respect, bien évidemment, des engagements qui ont été pris lors des accords de Paris.

Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, I think everyone was shocked to see what we saw this summer with the Amazon fires, and rightfully so. We have been discussing here the Mercosur trade deal, which is designed to improve and to enhance trade between, for example, Brazil, and Europe. This is not about a blame game. This is to my colleagues in the European People's Party Group (EPP) – because I really would recommend you to read what's in it. If you are looking at preventing deforestation, in the current Mercosur trade deal, you will only find it somewhere down the line in the trade and sustainable development chapter. The only things that are being said is to encourage trade in products from sustainably managed forests and to promote, as appropriate and with prior informed consent, the inclusion of forest-based local communities and indigenous people. That's only talking about encouraging and promoting, whereas

the rest of the Mercosur trade deal is very binding. This shows you that this trade deal has totally bizarre priorities: more trade and when it's about sustainability, promoting and encouraging. That's the language that we are having here and that's the question to the Commission and to the Council: do you want to change this language in order to make sure that we have binding rules in place instead of these very weak chapters that we have now in the current Mercosur trade deal?

Emmanuel Maurel (GUE/NGL). – Madame la Présidente, nous sommes évidemment toutes et tous effarés par la situation en Amazonie. Mais on ne peut pas se contenter de déplorer ou de condamner. Il faut savoir identifier les causes et aussi en tirer les conséquences politiques.

La première des causes est la politique criminelle de M. Bolsonaro qui démantèle les agences environnementales, qui détruit les habitats des peuples autochtones et qui utilise toujours plus de pesticides toxiques.

La deuxième cause est aussi un modèle économique, celui de l'agro-business brésilien, qui est fondé sur l'exportation et qui a besoin de toujours plus de surface, notamment pour le soja.

Mais notre responsabilité à nous – parce qu'il faut arrêter d'être hypocrite, j'ai entendu le collègue de droite disant que le Mercosur va inciter M. Bolsonaro à être vertueux. Mais enfin, c'est une blague! Une mauvaise blague, d'ailleurs. La réalité est que le Mercosur, cela est écrit noir sur blanc, c'est plus d'éthanol, plus de sucre, plus de viande, c'est donc une incitation incroyable à la déforestation. C'est un texte climaticide.

Alors, chers collègues, et surtout de la droite et de Renew, soyez cohérents, soyez logiques, si vraiment vous regrettez cette situation, alors rejetez le Mercosur.

Edina Tóth (PPE). – Elnök Asszony! Évek óta látjuk az erdőtüzek pusztító hatását, amelyek közül külön kiemelés érdemel az Amazonas vidékén bekövetkezett katasztrófa, amelyet rendkívül súlyos ügynek tartok. Véleményem szerint az Európai Unió feladata, hogy minden anyagi és technikai segítséget megadjon az érintetteknek és a rászorulóknak. Úgy gondolom, hogy az erdőirtással szemben úgy célszerű fellépni, hogy az erdőirtás mögött húzódó gazdasági okokat próbáljuk meg orvosolni. Örömmel láttam, hogy az új Európai Bizottság prioritásként kezeli az erdők fokozott védelmét. Fontosnak tartom a témában most tárgyalás alatt álló bizottsági közleményben felsorolt tervezett intézkedések végrehajtását, továbbá javaslom azok kibővítését az erdőirtás gazdasági okainak megszüntetésére irányuló intézkedésekkel.

Az erdők védelme, az erdők fogyásának megállítása globális kérdés. Fontos, hogy az Európai Unió és tagállamai saját területeiken is ösztönözzék az új erdők telepítését. Magyarországon a kormány kulcskérdésként tekint az erdőtelepítések támogatására. Idén több mint a duplájára emelte az erdőtelepítéshez igényelhető támogatások összegét, és megnövelte azok igénybevételeének időtartamát.

Delara Burkhardt (S&D). – Frau Präsidentin! Die Brände im Amazonas sind nicht nur ein Unglück der Natur. Sie sind auch Folge menschlichen Handelns. Durch Brandrodung werden Flächen landwirtschaftlich nutzbar gemacht, rein deshalb, weil der Schutz unserer natürlichen Lebensgrundlagen weniger lukrativ ist.

Unser Konsum, unser Handel tragen eine Mitverantwortung, die die Kommission in ihrer Mitteilung zum Schutz der internationalen Wälder ja auch anerkannt hat. Jetzt müssen aber Taten folgen. Wenn wir es ernst meinen, werden wir keinem EU-Mercosur-Vertrag zustimmen, der keine verbindlichen, einklagbaren Regeln zum Schutz der Wälder, Respekt der Menschenrechte und zur Umsetzung des Pariser Klimaabkommens enthält. Bloße Absichtserklärungen – das zeigt ja der Fall Bolsonaro bestens – zeigen noch keine Wirkung. Der Wald muss im Mittelpunkt stehen, wenn wir die Klimakatastrophe und das Massensterben der Arten stoppen wollen.

2020 kann die EU ihre Vorreiterrolle beweisen, wenn auf UN-Ebene ein internationales Artenschutzabkommen verhandelt wird und die weitere Umsetzung des Pariser Klimaabkommens. Hunderttausend junge Menschen werden auch Freitag wieder auf der Straße stehen, weil sie nicht nur Worte von uns hören, sondern Taten sehen wollen. Lassen Sie uns sie nicht enttäuschen!

Frédérique Ries (Renew). – Madame la Présidente, c'est un plaisir de vous voir présider ce débat en particulier, merci aussi au commissaire Vella pour ce qui sera peut-être l'un de ses derniers débats avec nous.

L'Amazonie brûle, un feu qui ravage la plus grande forêt de la planète, qui enflamme les opinions et qui dynamite les relations diplomatiques. L'Amazonie qui brûle, c'est toute une région qui suffoque et c'est le monde qui souffre. Les responsabilités, on l'a dit, des gouvernements Bolsonaro et Morales dans cette catastrophe sont accablantes, car il est terrible ce cercle vicieux. De puits carbone quelles furent, ces forêts deviennent émettrices en relâchant dans l'atmosphère du CO₂ qu'elles séquestrent depuis des siècles.

Et nous sommes l'un des principaux importateurs des produits issus de la déforestation: huile de palme, cacao, maïs, bois, viande et bien sûr le soja brésilien. En résumé, un produit sur 10 est associé à la déforestation et consommé en Europe. Notre réponse doit être à la hauteur et transversale. Une mesure seulement, puisque le temps m'est compté, c'est un label, créer un label, une certification de l'Union pour identifier et promouvoir ses produits zéro déforestation.

Marie Toussaint (Verts/ALE). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, l'Amazonie brûle et les feux qui la ravagent embrasent notre dernière barricade face au dérèglement climatique.

La multiplication des incendies n'est pas seulement liée à la sécheresse. Elle est liée aux intérêts économiques qui sacrifient les droits de la nature. En Amazonie, on exproprie, on déforeste, on incendie au nom de la seule recherche du profit.

Ne regardons pas ailleurs, avec l'air de ceux qui ne sont pas concernés. Ces entreprises agroalimentaires ou extractivistes sont aussi européennes. Ces entreprises ne sont aujourd'hui tenues par aucune règle, aucun devoir de vigilance. Et parmi les principaux pollueurs du monde, comment peut-on tolérer que Total et Shell, ces deux pétroliers européens, ne soient même pas tenus de respecter l'accord de Paris?

Il est temps d'agir. Quand l'Europe reconnaîtra-t-elle enfin les droits de la nature, les communs planétaires, les écocides? Vous qui nous parlez de défendre notre mode de vie, je vous le demande: quand défendrez-vous un mode de vie compatible avec notre avenir? L'Europe responsable est une Europe qui respecte les limites planétaires et le vivant.

Sira Rego (GUE/NGL). – Señora presidenta, arde el Amazonas. El planeta se queda sin tiempo. A estas alturas, y con la grave crisis ecológica, necesitamos actuar con firmeza.

Se han citado ya algunos de los impactos de estos incendios: pérdida de biodiversidad, destrucción de la selva para fomentar los intereses de la industria cárnica, comunidades indígenas que pierden su territorio. Y, además, estamos viendo la incompetencia de Bolsonaro y su Gobierno de extrema derecha, incapaces de afrontar con seriedad y responsabilidad el problema y preocupados tan solo por repartir el pastel entre las oligarquías. Eso sí, con la ayuda de las políticas comerciales de la UE.

Por eso, no basta con destinar fondos europeos, y mucho menos permitir que un neofascista los maneje. Debemos asumir las consecuencias de nuestro modelo económico.

Hace un momento, la representante del Consejo nos pedía propuestas. Aquí le dejo algunas: la paralización de Mercosur, un acuerdo que es parte del problema; que dejemos de importar carne de forma masiva y de sostener modelos de producción y consumo que explotan la capacidad del planeta. Pero, sobre todo, que dejemos de ser cómplices de quienes siembran la muerte.

Puhemies. – Haluaisin nyt tehdä ilmoituksen. Meillä on vielä 20 pyydettyä puheenvuoroa tässä keskustelussa, joka on hyvin tärkeä, ja on tärkeää, että tästä puhutaan. Meillä on myös puheenvuorolistan ulkopuolisia pyyntöjä niin paljon, 12 kappaletta, että koska olemme istunnossa jäljessä, en voi niitä kaikkia myöntää. Näin avoimuuden nimissä ajattelin nyt luetella ne jäsenet, jotka tulevat saamaan keskustelun jälkeen puheenvuorolistan ulkopuolelta puheenvuoron. He ovat jäsenet Arias Echeverría, Agius Saliba, Avram, Joveva, Kelleher, Chowns ja Konečná. Valitettavasti te muut tullette petty-mään. En voi nyt tälle asialle muuta.

Hildegard Bentele (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kollegen, liebe Zuhörer! Die Nachrichten und Bilder aus dem Amazonasgebiet sind schrecklich; das haben viele vor mir schon deutlich hervorgehoben. Wenn man sich vor Augen führt, dass der Wald nicht nur in Südamerika, sondern auch in Russland, in Kanada und im Kongo großflächig brennt und abgeholzt wird und selbst viele Waldgebiete in der EU in einem besorgniserregenden Zustand sind, dann müssen wir uns als EU natürlich fragen: Was können wir tun, um diese lebensnotwendigen, unentbehrlichen CO₂-Speicher zu erhalten?

Meine erste Antwort darauf ist: Die EU muss mit einer Stimme sprechen. Genauso wie bei der Aushandlung von Handelsabkommen muss die EU in Zukunft beim Schutz der Wälder ihr ganzes Gewicht von 28 Mitgliedstaaten in die Waagschale werfen und Gesicht und Profil zeigen. Und wir sollten zweitens Umwelt- und Klimaschutz zu einem festen Bestandteil unserer Entwicklungszusammenarbeit und der EU-Diplomatie machen.

Wir stehen jetzt zu Beginn einer neuen Legislatur. Eine neue Kommission nimmt ihre Arbeit auf. Und ganz ehrlich: Mir fehlt das Thema Umwelt- und Klimaschutz in den *Mission Statements* von Josep Borrell und Jutta Urpilainen. Klimaschutz muss per se international erfolgen, und deshalb kann man sich einen *Green New Deal* nicht nur EU-intern vornehmen, sondern wir müssen diesen weltweit vorantreiben und im Falle des Waldschutzes ganz konkret in der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit Gelder für Zertifizierung, für alternative Erwerbsmöglichkeiten und für Aufforstung bereitstellen. Lassen Sie uns in den nächsten Wochen die Chance nutzen, unser neues Entwicklungshilfeinstrument dementsprechend auszurichten.

Isabel Santos (S&D). – Senhora Presidente, os incêndios florestais na região amazônica chamaram a nossa atenção não apenas para a extensão da destruição daquele que é chamado um dos «pulmões do planeta», mas também para as violações de direitos humanos cada vez mais graves nesta região.

Temos sido testemunhas de uma escalada de violência nos territórios indígenas e não podemos ficar indiferentes às notícias do assassinato de líderes indígenas, ativistas de direitos humanos e ambientalistas.

Exemplo como o chefe Emyra Wajãpi, assassinado no final de junho, Dilma Ferreira da Silva, Claudionor Costa da Silva, aqui já evocados, e tantos outros devem servir de alarme para o que se está a passar.

Ameaças, intimidações e assédio são cada vez mais comuns e devem ter uma resposta determinada por parte da União Europeia.

Os anúncios, por parte de responsáveis políticos brasileiros, da abertura a uma crescente exploração do território amazônico pelos setores agrícola e mineiro têm estimulado os conflitos e o desrespeito pelos direitos e pelas liberdades básicas dos povos indígenas.

A União Europeia não deve – não pode – ignorar as suas obrigações como líder global e deve utilizar os instrumentos ao seu alcance no diálogo com os governos para defesa da floresta, do ambiente, o combate às alterações climáticas e a proteção dos direitos humanos.

Karin Karlsbro (Renew). – Fru talman! Amazonas brinner. Det är en akut kris och en angelägenhet för hela världen. Brasiliens president, Bolsonaro, har visat att han inte självant kommer att ta klimatutmaningen och avskogningen av Amazonas på allvar. Tvärtom har han tidigare sagt att han vill dra sig ur Parisavtalet i sällskap med Donald Trump men protester från omvärlden, däribland EU, har gjort intryck.

Vill vi verkligen ta ansvar för klimatet? Vill vi samverka för att Parisavtalet ska följas? Vill vi rädda Amazonas måste vi helt enkelt använda de bästa verktygen vi har. Handelsavtalet mellan EU och Mercosur är viktigt både för oss och för Brasilien ekonomiskt. Men det ger oss också en alldeles unik möjlighet att både sätta press på och skapa incitament för Brasiliens regering att ta klimatansvar. Moderna handelsavtal med tydliga krav på hållbarhet är ett av de allra bästa och mest effektiva verktyg vi har. Låt oss använda dem.

Francisco Guerreiro (Verts/ALE). – Senhora Presidente, Senhora Ministra, Senhor Comissário, os dados e os factos são claros. A União Europeia é a grande responsável pela destruição da selva amazônica. Somos o maior importador de produtos agrícolas provenientes de zonas desmatadas e o segundo maior importador de soja brasileira usada em rações para gado na Europa.

Não há como negar que o que comemos está a devastar a Amazônia e as suas comunidades indígenas. Mas outro rumo é possível se a União tiver a coragem necessária para colocar o pé no travão. Por isso, questiono, Senhora Ministra, Senhor Comissário, estão prontos para congelar o acordo com o Mercosul e travar a importação de carne e de soja da América Latina?

Sabemos que é uma decisão difícil, mas é necessária para travar o lóbi da agropecuária e para, finalmente e definitivamente, priorizarmos a proteção da biodiversidade da Amazônia e das comunidades indígenas.

Mick Wallace (GUE/NGL). – Madam President, the production of beef is without question the biggest cause of deforestation in the Amazon, so it stands to reason that the quickest way to end deforestation in the Amazon will be to reduce demand for Brazilian beef. But now the EU wants to flood the European market with more South American beef every year through the Mercosur deal. You couldn't make it up.

Nineteen per cent of all soy consumed in the EU comes from Brazil. Yes, there are restrictions on soy production expansion in the Amazon, but this has only served to increase pressure from cattle farming. Pasture land in the savannah has been replaced with soya bean plantations, and because of this, these beef farmers have moved to the Amazon.

It is estimated that nearly a quarter of total annual Amazon deforestation in recent years has been caused by these displaced beef farmers, so how in the name of God did the Commission come to the conclusion in March in its sustainability criteria for biofuels that soya bean production should not be designated a high risk factor for indirect land use change? It's just madness.

Nathalie Colin-Oesterlé (PPE). – Madame la Présidente, par nos échanges commerciaux nous portons une responsabilité dans ces incendies en Amazonie, parce que nous importons des produits issus de la déforestation et de la dégradation des forêts – viande bovine et soja, notamment.

L'Union européenne doit non seulement porter un discours fort, mais également imposer une gestion durable de la forêt par des clauses contraignantes en respect des accords de Paris sur le climat. Car, faut-il le rappeler, aucune sanction n'est aujourd'hui prévue en cas de non-respect. À l'heure des négociations avec le Mercosur, cette question est absolument cruciale.

Nous devons également mettre en place cette barrière écologique que nous avons défendue durant la campagne européenne et sur laquelle s'est engagée la présidente von der Leyen, ce dont nous nous félicitons.

Mais comment alors promouvoir cette barrière, tout en avançant sur de telles négociations? Nous devons protéger nos consommateurs, soutenir nos industries, nos agriculteurs, protéger l'environnement face aux producteurs étrangers pollueurs. Or, aujourd'hui, les accords négociés avec le Mercosur ne répondent pas à ces exigences. Cela nous responsabilise de fait sur la situation en Amazonie.

Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D). – Voorzitter, beste commissaris, ik ben blij u nog eens te zien bij dit belangrijke debat. Ik merk heel sterk dat over de partijgrenzen heen in dit Europees Parlement de verontwaardiging unaniem is over wat er gebeurt in het Amazonegebied. Ik ga er dan ook van uit dat er unanimité gezocht en gevonden kan worden dat de Europese Unie haar tanden moeten laten zien om dat probleem ook op te lossen. Er zijn verschillende manieren, maar één cruciale manier om hiermee om te gaan, is ons handelsbeleid drastisch te herzien, handelsbeleid dat de *sustainable development goals* ook echt meeneemt en ervoor zorgt dat de ontbossing wordt gestopt. Er zijn twee heel belangrijke manieren: je hebt de *sustainability chapters*, de *TSD-chapters* die echt afdwingbaar moeten worden en bindend moeten worden. Maar wij als Parlement kunnen ook laten zien dat we tanden hebben, bijvoorbeeld door voorafgaand aan de discussie te zeggen: de ontbossing moet stoppen en de manier waarop de mensenrechten worden behandeld in Brazilië moet stoppen. Dat moet de basis zijn van een toekomstig handelsbeleid. Laat ons daar de komende jaren onze tanden inzetten.

Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (Renew). – Señora presidenta, la ola de incendios que se ha cebado este año con el bosque amazónico y sus comunidades indígenas nos afecta a todos por sus repercusiones humanas, ambientales y climáticas. Además, es una aberración económica, porque parece confirmarse que es fruto de un plan para fomentar un desarrollo insostenible.

Quiero poner en valor, por ello, el Pacto de Leticia por la Amazonia, suscrito el pasado seis de septiembre por Bolivia, Brasil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Perú y Surinam, en el que se ratifica el compromiso de estos países con el sistema de tratados internacionales para proteger el medio ambiente y muy especialmente el Acuerdo de París. Un movimiento que debemos estimular comprobando que las políticas de prevención, extinción y reforestación son efectivas, apoyándolas solo contra resultados e impidiendo que productos agrícolas y ganaderos cuya producción haya dañado la Amazonia, tengan salida en ningún mercado y particularmente en la Unión.

Credibilidad, en este caso, significa primar los valores frente a los intereses.

Grace O'Sullivan (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, we all watched in horror this summer as the catastrophic fires raged through the Amazon, under the path of neglect and even perhaps the active encouragement of the Bolsonaro regime. None of us are blameless in this matter. Global demand for unsustainability, cheap and destructive beef production has driven the land clearance that is at the heart of the massive destruction. I endorse the resolution that has been put forward in response to this situation and I am happy that it is not shrinking from the issue of trade and the policies and politics that have led to the increase in deforestation recently. Trade deals with governments that violate the rule of law, that punish NGOs while encouraging illegal activities and that breach international agreements cannot be allowed to pass this House. There are arguments circulating with false narratives for the need for development clashing with the need to protect crucial ecosystems like the Amazon. These need to be rejected for the distraction that they are. We all know there are no jobs on a dead planet, but there are also few jobs on massive plantations, many under foreign ownership, designed to produce maximum short-term profit at the cost of the long-term health and well-being for the people of Brazil. I hope the Chamber will reject them and endorse the resolution in front of us.

José Manuel Fernandes (PPE). – Senhora Presidente, caros Colegas, o combate às alterações climáticas tem de ser assumido à escala global, o que implica uma ação coordenada.

A floresta é um elemento essencial para esse combate. A sustentabilidade deve ser a palavra-chave, que também significa solidariedade. No que diz respeito à floresta da Amazônia, não nos podemos esquecer de que a sua dimensão são 5 milhões de km², 9 países, não é só o Brasil, e, se falarmos de incêndios, também, infelizmente, aqui na União Europeia os temos e deveríamos ser um exemplo para o resto do mundo. Incêndios que até têm levado, como no caso meu país em 2017, infelizmente à perda de mais de 100 pessoas em termos de vida humana.

A União Europeia, para além de exemplo, tem de procurar a prevenção – e é essa a chave – e deve colaborar, deve cooperar, financiando programas, financiando fundos para que, na Amazônia e em outras florestas, haja respeito pelos direitos humanos, pela sustentabilidade, que é uma causa que a todos nos diz respeito.

César Luena (S&D). – Señora presidenta, señorías, estamos ante un debate en realidad sobre el expolio de los bosques, de las selvas, de la biodiversidad. Y lo ha dicho la señora ministra del Consejo: liderazgo de la Unión Europea.

No nos resignemos. Se pueden conciliar los intereses privados, los intereses de la industria y de la agricultura con la conservación del medio ambiente. Es el desarrollo sostenible.

Ahora bien, usted pedía ideas. Yo le doy una. Siga la estrategia forestal de la Comisión Europea, que dice que hay algunos productos que vienen derivados de este auténtico expolio forestal que no tendríamos que importar, que hay que restringir.

Señorías, estamos librando una batalla. Este Parlamento está librando una batalla esta tarde contra auténticos depredadores negacionistas. Pero la batalla la podemos ganar con el liderazgo de la Unión Europea. Sin resignarnos y con coherencia.

Elsi Katainen (Renew). – Arvoisa puhemies, metsäpalot ovat muistuttaneet myös Mercosur-sopimukseen sisältyvistä kestävästä kehityksen luvun ja sopimuksessa myöskin mukana olevan Pariisin ilmastopöytäkirjan tärkeydestä. Meidän on todella pidettävä huolta siitä, että Mercosur-sopimuksen toimeenpanossa noudatetaan kestävästä kehityksen periaatteita ja niitä soveltavia standardeja.

Meidän on luotava edellytykset kaikkia osapuolia tyydyttävään kaupankäyntiin. EU voi näyttää myös Brasilialle esimerkkiä. Tuore komission metsäkatoa käsittelevä tiedonanto näyttää, että meillä EU:ssa metsävarat vain kasvavat. Se on kestävä metsänhoidon ja monipuolisen puun käytön ansiota. Voimme olla todella ylpeitä siitä, että jäsenmaamme hoitavat metsänsä pääosin hyvin ja kestävästi.

Metsäasioiden käsittely täällä parlamentissa on kuitenkin hyvin hajallaan ja kaipaisi lisää koordinoitua. Siksi muun muassa metsästrategian päivittäminen on ajankohtaisempaa ja tärkeämpää kuin koskaan aikaisemmin.

Pär Holmgren (Verts/ALE). – Fru talman! Förra veckan hade jag möjligheten att träffa två representanter för Huni Kuin-stammen i Amazonas som hade fått se sin by brinna ner. Deras kamp mot bränderna måste vara vår gemensamma kamp. Amazonas brinner fortfarande. Samtidigt hotar president Bolsonaro med att lämna Parisavtalet och fortsätta och till och med utöka skövlingen.

Den här skövlingen av Amazonas måste stoppas nu! Det är en av de absolut mest känsliga delarna av hela klimatsystemet på vår planet. EU ska inte prioritera ökad import av soja och kött när det drabbar ursprungsbefolkningar och regnskog. I förhandlingarna om ett nytt stort handelsavtal måste vi därför ställa tydliga tuffa krav på Mercosurländerna.

Det jag skulle vilja veta från kommissionen är hur de kan få dessa länder att från med nu välja mellan att agera för att skydda regnskogen eller att gå miste om europeisk handel?

Alexander Bernhuber (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin! Seit Jahresbeginn wurden in den Amazonasgebieten schon 6 000 - Quadratkilometer Wald niedergebrannt. Das entspricht einer Fläche von circa 8 % meines Heimatlandes, Österreich. Wie Sie, Herr Kommissar, auch erwähnt haben, werden bereits heute 80 % dieser Regenwaldabholzungsflächen für die Ausdehnung der landwirtschaftlichen Produktion genutzt. Dabei entstehen riesige Farmen, die mit unseren europäischen landwirtschaftlichen Betrieben nicht vergleichbar sind.

Die Verbindung zum Mercosur ist offensichtlich, und es ist beschämend, wenn Europa zusieht, wie das System der Regenwaldabholzung hier unterstützt wird. Man kann doch nicht erwarten, dass wir die Klimaziele in Europa einhalten und gleichzeitig Fleisch aus Mercosur-Staaten importieren, obwohl wir europäische Landwirte eigentlich genug regionale Produkte in ausreichender Qualität und Menge produzieren.

Sollten diese Zustände der Brandrodung so weitergehen, die brasilianische Regierung weiter so zusehen, fordere ich starke Konsequenzen und Importverbote von Rindfleisch aus Mercosur-Ländern, so wie es die finnische Ratspräsidentschaft bereits vorgeschlagen hat.

Patrizia Toia (S&D). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, l'Amazzonia brucia e, se brucia la terra che produce il 20 % dell'ossigeno che respiriamo, brucia anche un patrimonio immenso di culture, popoli e biodiversità.

La deforestazione, così come gli incendi, sono certo causati da uomini, da leader che avallano lo sfruttamento delle risorse e delle persone, uno sfruttamento basato su un'idea vecchia e sbagliata di capitalismo, senza sostenibilità che promuova il benessere di tutti.

C'è una frase, un'espressione in lingua indigena che non so ripetere, che parla proprio del «buon vivere». Ecco, buon vivere, cioè un rapporto armonioso tra uomo e creato, e questo buon vivere noi dovremmo farlo nostro, anche nelle politiche da ripensare dell'Unione.

E io mi chiedo, perché non dobbiamo avere il coraggio di rivedere anche l'accordo del Mercosur per metterci criteri più stringenti di sostenibilità ambientale? E perché non abbiamo il coraggio di dire che non si può fare gli ambientalisti, come dice qualcuno, con le foreste degli altri, di paesi che vogliono avere una via di sviluppo?

È un problema anche nostro e penso che l'Europa dovrebbe contribuire a un piano per la riforestazione.

Tilly Metz (Verts/ALE). – Madame la Présidente, entre 1990 et 2016, nous avons perdu 1,3 millions de kilomètres carrés de forêt. Cela correspond environ à 800 terrains de football par heure. Ce désastre est dû à la demande mondiale de denrées alimentaires et d'aliments pour animaux. Nous importons du soja génétiquement manipulé en encourageant l'utilisation massive de pesticides pour nourrir nos animaux.

Que fait la Commission européenne? D'une part, elle propose une stratégie de protection des forêts, voire de reforestation, mais, d'autre part, la PAC encourage l'agriculture intensive et l'importation massive d'aliments pour animaux. La Commission nous propose également un traité de libre-échange, le Mercosur, qui aggravera la situation. L'Amazonie a brûlé pendant des semaines, sur une telle étendue qu'on a pu le voir de l'espace.

Nous avons aussi notre part de responsabilité. Soyons cohérents, faisons barrage aux produits issus de la déforestation et arrêtons d'encourager le président Bolsonaro à sacrifier la forêt amazonienne et ses habitants au secteur agro-industriel.

VORSITZ: RAINER WIELAND

Vizepräsident

Μαρία Σπυράκη (PPE). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, όλοι εδώ σε αυτή την αίθουσα ζητούμε επείγοντως μέτρα για τη βιώσιμη διαχείριση του Αμαζονίου διότι, αν η καταστροφή ξεπεράσει το 30%, η κατάσταση δεν θα είναι αναστρέψιμη. Η κυβέρνηση Bolsonaro, αντί να συνεχίσει το σχέδιο για τη βιώσιμη διαχείριση, που υπάρχει από το 2014, ενθάρρυνε την υπερεκμετάλλευση της γης και κλείνει τα μάτια μπροστά στην καταστροφή.

Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο η συμφωνία μεταξύ της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και της Mercosur μπορεί να αποτελέσει ένα ισχυρό εργαλείο για την προστασία των δασών του Αμαζονίου. Είναι μία συμφωνία δίκαιου εμπορίου, είναι μία συμφωνία συνδεδεμένη με τη Συμφωνία του Παρισιού και στην πραγματικότητα νουθετεί τη Βραζιλία να αναδασώσει δώδεκα εκατομμύρια εκτάρια.

Πυρκαγιές, δυστυχώς, στον Αμαζόνιο είχαμε πολλά χρόνια τώρα. Όμως, τώρα, τουλάχιστον έχουμε ένα μέσο πίεσης. Και όποιος παραβιάζει τη Συμφωνία του Παρισιού πρέπει να παραβιάζει και τη συμφωνία Mercosur. Μέτρα πίεσης δεν έχουμε, όμως, ούτε για τη Σιβηρία ούτε για την Αφρική ούτε για την Ινδονησία. Χρειαζόμαστε μια συνολική πρόταση βιώσιμης διαχείρισης των δασών και εργαλεία για να την προωθήσουμε εκτός Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Αντί να εξαντλούν οι συνάδελφοι της Ομάδας GUE την ευαισθησία τους ... (Ο Πρόεδρος αφαιρεί τον λόγο από την ομιλήτρια.)

Roberta Metsola (PPE). – Mr President, for the past few weeks, the world has watched in horror as massive fires engulf large sections of the Amazon, Siberia, Alaska, Greece – the list goes on. Against the backdrop of unprecedented climate change and deforestation at levels we have not seen before, the earth's lungs are quickly filling with smoke. We have now moved from a climate emergency to a climate catastrophe, and the world deserves a better response than school-yard political sniping games on Twitter. The entire system is flawed. Our habits and our throwaway society, coupled with populist political short-termism, will have tragic consequences on the lives and the health of our children and their children. When all the evidence shows us that the way we are consuming our natural resources on our planet is unsustainable, we have to have the courage to take the tough decisions we need. We did it with plastic. We managed to push through a ban of some of the worst products, but it is time to go further, and Europe can be the global leader in this. When Greta Thunberg, as the voice of her generation, asked politicians to panic, she was right and now it is up to us whether we panic by running into a wall or taking drastic action. That's the choice we face.

Agnès Evren (PPE). – Monsieur le Président, la situation en Amazonie est catastrophique, mais le fléau de la déforestation est mondial, il ne concerne pas seulement l'Amazonie. Depuis juillet, par exemple, l'Indonésie brûle aussi dans un silence insoutenable.

Ce n'est pas seulement à coup d'accords commerciaux que nous lutterons contre cette déforestation massive et encore moins s'ils ne comportent aucune mesure contraignante, comme avec le Mercosur. Élargissons le débat. Il faut des années pour conclure un accord commercial et le mettre en vigueur. Or, il nous faut agir très vite. L'aide au développement est un levier plus efficace à court terme. Elle pourrait être mieux utilisée, notamment comme moyen de pression sur les États qui ferment les yeux sur la déforestation.

Je voudrais enfin penser aux agriculteurs qui n'ont souvent guère le choix que d'étendre leurs cultures sur la forêt. Aidons-les à changer les comportements, en s'assurant que les pratiques vertueuses leur fournissent une rémunération décente.

Jörgen Warborn (PPE). – Herr talman! Förra sommaren led vi av stora skogsbränder i Sverige och stödet från medlemsländerna visade sig ovärderligt för oss. Våra polska vänner skickade oss 139 brandmän till undsättning. Precis som skogsbränder världen över så var det ett enormt problem för människor, för djur och för naturen. Därför känner jag med det brasilianska folket. Men jag noterar också att det drevs ingen kampanj eller debatt i världen om att sluta handla med Sverige, bara för att det brann i våra skogar. Därför är det fel att som vänsterkanten nu gör, använda den här tragiska katastrofen för att stoppa frihandelsavtalet mellan EU och Mercosur.

Så låt mig tala klarspråk. En blockering av frihandelsavtalet kommer inte att släcka några bränder i Amazonas eller förbättra klimatet. Tvärtom binder Mercosuravtalet Brasilien och de andra länderna att respektera och implementera Parisavtalet och arbeta för ett hållbart skogsbruk. Vi ska använda handeln som en morot. Då skapar vi hållbar utveckling och välbefinnande genom flera arbeten, genom högre tillväxt som gör både varor och tjänster billigare. Därför uppmanar jag alla medlemsstaternas regeringar och kollegorna här i huset att bidra till en så snabb ratificering som möjligt.

Der Präsident. – Für das nun folgende Verfahren der spontanen Wortmeldungen haben wir, wie Frau Vizepräsidentin Hautala bereits sagte, fast dreimal so viele Wortmeldungen wie vorgesehen. Wir werden sieben Wortmeldungen berücksichtigen.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Alex Agius Saliba (S&D). – Mr President, I will start with some simple facts: the Amazon forest produces 20% of the world's oxygen in our atmosphere. More than a million indigenous lives are currently in danger. Deforestation fires have burned the Amazon for decades; fires have increased by 85% under the current Bolsonaro Government. The Amazon is not the only region being destroyed. There are no ordinary fires; the destruction of the Amazon will rapidly accelerate global warming, increase the overall temperature of the planet, and destroy biodiversity and indigenous life within the forest. What are we doing while the Amazon forest burns to the ground? Are we just going to sit and watch in horror while our planet burns? No. We need to act, and the need to act was yesterday.

I want to ask the Commission: what is the strategy here? What is EU doing to protect and tackle forest fires worldwide? What actions and financial support can be offered to stop and control these fires?

Pablo Arias Echeverría (PPE). – Señor presidente, el acuerdo Unión Europea-Mercosur es, sin duda, el mejor instrumento que existe para la protección de los bosques del Amazonas. Si la Unión Europea aspira de verdad a liderar los esfuerzos a nivel mundial para la lucha contra el cambio climático, debe sin duda aprobar el acuerdo Unión Europea-Mercosur. La protección de la selva amazónica nos corresponde a todos, así como otras zonas boscosas en África, América, Asia y Oceanía, pues contribuye a varios de los objetivos de desarrollo sostenible fijados por las Naciones Unidas.

Quiero poner en valor el pacto alcanzado en la ciudad de Leticia, en Colombia, por siete países latinoamericanos, entre los que destacan Colombia, Perú, Ecuador, Bolivia y Brasil, para la protección del Amazonas. Sin embargo, he de decir que la postura del presidente Macron, manifestada durante la última cumbre del G-7, no es apropiada, por deberse a cuestiones de política interna que ponen en riesgo muchas cosas que se han conseguido tras veinte años de dura negociación.

El acuerdo Unión Europea-Mercosur es una oportunidad para todos los implicados, no solo en materia comercial, sino, sobre todo, en materia medioambiental para cumplir ...

(El presidente retira la palabra al orador).

Irena Joveva (Renew). – Gospod predsednik, že nekaj časa poslušam o tem, kako Evropska unija mora biti zgled pri soočanju s podnebnimi spremembami in kako pravzaprav že igra vodilno vlogo pri tem.

Vse lepo in prav, to drži, drži tudi, da smo na pravi poti, ampak Evropska unija se s tem, kar želi doseči, ne more soočiti sama. Skrb za okolje je svetovni problem in tukaj morajo biti zraven vsi.

Zato je po mojem mnenju glede Amazonije ključna ne samo razprava, ampak so ključna dejanja. Brazilija dopušča uničevanje pragozda in dokler bo tako, si ne znam predstavljati, da bi države članice Unije ratificirale trgovinski sporazum z Mercosurjem.

Ne zagovarjam sankcij – razen v skrajnem primeru. Ampak a to ni skrajni primer? A naj mirno gledamo, kako gorijo pljuča sveta. Jasno sporočilo Unije mora biti, da nam je mar, v kakšnem svetu živimo. In to ne sme biti samo floskula. Podnebje in narava se spreminjata in skrajni čas je, da se spremenimo tudi ljudje. Če nam tu ne uspe, je konec.

Ellie Chowns (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, occasionally, an issue comes to public attention because it crystallises a big and complex issue in a way that hits home for all of us that we can all understand, and the fires in the Amazon are one such example. Yes, they're not the only fires, yes, we need to plant more trees here in Europe, but concentrating on the fires in the Amazon brings home some really important issues for us all. People in Europe are passionate about the fate of the Amazon because we care about the climate crisis. We care about biodiversity and about the lives of indigenous people under threat. None of us is an island; we're interconnected. Our choices here in Europe – consumption, trade policy – have an influence elsewhere in the world. Like many others, I'm fearful of the effects of the EU-Mercosur trade deal. I worry that narrow economic interests will trump concern for human rights and environmental protection. I'm not at all reassured by claims that the EU will somehow have more leverage than before over human rights and environmental protection after we sign the Mercosur trade deal. You only have to look at our record on this. It's taken eight years to begin enforcement on the EU-Korea Free Trade Agreement. As it stands, the Mercosur deal is all carrot ...

(The President cut off the speaker)

Kateřina Konečná (GUE/NGL). – Pane předsedající, není možné hrát si na nevinátka. O tématu odlesňování se zde bavíme od roku 2017, kdy jsem tady prezentovala svou zprávu k danému tématu a tento Parlament ji přijal. Že prezident Bolsonaro znamená zkázu deštných pralesů, víme přes rok. Rovněž víme, že Evropská unie je zejména díky své zahraniční obchodní politice součástí problému odlesňování. Předstírání šoku proto opravdu není na místě. Na místě je se ptát, proč jsme tolik let čekali na akční plán Komise proti odlesňování a proč není k dnešní debatě rezoluce. Trapně tady předstíráme, že nás to zajímá, ale to je tak vše. Musíme se jasně postavit faktům – jsme svědky ničení lesů a pralesů, bez kterých není života. A tohle není Notre-Dame, tady mohou nenaplněné sliby znamenat zkázu. Skončeme s tlachy, skončeme s odlesňováním, skončeme s ničivými požáry. A budme součástí řešení.

Carmen Avram (S&D). – Mr President, we are here today, united from the left to the right, to condemn the dramatic fires happening as we speak in the Amazon rainforest. But why not stop crying and act – because today the European Union can do something concrete. We have trade tools to apply pressure and we should use them. The EU has just signed the Mercosur deal and insists that the deal does not lower environmental standards and that the precautionary principle ensures that the EU and the Mercosur countries can continue to protect the environment. Well, now we can see how Bolsonaro keeps his part of the deal. The EU says it is legally committed to respecting the environment and biodiversity. So, will it suspend this trade deal at least until the fires have stopped and the investigations into the causes of the fire are concluded? If the burning of the largest rainforest in the world is not serious enough, what does it take for the EU to suspend this trade deal and respect the sustainable chapter of it?

Billy Kelleher (Renew). – Mr President, just to say at the outset that I welcome the opportunity, and I don't think that this debate should be distilled down to an ideological debate about left or right. Let's be honest, Bolsonaro is right-wing and is burning forestry, and Morales is left-wing and is equally burning forestry. We need to talk about it in ethical terms: how we trade, and how we interrelate on the planet itself. And there is no point in saying it: it is profitable at the moment to burn the forests in Amazonia, it's profitable to burn the rainforests across the globe, because we are trying to satisfy the commodity markets. Until such time as we accept this in Europe, and while we continue to import soy beans and coffees and beef from these parts of the world, they will continue to burn the rainforests.

Let's be very clear: if the Mercosur agreement is ratified, it is Europe that will tear up the Paris Agreement, not the others. We have ethical, moral obligations to insist that any trade deals comply with the vigours and rigours of the Paris Agreement, and we should insist on that at the very minimum before we sign any Mercosur trade agreement.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Karmenu Vella, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, I think we all agree that rain forests are a vital resource for the planet. This debate has reiterated that the ongoing fires in the Amazon basin are deeply worrying to all of us, all the more so against the backdrop of devastating fires raging in other parts of the world. Many have said – and I totally agree – that we have to tackle and we have to be concerned about all forest fires everywhere, whether it's in Angola, Siberia, the Arctic, the subarctic region, central Africa, Europe, Southeast Asia or South America. All these fires once more underline the sense of urgency required in joining our forces to fight climate change. Forests are indispensable and are vital to our efforts to fight climate change. Protecting forests is a significant part of our and everybody's responsibility to meet the commitments under the Paris Agreement.

Most of the speakers spoke about the EU-Mercosur trade agreement. In the trade and sustainable development chapter of the EU-Mercosur trade agreement, both the EU and the Mercosur countries, including Brazil, accepted an explicit commitment to effectively implement the Paris Agreement. Brazil's nationally determined contribution under the Paris Agreement includes commitments on deforestation and reforestation. These are reinforced by private-sector initiatives, such as the Soy Moratorium or commitments by Brazilian meatpackers not to source meat from farms in recently deforested areas. In addition to provisions to promote sustainable trade and the trade agreement itself, let me note that the trade deal is part of an overall association agreement covering dialogue on human rights and cooperation in many fields, including the environment and climate change. It will provide the EU and, indeed, the European Parliament with additional instruments for dialogue and cooperation and help bring our markets and citizens closer together.

Many are concerned that we have to make certain that the commitments are there and that the commitments are honoured. The EU-Mercosur Agreement includes a comprehensive trade and sustainable development chapter containing legally binding commitments on environmental protection, as well as climate change, including a commitment to the implementation of the Paris Agreement. The Commission has a range of tools and mechanisms available to ensure that these commitments are respected. Where a party fails to comply with a commitment, we can resort to the dispute settlement mechanism, tailored to the specifics of labour and environment.

We trust and expect, but above all, we will ensure that Brazil will live up to its own commitments in the framework of the Paris Agreement, which includes a pledge by Brazil to reduce by 2025 its net greenhouse gas emissions by 37% compared to 2005 levels, and an action plan to stop illegal deforestation, including in the Brazilian Amazon. On our part, we also committed a pledge by the EU to reduce our domestic emissions by at least 40% by 2030.

Some MEPs commented that we should also tackle the demand side regarding the marketing of products associated with deforestation. A legislative framework preventing products associated with deforestation to reach the EU market is key. It is essential. The EU already has domestic regulations banning, for example, the sale of illegally harvested timber. The main objective of the regulation is to reduce illegal deforestation and give consumers better assurances about the products that they buy. When it comes to any future EU domestic measures relating to products associated with deforestation, let me refer to our recent communication on deforestation where we have announced a number of other measures in this regard. Those measures include reinforcing standards and certification schemes to identify and to promote deforestation-free commodities, exploring possible additional demand-side regulatory and non-regulatory measures to increase supply-chain transparency and to minimise the risk of importing products associated with deforestation and forest degradation, also, promoting forest-relevant considerations and activities to foster corporate social responsibility and responsible business conduct and, finally, establishing a stakeholder platform on deforestation allowing for discussions between government officials, NGO businesses, retailers, and so on.

To conclude, let me remind everyone that the final legal texts of the Association Agreement and its trade aspect will be submitted to the EU Member States and to the European Parliament for approval.

Tytti Tuppurainen, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, to conclude I wish to thank you for this very useful debate on a pressing issue that concerns us all. We all share the view that we need to do our utmost to protect our forests. We need to improve the EU's action on this matter and continue working towards honouring our international commitments.

Many of you referred to the Mercosur Trade Agreement. The trade agreement with Mercosur contains a robust trade and sustainable development chapter which lives up to the highest standards comparable to those in other modern agreements. The basic premise is that increased trade should not come at the expense of the environment or labour conditions; on the contrary, it should promote sustainable development.

The Mercosur Agreement contains a specific article on climate change committing the parties to effectively implement the Paris Agreement. There are also commitments on fighting deforestation. However, just like here in Parliament, discussions in the Council on the EU-Mercosur Agreement are still in an early phase. It is clear that sufficient time will be needed for a comprehensive examination of the negotiated agreement. It will be important for both of our institutions to have an honest debate on the agreement, based on facts.

I would also like to note that open, ambitious and rules-based trade policy which is value-based, sustainable and inclusive is a priority for the Finnish Presidency. Many of you also referred to the urgency of climate action. The time to act on climate change is now, not later. We believe that the EU can have an effect on others by setting an example. This is why it is crucial to agree on an ambitious target of climate neutrality in the European Union by 2050 as soon as possible.

We must preserve the Amazon rainforest for the generations to come. Huge damage has been done so far, which I deplore, but we need to focus on preventing further deterioration. We need to protect our forests in the Amazon and elsewhere because we need to protect our lives. Deforestation is a global challenge with many complicated aspects. For that reason cooperation within the Council configuration is an elementary part of successful work. The cooperation between the EU institutions is even more important and for that reason, we are all here today. Thank you very much once again for your active participation and for your attention.

Der Präsident. – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171 GO)

Andrus Ansip (Renew), *kirjalikult*. – Valitsused, kes soovivad vihmametsade massilist maharaiumist ja põletamist, peavad arvestama ka tagajärgedega. Nende riikidega vabakaubandust toetav avalik arvamus võib muutuda. Amazonase vihmametsade saatus ei mõjuta mitte ainult Brasiiliat, vaid kogu maailma. Seetõttu ma toetan probleemile tähelepanu juhtimist ja surve avaldamist Brasiilia võimudele.

João Ferreira (GUE/NGL), *por escrito*. – Expressamos aqui toda a nossa solidariedade com o povo brasileiro e com os povos dos demais países afetados pelos grandes incêndios da Amazônia, em particular com as populações que habitam a Floresta Amazônica. Estes incêndios são um exemplo dramático do que pode suceder quando, como sucede na sociedade capitalista, o objetivo do lucro se sobrepõe a elementares preocupações ambientais e sociais. A destruição da Amazônia não começou agora. Há muito que as multinacionais e outros grupos económicos disputam os recursos da Amazônia. Esta disputa encontra expressão nos planos económico, político e geoestratégico, e passa pela apropriação da terra, das matérias-primas, dos recursos extraídos da Natureza. Tais objetivos de apropriação e depredação de recursos encontram no Governo brasileiro, dirigido por Bolsonaro, programas ultraliberais que dão rédea solta e potenciam a sanha do grande capital e dos grupos económicos do agro-negócio, que visam abocanhar as grandes riquezas naturais da Amazônia. A situação que se vive na Amazônia justifica a cooperação e ajuda internacionais, para melhor e mais prontamente lidar com a catástrofe. Mas tal não legitima quem tem pretensões de favorecer planos e processos de domínio económico e, bem assim, formas de transferência de custos para os povos do mundo da degradação ambiental, apagando as responsabilidades do modo de produção capitalista.

Γιώργος ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΥ (GUE/NGL), γραπτώς. – Οι «πνεύμονες» του πλανήτη μας καίγονται και η κλιματική αλλαγή εξελίσσεται ραγδαία σε κλιματική κρίση, οδηγώντας μας σε ένα οικολογικό εφιάλτη. Ο Αμαζόνιος φλέγεται λόγω οικονομικών συμφερόντων. Με τη σφραγίδα των πολιτικών του Bolsonaro, ο Αμαζόνιος θυσιάζεται στον βωμό του κέρδους, προκειμένου να εξυπηρετηθούν τα συμφέροντα μεγάλων ντόπιων και ξένων βιομηχανιών. Οι 40.000 πυρκαγιές που προκλήθηκαν φέτος στον Αμαζόνιο δεν ήταν ατύχημα. Ήταν το αποτέλεσμα εγκληματικών πολιτικών.

Απαιτούμε τα αυτονόητα. Ζητούμε να αναλάβει η ΕΕ άμεσα πρωτοβουλίες, ώστε να σταλεί βοήθεια για τη διάσωση του Αμαζονίου. Να ληφθούν άμεσα μέτρα στην ΕΕ για την πρόληψη και αποτροπή της παράνομης υλοτομίας, της αυθαίρετης αποψίλωσης αλλά και της καταστροφής και πυρπόλησης των δασών. Ας αφήσουμε τις βαρύγδουπες δηλώσεις. Δεν ωφελούν. Χρειαζόμαστε δραστικά μέτρα. Καλούμε λοιπόν την ΕΕ να εξαγγείλει άμεσα τη διάθεση συγκεκριμένου κονδυλίου για αναδάσωση σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη ως ζήτημα έκτακτης ανάγκης. Γιατί ο πλανήτης, το σπίτι μας, καίγεται, και δεν έχουμε την πολυτέλεια να αποτύχουμε!

Urmas Paet (Renew), *kirjalikult*. – Amazonase vihmametsad on hävimas enneolematu ulatuses, põlenguid on lausa 76% rohkem kui eelmisel aastal. Rekordilised põlengud, mis on üha enam süüdatud tahtlikult, jõgede reostamine ebaseaduslike kaevanduste toksiliste jäätmetega ja põlismaalaste aladele tungimine maavarade hankimise nimel on hävitamas üht maailma suurimat troopilist metsa. On oluline jätkata ja suurendada tööd vihmametsade säilimise nimel, seista selle eest, et sealse elanikud ja loomad oleksid kaitstud ning et loodusvarade kasutamine oleks mõistlik ning mitte röövellik. Tuleb teha tõsiseid samme Amazonase säilimise nimel ning ka praegu seal lõdmavate põlengute kustutamisel. Ka EL peab sellele kaasa aitama.

María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos (Renew), *por escrito*. – Nos alarma el estado y la reciente propagación de fuegos en los dos pulmones principales de la tierra. Por un lado, la Amazonia (el primer pulmón de la tierra) ha sufrido una devastadora oleada de incendios jamás vistos. Estos focos han aumentado un 83 % comparado con el mismo periodo en 2018. ¿El causante principal? La deforestación, que además ha cobrado un fuerte impulso con el Gobierno actual. Por otro lado, el segundo pulmón de la tierra, los bosques de la cuenca del Congo, que registraron un total de 10 000 focos de incendios en las mismas fechas.

Estos dos continentes en llamas son un santuario de biodiversidad y constituyen una herramienta esencial en la lucha contra el cambio climático. Si la pérdida de la cubierta de los árboles tropicales continúa, será imposible mantener el calentamiento por debajo de los 2° C. Nos preocupa que Gobiernos —como el de Brasil— hayan dado un vuelco a la política de gestión de bosques y deshagan todo el progreso que el país había visto en los últimos años. La irresponsabilidad política y la mala gestión de los bosques supone una gran amenaza para nuestros ecosistemas y para nuestra supervivencia.

Sándor Rónai (S&D), *írásban*. – A világnak az elmúlt években egyre gyakrabban kell erdőtüzekkel küzdenie. Emlékezzünk Kaliforniára. Idén nyáron Szibéria és az Amazonas medencéje szenvedett súlyos károkat. Azonban nem kell az Unión kívülre mennünk, hogy hasonló tragédiát találjunk. Az utóbbi időben Görögországnak és Portugáliának kellett hatalmas erőfeszítésekkel megállítani a lángokat, idén nyáron pedig a Kanári-szigeteken kellett folytatni az ember feletti küzdelmeket. Szörnyű látni, hogy miközben fiatalok, hírességek, és hétköznapi emberek a világ minden tájáról harcolnak a klímaváltozás ellen, és a világ egyre elkötelezettebbé válik a klímakatasztrófa megállításában, még mindig vannak, akik félrenéznek és legyintenek arra, hogy óránként 800 futballpályányi esőerdő pusztul el az Amazonas területén.

Kiábrándító, hogy amikor a globális felmelegedés elleni küzdelemhez kellene hozzájárulni, akkor vannak kormányok, amelyek önző politikai céljaikat előbbre valónak tartják gyermekeink és unokáink életéténél. Politikai érdekeik annyira elvakítják őket, hogy nem veszik észre, hogy mindnyájunk sírját ássák. Ez történt akkor, amikor néhány közép-keleti európai vezető nem volt hajlandó vállalni a 2050-es karbonsemlegességi célokat, vagy amikor felháborító és cinikus módon a kormánypártok nem vettek részt a nemzeti parlament klímaváltozásról szóló vitáján. Az a politikus, aki legyint a klímaváltozásra, az halálos ítéletet mond. Minden erőnkel azon kell lennünk, hogy megtaláljuk azokat az eszközöket, amelyekkel akár nélkülük is tudunk küzdeni a klímaváltozás ellen.

Michaela Šojdrová (PPE), *písemně*. – Na tom po zasedání právem debatujeme o situaci v Amazonii. To je oblast, která se označuje za plíce světa (produkuje 20 % světového kyslíku) a má klíčovou úlohu pro zvládnutí klimatické změny. Rozsáhlé požáry, ke kterým tam dochází, mají naopak potenciál pouštět do atmosféry velké množství skleníkových plynů. Ráda bych se této otázce dotknula z pohledu obchodní vztahů mezi Evropskou unií a zeměmi MERCOSURU, konkrétně Brazílií. Je jisté dobře, že navrhovaná dohoda mezi EU a MERCOSUREM obsahuje opatření o boji proti změně klimatu. Na druhou stranu jsme byli svědky toho, že brazilská vláda a prezident přistupovali ke katastrofě tohoto rozměru poměrně laxe. Znepokojivá je také skutečnost, že za vlády současného prezidenta Brazílie se – a to bez ohledu na požáry – odlesňování v Amazonii zvýšilo o 88 %. Návrh dohody s MERCOSUREM má za cíl rozvíjet společné

obchodní vztahy. Je jasné, že brazilští producenti potřebují odbytiště. Na druhou stranu, naši zemědělci mají právem obavy z brazilské produkce, která je masivní a využívá nepřijatelné metody. Pokud by tato produkce měla být podporována za cenu ničení amazonského pralesa, tak to by bylo absolutně nepřijatelné. Na dohodu s MERCOSUREM se musíme dívat touto optikou a požadovat jasné záruky, že její naplňování nebude znamenat zkázu pro plíce světa a snížení konkurenceschopnosti našich zemědělců.

Monika Vana (Verts/ALE), schriftlich. – Auf Debatten müssen endlich Taten folgen! Wir Grüne bedauern sehr, dass das Europäische Parlament keine Entschlieung zu den Waldbränden im Amazonasgebiet verabschiedet hat. Dabei ist das Ausma der Umweltkatastrophe klar: Vor zwei Wochen mahnte uns Mapu Huni Kuin aus dem brasilianischen Bundesstaat Acre im Europäischen Parlament: „Die Brände zerstören unsere Lebensgrundlage und unser Zuhause. Wir brauchen den Wald, er gibt uns Freiheit und unsere Identität.“ Auf politischer Ebene braucht es klare Ansagen gegenüber Bolsonaro und eine multilaterale Lösung in Südamerika, um die Waldbrände dauerhaft zu stoppen!

Henna Virkkunen (PPE), kirjallinen. – Viikkoja jatkuneet Amazonin alueen valtavat metsäpalot ovat syystäkin nostaneet suurta kansainvälistä huolta. Erityisen vakavaa on, että palot eivät näytä syttyneen vahingossa, vaan niitä on osin tarkoituksellakin sytytetty maan raivaamiseksi.

Metsät ovat meille monestakin syystä elintärkeitä. Ne ovat elintärkeitä sekä luonnon monimuotoisuuden, ilmastonsuojelun että taloudellisen ja sosiaalisen hyvinvoinnin näkökulmasta. Myös Brasilia on saatava kansainvälisten sopimusten kautta sitoutumaan tiukemmin arvokkaiden metsien suojeluun, kestävään metsänhoitoon ja luonnon monimuotoisuuden turvaamiseen. Tähän meillä saattaa olla jatkossa paremmin välineitä käytössä, jos kesällä alustavasti poliittiseen sopimukseen saatu Euroopan unionin ja Mercosur-alueen kauppasopimus kyetään toimeenpanemaan onnistuneesti. Mielestäni sopimusta ei siis pidä hylätä, vaikka Brasilian johdon toiminta on Amazonin palaessa näyttänyt suorastaan pöyristyttävän piittaamattomalta.

On tärkeä huomata, että kaikkiin uusiin EU:n kauppasopimuksiin, myös Mercosur-sopimukseen, sisältyvät nyt luvut kestävästä kehityksestä. Se antaa meille selkänöjaa vaatia kauppakumppaneiltamme kansainvälisten sopimusten ylläpitämistä, yhteistyötä ja dialogia muun muassa ympäristönsuojelun osalta. Kun Mercosur-sopimusta tulevana talvena käsitellään ja työstetään eteenpäin, on todella tärkeä varmistaa, että näitä sopimukseen kirjattuja tavoitteita seurataan kunnolla ja varmistetaan niiden toteutuminen myös käytännössä.

(Die Sitzung wird für einige Minuten unterbrochen.)

13. Reanudación de la sesión

(Die Sitzung wird um 19.04 Uhr wieder aufgenommen.)

14. Correcciones de errores (artículo 241 del Reglamento interno) (curso dado): véase el Acta

15. Situación de seguridad en Burkina Faso (debate)

Der Präsident. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärung der Vizepräsidentin der Kommission und Hohen Vertreterin der Union für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik zur Sicherheitslage in Burkina Faso (2019/2812(RSP)).

Tytti Tuppurainen, President-in-Office of the Council, on behalf of the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. – Mr President, over the past months we have seen a continued and dramatic deterioration of the security situation in Burkina Faso. I would like to start by expressing our solidarity with the people of Burkina. More than 200 people have been killed so far in 2019, including 60 victims in the last month.

This insecurity climate puts more pressure on already overstretched social services. The number of internally displaced persons is now reaching 300 000 people, posing a serious challenge to the delivery of food, health or sanitation services, but also in terms of social cohesion.

That Jihadist groups are now targeting both security forces and civilians, with a clear strategy to force local antagonism and create a circle of vengeance between different communities. They are trying to incite a war of religion in a country that has a long history of peaceful coexistence between faiths and communities.

The European Union is today closer than ever to the people of Burkina Faso. The country is currently at the heart of our action in the Sahel. In the last seven years we have mobilised more than EUR 1 billion for development programmes in Burkina.

High Representative Mogherini was in Ouagadougou over the summer, on the occasion of the fifth annual ministerial meeting between the EU and the G5 Sahel. During the meeting, she announced an extra EUR 138 million in support of the joint military force of the G5 Sahel, which has an important role in fighting terrorism and organised crime across the region.

Our military and civilian missions in the Sahel are also working more and more across the region, alongside France's Operation Barkhane. Coordination between security and development policies is one of the essential challenges, and this was one of the main messages that the High Representative delivered during her visit.

We are glad that the G5 countries have committed to adopting an integrated, strategic framework precisely to synchronise their efforts on security and on development and to identify priority regions for their actions. The Government of Burkina has also extended the emergency plan for the Sahel to its eastern regions, which is a positive development.

During her visit, Ms Mogherini called for urgent progress on security-sector reform. The fight against terrorism can only bear fruit if security forces respect the rule of law and human rights. This is the only way to build trust between state authorities and all sectors of the population.

The recent national dialogue is an important building block for national cohesion. It is crucial that all ethnic communities in Burkina feel that they are part of a common national family. As the terrorists incite hatred and inter-ethnic tensions, the state should push in the opposite direction and invest in a shared sense of belonging for all its citizens.

Security is vital but it is not the only answer to the challenges that the country is facing. Linking political, security and development issues will be more and more essential. Let me just mention that during her trip to Burkina, the High Representative also visited an EU-funded school, because education is the foundation of any country's strength.

International coordination is also crucial and the EU is willing to engage even more with the whole region. This is the reason why we took the opportunity of the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) extraordinary summit on terrorism in Ouagadougou last Saturday to discuss with countries of a wider region how they can contribute more to counteract terrorism and how we can coordinate our respective actions.

Since 2015, a peaceful country like Burkina Faso has had to face unprecedented violence. We Europeans have stepped up our support to stop this escalation, to stabilise a crucial region for our own security and to help the people of the Sahel take their future into their hands. We will continue to be a strong partner for Burkina and for its people.

György Hölvényi, a PPE képviselőcsoport nevében. – Elnök úr, tisztelt Képviselőtársaim! Az Iszlám Állam tömeggyilkos terrrorszervezet új stratégiát követ a közel-keleti visszaszorulása után. Beszéljünk világosan és egyértelműen! Mára a gyenge biztonsági helyzetben lévő Száhel-övezetben bontogatja szárnyait a kalifátus, Burkina Fasót pedig hídfőállásnak tekinti ebben a folyamatban. Mali, Niger, Csád és az ezekkel határos Burkina Faso térségében a vallási és etnikai konfliktusok következtében 1,2 millió embernek van ma szüksége sürgős humanitárius segítségre. Burkina Fasoban 2015 óta csaknem ötszáz áldozatot követeltek az iszlamista terrortámadások. Ezek célpontjai közé tartoztak a városközpontok, a hadsereg épületei, nagykövetségek, de az oktatási intézmények is. Csaknem 2000, ismétlem 2000 iskolát kellett bezárni, ami miatt háromezer tanuló esett ki az oktatásból.

2019-ben drámai mértékben megsokasodtak a konkrétan vallási színezetű támadások. A keresztény közösségek különös veszélynek vannak kitéve. Februárban terroristák lőtték agyon César Fernández spanyol szalézi szerzetest. Idén összesen 57 keresztényt öltek meg konkrétan a templomok elleni támadásokban. Európából segítenünk kell abban, hogy a térség megőrizze, amit ugye előbb is hallottunk, az etnikai és vallási sokszínűséget. A jó megoldáshoz látnunk kell, az egyházaknak döntő társadalmi és biztonsági szerepe van. Lényegesnek tartom, az európai intézményeknek meg kell szüntetniük a szélsőséges semlegességet, amelynek nevében rendszeresen, szisztematikusan, mi itt együtt figyelmen kívül hagyjuk a felekezeteket érő támadásokat. Meg kell értenünk, hogy a vallási közösségek, így a nagyszámú keresztény felekezetek üldözése a társadalmi struktúra szétverését és az elvándorlás fokozását eredményezi. Végülis biztonság nélkül nincs vetés, nincs aratás, ezért az emberek elvándorolnak. Tudom, hogy ez leegyszerűsítés, de ez a helyzet.

Maria Arena, *au nom du groupe S&D*. – Monsieur le Président, depuis 2015, vous l'avez dit, les groupes extrémistes prolifèrent au Burkina Faso, avec des attaques de plus en plus nombreuses et de plus en plus violentes.

Cette région du Sahel est particulièrement vulnérable en termes de sécurité, et le G5 Sahel est évidemment utile pour lutter contre ces groupes armés. Mais, comme le disait le président Kaboré, le Burkina est aussi vulnérable par sa pauvreté. Lutter contre le terrorisme ne se limite pas à la seule réponse militaire, mais demande des stratégies robustes qui sont des stratégies de développement. C'est dans ce cadre que le Burkina a pris des mesures de protection des secteurs de production, comme la production de l'huile alimentaire ou encore le sucre qui, quand ils sont produits par les Burkinabè, produisent de l'emploi et sont moins chers pour les Burkinabè.

Quelle est donc la cohérence de l'Union quand elle promeut des accords comme l'accord de libre-échange avec l'Afrique de l'Ouest, destructeur de l'emploi local et générateur de pauvreté pour les populations locales, envoyant ensuite des contingents militaires pour lutter contre Boko Haram? Ne serait-il pas plus intelligent, plus cohérent, plus structurant de veiller à des partenariats qui protègent les économies locales plutôt que de les fragiliser?

N'oublions pas que l'agriculture représente 82 % de la population active du Burkina. C'est avec des accords de libre-échange que nous détruisons l'agriculture du Burkina et donc les 82 % de la population active. Je pense qu'il est temps que l'Union européenne revoie les partenariats économiques qu'elle a avec l'Afrique, pour pouvoir vraiment avoir une politique de développement sur le fond et non pas uniquement sur la protection de la sécurité et l'action militaire.

Lars Patrick Berg, *im Namen der ID-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident! Die Situation in Burkina Faso ist ein hervorragendes Beispiel dafür, wie unsere Politik bei der Bekämpfung des islamistischen Extremismus in Afrika, im Nahen Osten gescheitert ist. Ich halte es für wahrscheinlich, dass das Chaos, das in diesem Lande jetzt wütet, zu einer Massenmigration führen könnte, wenn die Bevölkerung Sicherheit sucht – sei es in den Nachbarländern oder in Europa.

Burkina Faso war ein friedliches Land; jetzt wird es von al-Qaida- und Boko-Haram-Extremisten überrollt, aus Mali eingesickert, Kämpfer, die in Afghanistan ausgebildet und mit Waffen aus Libyen bewaffnet sind. Anfänglich war das Töten in Burkina Faso willkürlich, es war Terror gegen die Zivilbevölkerung, aber jetzt ist das Töten gezielter: Es sind Angriffe auf Christen. Tatsächlich – beispielsweise war es möglich, interreligiöse Ehen zu führen – kann jetzt jeder, der ein Kreuzifix trägt, getötet werden, Kirchen werden angegriffen und niedergebrannt. Wir können nicht untätig zusehen, wie ein weiteres Land von Christen gereinigt wird. Wir müssen Maßnahmen ergreifen, dieser gefährlichen Ideologie des Islamismus Einhalt zu gebieten.

Assita Kanko, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – Mr President, the dress I am wearing was made by a girl in Burkina Faso. When we were her age, we had so many dreams. Who doesn't, when one is 20 years old? But what future is being shaped for her, on her motorcycle in a village in Burkina Faso, or for our kids here in a global world where Jihadism is allowed to grow here and there?

As the world looks away, Burkina Faso – my country of birth, where I played and ran barefoot in the then safe fields – is sinking far away in Jihadist violence today, after so many other places. Didn't the world look away too long when the same problems occurred in Iraq or in Syria? Islamic State, Al Qaeda, Boko Haram and other Jihadist terror groups are now growing up again in this area. In the meantime, there are plenty of meetings, but isn't it about time for more action and concrete results?

The impact of the growing insecurity is a very concrete fact in the daily lives of people like that girl. School doors are more and more often barred by violence, leaving them without the education they need and with the increased risk of recruitment by armed groups, exploitation by human traffickers, abuse by child marriage and teen pregnancy. The number of displaced grew from 50 000 to 300 000 in less than a year. Health centres are closed. Freedom of the press was also affected by a legal ban on reporting on military operations. Businesses, including Western ones, move out – I just spoke to a business leader yesterday in Brussels. We need less meetings and more actions and results for the girl I just told you about.

Carlos Zorrinho (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, os relatos que chegam do Burquina Faso são extremamente preocupantes. Neste país, e nos países limítrofes, a situação humanitária e de segurança está a degradar-se profundamente.

Assistimos a uma crise humanitária sem precedentes com 1,5 milhões de pessoas em situação vulnerável e a necessitar de assistência humanitária urgente. Há milhares de deslocados e mais de 300.000 crianças estão sem acesso à escola dado que os estabelecimentos foram encerrados por questões de segurança.

Os ataques terroristas já provocaram centenas de mortos nos últimos meses. O governo tem tentado circunscrever os grupos terroristas islamitas, ao norte e este do país, nas fronteiras com o Mali e o Níger, de forma a não deixar alastrar a sua ação ao resto do país, mas a ação tem sido alvo de críticas pela forma descoordenada e pouco eficaz como tem sido feita.

O combate às redes terroristas, que espalham o caos e molestam alvos civis de forma transfronteiriça e indiscriminada, tem que mobilizar os governos dos países atingidos, mas não dispensa uma solidariedade clara da comunidade internacional.

É crucial que o governo do Burquina Faso reforce as ações antiterroristas e que a União Europeia, como tem feito, continue firme no apoio que tem prestado de forma a assegurar a paz e a segurança ...

(O Presidente retira a palavra ao orador).

Dominique Bilde (ID). – Monsieur le Président, près de 300 000 déplacés, 2 000 écoles fermées, des chrétiens ou des professeurs dont le seul crime est d'enseigner en français pris pour cibles. Voilà la réalité tragique d'un Burkina Faso en proie au terrorisme islamiste, avec à la clé un risque de famine.

À qui la faute? Le sacrifice en mai dernier de Cédric de Pierrepont et Alain Bertoncello nous rappelle douloureusement l'engagement de la France dans la lutte antiterroriste depuis 2013.

Mais, alors qu'un sommet se tenait samedi à Ouagadougou, il est urgent que les promesses d'aide, notamment issues de la conférence de Bruxelles de 2018 soit enfin honorées au niveau européen comme mondial et répondent aux besoins des armées locales en équipement et en formation.

En matière économique, je salue le projet ambitieux d'électrification solaire de la région. Infrastructures énergétiques et routières, soutien au pastoralisme, les défis économiques au Burkina Faso et dans le Sahel sont immenses. De la réponse que nous y apporterons dépend, pour nous autres Européens, une grande partie de notre avenir sécuritaire et migratoire.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Beata Kempa (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Pani Minister! Burkina Faso od czterech lat jest miejscem coraz częstszych i bardziej krwawych ataków – przede wszystkim dżihadystów – na duchownych, szczególnie chrześcijańskich, ale również muzułmańskich. Połowa z 20 mln mieszkańców żyje poniżej granicy skrajnego ubóstwa i na swoje utrzymanie nie może wydać więcej niż równowartość jednego dolara. Dzięki pomocy polskiego rządu tylko w 2018 r. – uważaliśmy, że trzeba dotrzeć bezpośrednio z pomocą humanitarną do najuboższych i tych, którzy ucierpieli na skutek działań dżihadystów – wybudowaliśmy ponad sześćdziesiąt lokali socjalnych dla najuboższych rodzin żyjących w warunkach skrajnego ubóstwa. Uważamy, że kierunkiem, obok tych działań, które Pani przedstawiła, słusznych działań, jest jeszcze większa pomoc humanitarna na miejscu dla tych osób. I te wysiłki Unii Europejskiej powinny być, moim

zdaniem, zwiększone na wzór tych krajów, które pomagają bezpośrednio na miejscu. I dziękuję za dzisiejszą debatę. Ona jest niezwykle ważna z punktu widzenia niebezpieczeństwa i tych warunków, w których żyją ludzie w Burkina Faso.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Tytti Tuppurainen, *President-in-Office of the Council, on behalf of the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy*. – Mr President, first I would like to stress that this discussion was very relevant for our current and future actions. I would like to thank the honourable Members for their interventions.

The EU has built a very high profile in the Sahel where we have really succeeded to implement an integrated approach as an illustration of how global strategy. Next week High Representative Mogherini will have the opportunity to share these achievements in the margins of the UN General Assembly during a special event on Mali and Sahel.

As coordination remains an important challenge, I will take this opportunity to welcome the recent G7 Partnership on Security and Stability in Sahel initiative as a contribution to support an integrated approach based on long-term vision and to avoid overlap. As a follow-up to the recent contacts we have had with our local counterparts and, based on today's debate, be reassured that we cannot, and we will not, leave Burkina Faso alone in facing the challenges the country is confronted with.

Der Präsident. – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

16. Acontecimientos recientes en la situación política y el desarrollo del proceso de paz en Colombia (debate)

Der Präsident. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärung der Vizepräsidentin der Kommission und Hohen Vertreterin der Union für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik zu den aktuellen Entwicklungen im Zusammenhang mit der politischen Lage und der Umsetzung des Friedensprozesses in Kolumbien (2019/2813(RSP)).

Tytti Tuppurainen, *President-in-Office of the Council, on behalf of the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy*. – Mr President, three years ago, Colombia demonstrated to the world that even the longest and most violent of conflicts can come to an end. No one imagined that building peace would be easy but, three years on, the great majority of Colombians would never go back to the dark years of their country's history.

High Representative Mogherini was in Colombia last week and she saw a country that looks forward, not backwards. President Duque has confirmed his willingness to keep implementing the peace deal. The leadership of the FARC as a political party and the vast majority of former fighters remain committed to the agreement.

It is true that a small group of FARC dissidents have decided to take up arms again. We have strongly condemned this announcement because more violence is simply not the answer to the challenges that the country is facing. But we must not forget that this is only a small group of dissidents. This doesn't mean that we do not see the challenges the peace process is facing. The killings of local leaders, human rights defenders and ex-FARC members are alarming and unacceptable. As the local and regional elections next month approach, we also see assassinations of candidates.

The High Representative has welcomed the actions taken by the Government to ensure protection of those under threat, to bring the perpetrators to justice and to dismantle these criminal networks. But most importantly, she also offered the European Union's practical help. We are complementing government efforts through support to civil society, and have supported a special investigation unit in the Prosecutor's Office and, together with the EU Member States, the campaign 'Defendamos la vida' All in all, this was the main message that she delivered to the Government and the people of Colombia: the European Union is with you. We want to help Colombia win the peace.

During her visit to Bogotá, the High Representative announced a number of measures to step up our support to the peace process. She met with the top officials in the three main institutions of the transitional justice system: the Truth Commission, the Search Unit for Missing Persons and the Peace Court. She announced EUR 4.5 million in support for the Truth Commission, which adds to our support for the Search Unit, and we are also planning to support the Peace Court.

So far, the EU has invested around EUR 645 million over these last years to support peace in Colombia, including through the creation of a specific Trust Fund. The European Union is also the largest foreign investor in Colombia, with a special focus on sustainable development in the areas that were most hit by the conflict. On top of this, the High Representative also announced a new package to support Colombian solidarity towards refugees and migrants from Venezuela. We are putting an extra EUR 30 million on top of the EUR 120 million already invested.

There are now 1.4 million refugees and migrants from Venezuela who have found refuge in Colombia. Colombia's generosity in welcoming and hosting these people sets an example to the region and to the world. However, to praise is not enough. Colombia and the countries from the region need more international support and the European Union is doing its part, leading the way among the international community.

The Colombian people know that they can count on the continued commitment and support of the EU in their daily work to win the peace. Since the peace deal was signed, the European Union and its Member States have invested EUR 1.5 billion in support of peace in Colombia.

The people of Colombia are showing an amazing courage and perseverance in seeking the mediations that are essential to build a truly inclusive and peaceful democracy. We believe in them. Europe believes in Colombia and we will keep supporting all of Colombia's peace builders.

Pilar del Castillo Vera, *en nombre del Grupo PPE*. – Señor presidente, señora representante del Consejo, la implementación del acuerdo de paz con Colombia requiere tener una visión a largo plazo. Es, desde luego, un camino lleno de dificultades y de constantes riesgos. Por eso, hace falta esta visión y ese horizonte en una perspectiva larga.

Quiero resaltar la importancia del apoyo financiero de la Unión Europea, en particular el dirigido a las áreas de reincorporación y desarrollo rural, y celebro, además, que se haya anunciado, por parte de la alta representante, un nuevo programa para seguir apoyando financieramente a los que en su día decidieron dejar las armas y vienen manteniendo con firmeza ese compromiso.

Por otra parte, tal y como está haciendo el Gobierno colombiano, es indispensable fortalecer las medidas para garantizar la seguridad de los líderes políticos y sociales que están siendo ahora amenazados y llevar adelante y ante la justicia a quienes violentan la paz y la ley.

Colombia tiene todo nuestro apoyo. Se trata de un socio comercial muy importante para la Unión Europea y, desde luego, un aliado imprescindible en la lucha contra el cambio climático y la protección adicional del medio ambiente. El Consejo de Seguridad y la propia alta comisaria han afirmado -y yo creo, también- que, a pesar de todas las dificultades, la implementación del acuerdo avanza. Avanza y lo hace sólidamente.

Desde aquí quiero felicitar y reconocer públicamente el enorme esfuerzo que están haciendo el presidente Duque y su Gobierno. Colombia cuenta y va a seguir contando con todo nuestro compromiso.

Para terminar, señores del Consejo, me gustaría llamar la atención sobre un asunto importante que deben tratar con la alta representante, que no está en esta Cámara hoy. Ayer acabó en Venezuela el diálogo facilitado por Noruega con una nueva artimaña de Maduro, que solo ha contado con una insignificante facción de la oposición. Se dijo que si eso ocurría habría sanciones. Es el momento de tomar esa decisión. Es el momento de incrementar las sanciones contra este régimen corrupto que vulnera sin descanso los derechos humanos. Sí así concluyera, el periodo Mogherini, desde luego, no sería un mal legado.

PŘEDSEDNICTVÍ: MARCEL KOLAJA*místopředseda*

Javi López, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señor presidente, creo que es muy oportuno que hoy nos encontremos aquí, en el Parlamento Europeo, para recordar y subrayar nuestro apoyo absoluto al proceso de paz. Lo hacemos ahora que iniciamos la legislatura; lo hacemos ahora que la alta representante ha estado en Colombia, enviando este mensaje, reforzando este mensaje; y lo hacemos ahora también porque vemos con preocupación cosas que están pasando en Colombia: dificultades en la aplicación de los acuerdos de paz y pasos hacia atrás que algunos quieren dar con la vuelta a la violencia.

Queremos poner luz sobre las dificultades en la aplicación de un proceso muy complejo, algo que reconocemos: la necesidad de otorgar seguridad a los líderes sociales en el país; la necesidad de apoyo presupuestario; la necesidad de la restitución de tierras y de poner en marcha también la justicia transicional, un elemento central de los acuerdos de paz. Para ello tiene nuestro apoyo el Gobierno de Colombia, pero necesitamos dar pasos hacia adelante y recordar a la sociedad colombiana que este camino, largo y complejo, no tiene marcha atrás.

Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, *en nombre del Grupo Renew*. – Señor presidente, el regreso de una minifacción de las FARC a la actividad armada debe animarnos a redoblar los esfuerzos y el apoyo que, desde la Unión Europea, estamos ofreciendo al proceso de paz de Colombia.

Pese a las dificultades en su implementación, la Colombia de hoy trabaja para que casi catorce mil antiguos guerrilleros culminen su reincorporación a la vida civil ordinaria. Frente a los asesinatos de este y otros colectivos, que deben cesar e investigarse a fondo, hay ya un plan de protección que debe sustituir a las medidas hasta hoy insuficientes, para ellos y para activistas en derechos humanos y periodistas. Su contenido y primeros resultados espero que certifiquen que hay, por parte de las autoridades, un compromiso sincero para corregir un problema del que depende la credibilidad de todos los actores.

Colombia es también mejor hoy porque, en el diagnóstico del problema y en las medidas para solucionarlo, hay un pilar social, un conjunto de medidas que articula el Plan 2018-2022 para la equidad, que está vertebrando acciones anteriormente separadas en diversos programas y ataca una de las raíces del conflicto: la pobreza y la desigualdad.

El 36 % de la superficie de Colombia albergaba al comienzo del proceso más de tres millones de pobres multidimensionales y dos millones y medio de víctimas, que añadían a su condición una desatención crónica en materia de servicios públicos. Corregir esta desigualdad y fomentar un desarrollo sostenible y cohesionado es otra de las claves del éxito del proceso.

La salida es compleja. Se añaden a ella situaciones imprevistas, como el éxodo masivo de venezolanos que huyen del régimen de Maduro, en cuyo territorio parece que se refugian los disidentes de las FARC.

Por eso, hoy más que nunca, hay que redoblar el apoyo político, financiero y humano de la Unión Europea a la paz en Colombia. En la Unión Europea sabemos de desarrollo rural, de partenariados público-privados, de mediación. Seguir aportando este y otros conocimientos útiles y aprendiendo con esta experiencia es el mejor complemento para el fondo fiduciario, la diplomacia y los programas de cooperación bilateral, que convierten en hechos las palabras de apoyo de la Unión a la paz en Colombia.

Diana Riba i Giner, *en nombre del Grupo Verts/ALE*. – Señor presidente, la situación de los derechos humanos en Colombia se ha agravado en los últimos tiempos. Según el programa Somos Defensores, 155 defensores de los derechos humanos fueron asesinados en 2018 y 25 en el primer trimestre de este año. Colombia es también el segundo país más peligroso del mundo para los activistas medioambientales, todo ello en un clima de impunidad y aumento de los desplazamientos internos. Por todo ello, y bajo la responsabilidad de la Unión Europea como actor participante en el proceso de paz en Colombia, ¿puede confirmar la Comisión que mantendrá a su representante especial? ¿Cuándo y con qué frecuencia la Comisión va a convocar el diálogo de los derechos humanos entre la Unión Europea y Colombia?

Desde el Grupo Verts/ALE creemos que es también imprescindible que la Unión Europea brinde apoyo a mecanismos como Justicia Especial para la Paz y a la prórroga del mandato del representante de las Naciones Unidas para los derechos humanos en Colombia, que expirará el próximo octubre.

Por último, creemos necesaria una mayor transparencia en el monitoreo de los fondos europeos en Colombia, que debe estar sujeto al cumplimiento de los derechos humanos en el país.

Hermann Tertsch, *en nombre del Grupo ECR*. – Señor presidente, estamos todos de acuerdo en que Colombia necesita en este momento una urgente ayuda. Necesita una urgente ayuda no solo porque haya una parte de las FARC que han roto el alto el fuego, que se han retirado y están protegidas en Venezuela y que van a intentar volver al terrorismo abierto, sino también porque están todas las ELN, que es otra de las organizaciones terroristas.

Están en Venezuela, dominan, controlan varios Estados en Venezuela. Están protegidos allí. Ellos participan en la explotación del oro que está causando devastación en el Orinoco, con las tribus indígenas huyendo en gran parte a Colombia también, sumándose a ese éxodo inmenso que se ha ido a Colombia y que también es un factor de desestabilización y preocupación.

Hay en este momento más de un 1 400 000 venezolanos en Colombia, hay 4 200 000 o 4 300 000 venezolanos huyendo del régimen criminal de Maduro, y creo que es momento de apoyar a Colombia, de apoyar al Gobierno de Colombia, perseguir a los criminales y, desde luego, presionar también a aquellos que realmente tienen algo que ver con la desestabilización de Colombia, que están en Venezuela y que están también en La Habana, donde ha estado la señora Mogherini la semana pasada, dando un discurso de apoyo al régimen comunista, a la dictadura comunista, que fue una vergüenza.

La presión sobre La Habana y sobre Caracas es fundamental también para la estabilidad de Colombia.

Manu Pineda Marín, *en nombre del Grupo GUE/NGL*. – Señor presidente, la señora Mogherini acaba de volver de Colombia y sabe de sobra que el Gobierno de Duque incumple de forma deliberada los acuerdos de paz de La Habana.

La entrega de tierras a los campesinos no se ha producido. Las multinacionales y los terratenientes continúan desplazando con violencia a la población campesina, apoyándose en grupos narcoparamilitares. La sustitución de cultivos de uso ilícito se ha paralizado y los líderes de esos programas están siendo asesinados. Y el programa de reincorporación de los exguerrilleros no se está implementando.

Pero lo más preocupante es que el Gobierno de Duque ha decidido acabar con la Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz, y esto está provocando un reguero de muertes: más de 700 líderes sociales y más de 150 exguerrilleros han sido asesinados desde su firma; y, en este momento, en plena campaña electoral, ya han sido asesinados más de 30 candidatos.

A pesar de todo, las FARC están cumpliendo. La única garantía para la no repetición del conflicto y la consecución de la paz es la implementación efectiva de los acuerdos. La Unión Europea debe exigir al Gobierno de Colombia que cumpla también y condicionar cualquier tipo de cooperación económica, comercial o política a dicho cumplimiento.

Robert Rowland (NI). – Mr President, I declare a personal interest in connection with Colombia, given that my third son has got a Colombian godfather, as well as having two friends who are sporting heroes: Robert Farah and Juan Sebastian Cabal, who have both won a back-to-back in the men's doubles in tennis.

Another great achievement delivered three years ago was President Santos, who signed the peace accord with the left wing terrorist militia group known as FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*). After decades of violence, it took real courage and leadership to bring FARC to the political process and give them ten elected seats in Congress. We now see a peace agreement under threat as elements of the FARC renege on the accord and call for a new armed struggle. Aided by the thug Maduro in neighbouring Venezuela and funded by narco-trafficking, there is a real danger that Colombia could lurch back into the dark days of the past, so it is now imperative that President Duque remains resolute and does not buckle to the threats of renewed violence from FARC. Of one thing I am certain, though: the EU has no right, moral authority or treaty obligation to interfere in the affairs of Colombia. It is an independent sovereign state, and EU foreign policy mission creep is neither necessary nor desirable.

Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE). – Señor presidente, yo quiero empezar señalando que el viaje de la alta representante, la señora Mogherini, a Bogotá la pasada semana me ha parecido muy útil.

Creo que la Unión Europea debe continuar manifestando su solidaridad claramente en estos momentos difíciles para Colombia. Difíciles por la vecindad con Venezuela, que ha experimentado un éxodo de más de cuatro millones de personas huyendo del régimen de Maduro. Colombia alberga el mayor número de desplazados —ya se ha dicho—, casi un millón y medio.

Esta presión migratoria va a reforzarse por el reciente establecimiento de visados por parte de Chile, Perú y Ecuador. Por ello, celebro la movilización de la nueva ayuda de la Unión Europea, pero son solo treinta millones de euros dirigidos a la identificación de inmigrantes y su integración socioeconómica. Espero que esta cuantía se incremente. Es necesaria más ayuda humanitaria internacional. En estos momentos, es mayor la ayuda humanitaria de los Estados Unidos que la de toda la Unión Europea —a Colombia, me estoy refiriendo—.

Por otro lado —también se ha dicho—, es muy preocupante que un pequeño grupo de guerrilleros, liderado por Iván Márquez, anunciase recientemente su intención de retomar las armas. Esta iniciativa es peligrosa y totalmente equivocada, máxime cuando el proceso de paz está avanzando, está llevando a cabo importantes avances y cuenta ya con casi doce mil personas en fase de reincorporación activa. Ahí está el nuevo respaldo del Consejo de Seguridad precisamente ayer, o las declaraciones del propio líder Timochenko, el líder de las FARC, que decía ayer en un periódico español que el proceso de paz es irreversible.

Pues bien, tanto la Unión Europea como el resto de la comunidad —y ya termino, presidente— debemos seguir apoyando a Colombia ante los numerosos y graves retos. Un país amigo y con el que en los últimos tiempos hemos fortalecido mucho nuestros lazos.

Maria Arena (S&D). – Monsieur le Président, l'Union européenne et la Colombie se sont engagées dans un dialogue politique en faveur des droits humains et de l'accord de paix. En dépit de certaines améliorations, que nous avons d'ailleurs soulignées aujourd'hui, la situation des défenseurs des droits humains est alarmante aujourd'hui en Colombie.

Depuis la signature de l'accord de paix, 462 leaders communautaires ainsi que 164 défenseurs de l'environnement ont été tués par des paramilitaires. Parmi les meurtres qui ont été perpétrés, la société civile nous rapporte que seuls 8 % de ceux-ci ont fait l'objet de poursuites judiciaires en Colombie.

En 2016, un fonds fiduciaire a été mis en place avec l'Union européenne. La première question est: parmi les projets qui ont été financés par ce fonds, la Commission peut-elle nous préciser quels sont ceux qui visent particulièrement la question de la protection des défenseurs des droits de l'homme?

La deuxième question concerne l'accord commercial avec la Colombie, qui prévoyait un mécanisme d'évaluation en matière des droits humains: où en est-on aujourd'hui par rapport à cette évaluation?

Dita Charanzová (Renew). – Mr President, the 2016 deal brought fragile peace to Colombia, a peace that is more and more under threat. Iván Márquez's video was the most recent blow. While most leaders of the FARC condemned this return to war, we cannot underestimate the potential risks. Venezuela is another thorn to stability in Colombia. Not only is the crisis in Venezuela exerting pressure, with more than 1.4 million migrants fleeing over the border, but it also constitutes a safe haven for guerrillas to operate.

The EU has been committed for decades now to supporting a peaceful solution in Colombia. The Colombian Government needs our support now more than ever to continue implementing the peace agreement and we need to continue to actively find a solution to the crisis in Venezuela, which is clearly having spill-over effects in the region.

Miguel Urbán Crespo (GUE/NGL). – Señor presidente, hace tres años celebramos el acuerdo de paz en Colombia. Hoy lamentamos que continúe la violencia. En estos tres años más de 500 personas defensoras de derechos humanos, 175 excombatientes y familiares y varios dirigentes políticos han sido asesinados. Lamentamos que algunos miembros de las FARC, tres años después, retomen las armas, pero denunciemos también la falta de voluntad del Gobierno colombiano para implementar los acuerdos de paz.

No solo no se han desmontado los grupos paramilitares, sino que incluso han aumentado las denuncias de sus vínculos con el Gobierno y el Ejército. Mientras se favorece a los empresarios de la agroindustria, la reforma agraria continúa paralizada. Desde la Unión Europea estamos dando millones para apoyar la implementación de unos acuerdos que no se cumplen. ¿Dónde están los resultados? ¿Qué se ha hecho, por ejemplo, para desmontar los grupos paramilitares?

Nuestro compromiso por la paz exige acabar con la violencia política, implementar los acuerdos y reanudar las negociaciones con el ELN. Sin garantías, nunca habrá paz.

David Bull (NI). – Mr President, Colombia has been in a state of continual conflict since before the 19th century, involving many parties with vested interest. Therefore, the revised peace deal brokered in 2016 between the Colombian state and FARC is extremely welcome. FARC was made to cease parliament military activity and became a mainstream party. But the legitimisation of one group has left a power vacuum; other militant groups and factions have emerged keen to exploit the gap in the market, particularly in cocaine.

It is estimated by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime that there has been a year-on-year rise of 31% in cocaine production, estimated to be worth USD 2.7 billion. This provides almost unlimited capital for these groups, further entrenching their positions, provoking further conflict and crime in the region. So the revised peace deal has not brought peace. It has merely removed one group and replaced it with others.

As a medical doctor, I know the cocaine industry has a very real impact on people's lives, not just in Colombia or South America but here in Europe too. So we must find permanent solutions and revisit drug policy to tackle this exponential growth.

Leopoldo López Gil (PPE). – Señor presidente, la Unión Europea debe implicarse ante la amenaza que supone la vuelta a la lucha armada por parte de una escisión de la guerrilla de las FARC. El proceso de paz, que ha sido el centro del compromiso de esta Unión con Colombia, es la única vía para solucionar este conflicto que ha puesto en riesgo la estabilidad de esta región.

El régimen dictatorial venezolano es el que ofrece el apoyo y estímulo a estos guerrilleros. Este hecho ha sido bien denunciado por las autoridades colombianas. Esa dictadura ha hecho que más de cuatro millones de venezolanos tengan que abandonar su país, cifra que aumenta a diario, y ya cerca de dos millones se han establecido en Colombia. Ese país se ha hecho cargo de suplir necesidades sanitarias, vivienda y alimentación a personas que se han visto forzadas a emigrar.

Es por ello que celebro la oferta que ha hecho la señora Mogherini el pasado jueves al presidente Duque de dotar con ayuda económica a programas que faciliten la integración de esos migrantes y favorezcan el proceso y acuerdo de paz mediante la reintegración de los guerrilleros.

Se tiene que parar el origen de la crisis que afecta a Colombia. Por ello, la Unión Europea debe aplicar ya las sanciones contundentes a los violadores de derechos humanos en Venezuela, que son los verdaderos desestabilizadores de esta región. La señora Mogherini dijo que, en caso de no ver resultados concretos después de las negociaciones de Barbados, la Unión Europea las impondría sin dilación. Colombia necesita y debe dejar de sufrir por los daños colaterales que le causa el Gobierno de Maduro.

Caterina Chinnici (S&D). – Signor Presidente, signora ministro, onorevoli colleghi, questo Parlamento ha fortemente supportato il processo di pace avviatosi dopo decenni di guerra civile in Colombia, proprio per garantire nel paese il rispetto e la tutela dei diritti umani.

Tuttavia le notizie che ultimamente ci giungono non sono confortanti. Dopo un periodo di riduzione delle violenze, infatti, vi è stato un riacuirsi di attacchi, di violazioni dei diritti umani, atti di discriminazione, gravi atti di violenza contro le donne. Solo nello scorso anno, il 2018, sono stati circa 350 i bambini vittime di malnutrizione e di malattie, pur se curabili. Sono infatti i bambini i più vulnerabili nelle situazioni di crisi come quella che sta vivendo la Colombia.

Come Unione europea, quindi, dobbiamo utilizzare tutte le risorse, tutti gli strumenti a nostra disposizione e gli accordi raggiunti per difendere la pace in Colombia, per garantire il rispetto dei diritti umani, la sicurezza, la giustizia e l'equità sociale e per dare un futuro migliore ai bambini in tutto il paese.

José Ramón Bauzá Díaz (Renew). – Señor presidente, todos estamos de acuerdo en que la prioridad debe ser la seguridad y el bienestar de nuestro hermano pueblo colombiano. En ese sentido, hay que tener bien en cuenta y bien presente un asunto que no debemos dejar de lado, que es la memoria.

Garantizar la paz en Colombia no puede ni debe servir de excusa, en ningún caso, ni para reescribir la historia, ni tampoco para blanquear a los terroristas. Solamente con la justicia nos aseguraremos de que se garantice la paz. La firma de los acuerdos de paz, desgraciadamente, no ha supuesto el fin de décadas de sufrimiento de terrorismo, y eso lo dice alguien que, desgraciadamente, ha vivido en un país que ha sufrido en sus propias carnes los atentados y el dolor de las víctimas del terrorismo.

Por eso mismo le pedimos, y le pido yo personalmente a la señora Mogherini, que no confunda, que no piense que esto es un conflicto entre dos bandos, todo lo contrario. Este proceso debe tener exclusivamente, como base, la renuncia, la rendición de los asesinos ante los asesinados. Esto es importantísimo que la señora Mogherini lo entienda.

Sandra Pereira (GUE/NGL). – Senhor Presidente, a situação de incumprimento do acordo de paz na Colômbia e o recrutamento da repressão e das perseguições, de que é exemplo a vaga de centenas de assassinatos de dirigentes e ativistas sociais e políticos, incluindo antigos integrantes das FARC, atualmente desmobilizados, e dos seus familiares, assume contornos dramáticos.

A não aplicação integral do acordo de paz por parte do Estado colombiano, nomeadamente no que diz respeito à desarticulação dos grupos paramilitares de extrema direita e à eliminação do estatuto de impunidade de que estes gozam, constitui um elemento determinante do agravamento da situação política e social na Colômbia e da violação das garantias e dos direitos democráticos do povo colombiano que compromete a paz.

É hora de exigir o respeito e a implementação integral do acordo firmado em 2016 em Havana, e o seu cumprimento, pondo fim à campanha de violência e opressão. É hora de ir ao encontro das justas e legítimas aspirações e reivindicações do povo colombiano, em prol da democracia, da justiça social e da paz.

Peter van Dalen (PPE). – Voorzitter, de politieke verhoudingen in het noorden van Zuid-Amerika zijn onzeker. In Venezuela regeert een dictator die probeert zijn zogenaamd zegenrijke regime te exporteren naar omringende landen zoals Colombia. In Colombia heeft men een vredesakkoord gesloten met de opstandelingen van de FARC, maar diverse FARC-leiders, opgehitst door Venezuela, willen weer gaan vechten. Dat zou betekenen dat ook de hele narco-industrie weer in de hoogste versnelling komt, want de FARC leefde van de drugsinkomsten. Van groot belang is dat wij vanuit de Europese Unie de inzet van Emilio Archila steunen. Dat is de man die het vredesakkoord moet uitvoeren om te voorkomen dat we terugkeren naar dood en geweld. Te veel Colombiaanse boeren wachten echter nog steeds op geld dat hun was toegezegd ter compensatie van het zaaien van alternatieve gewassen. Wat kan de hoge vertegenwoordiger doen om dat te verbeteren en te steunen?

Het is voor de Europese Unie van strategisch belang de precaire verhoudingen in Latijns-Amerika in balans te houden, dus inzet voor de vrede in Colombia en vooral ook het indammen van de verwoestende werking van de narco-industrie, een industrie die hier in Europa in de miljoenen loopt. Denk aan de mensen die helaas verslaafd zijn. Maar denk ook aan het vele geweld dat hiermee samenhangt. Het geweld en de drugsoorlogen die ook in onze Europese steden zoals Amsterdam voorkomen. Daar gaat het ook over als we over vrede in Colombia spreken.

Isabel Santos (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, 260 mil mortos, 83 mil desaparecidos, 7,4 milhões de deslocados, são as cifras negras estimadas de 50 anos de conflito na Colômbia, que teve um ponto final há 3 anos com um acordo de paz e para o qual a União Europeia teve um contributo importante.

Não podemos voltar atrás. A Colômbia não pode voltar atrás. Por isso, o recente anúncio do regresso à luta armada por parte de uma minoria constitui um motivo de grande preocupação para todos nós face à ameaça de desestabilização do país e da região.

O acordo de paz não é um ponto de chegada, mas o início de uma construção coletiva onde é necessário o esforço de todos na integração política e social dos combatentes e na prossecução de objetivos mais elevados de desenvolvimento, de promoção do acesso à justiça de transição, de respeito pelos direitos humanos e pela ação dos ativistas.

Face à situação vivida na Colômbia, impõe-se que a União Europeia continue o apoio e acompanhamento na implementação do acordo de paz, bem como na reivindicação do seu cumprimento por parte do atual governo.

O diálogo e a ação política são as únicas vias para o progresso e para a pacificação que todos desejamos.

Nacho Sánchez Amor (S&D). – Señor presidente, desde que celebramos, con satisfacción, la firma del acuerdo de paz en Colombia, no solo no se han implementado los compromisos pactados —compromisos que llevaron al fin de una de las guerrillas más antiguas del mundo—, sino que estamos viviendo un grave paso atrás en ese desarrollo. Una parte de esa guerrilla —las FARC— ha decidido volver a las armas.

Los gobernantes están siendo también fieles a su compromiso de erosionar el proceso de paz, un elemento que se ve reforzado, precisamente, por la disidencia de las FARC. Claro que tenemos que seguir apoyando —todos los diputados lo han dicho— en la Unión Europea el proceso. Ha dicho la ministra que necesita apoyo internacional, pero también necesita voluntad política en el país; una voluntad política que no puede ser sustituida por una inyección financiera.

Han comentado —no voy a insistir— la importancia de la estabilidad de Colombia en el resto de la región, porque al final hablamos de Colombia y se acaba hablando siempre de Venezuela y no quiero insistir en ello. Pero la Unión Europea tiene que revisar y actualizar su posición en Colombia, porque están pasando cosas que no estaban previstas en el programa de nuestro trabajo allí.

Y creo que, para empezar, lo que tiene que hacer la Unión Europea es nombrar cuanto antes una nueva persona para representarnos en el proceso de paz y continuar el trabajo de Eamon Gilmore. Porque yo creo que con este tipo de hechos es como se demuestra nuestro interés.

Jude Kirton-Darling (S&D). – Mr President, the 2016 peace agreement created real hope for Colombians and it was a great achievement, but violence remains rife. Human rights activists and trade unionists are still assassinated every year with impunity. The Colombian Government's policy of greater militarisation and a piecemeal approach to the peace agreement's implementation is also endangering the fragile peace process, and we have a role to play and we must play it. We must keep a special representative for the peace process and support the extension of the mandate of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Colombia. We have direct leverage through the human rights clauses within our free-trade agreement with Colombia and we must use them, and we must also boost our support for transitional

justice and engage the Duque administration towards full truth and reconciliation. Without more international engagement, there can be no peace in Colombia and we can't shy away. We have to engage with all the tools that we have at our disposal. This peace agreement is too important.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Ibán García Del Blanco (S&D). – Señor presidente, el acuerdo de paz es precisamente eso, un acuerdo de paz. Es un acuerdo entre dos distintos y no se trata de una rendición, como no acaba de entender cierta parte de la derecha de mi país —como acabo de escuchar aquí—. Y de lo que se trata, es verdad, es de cumplir lo que estaba establecido en el acuerdo de paz. No ha sido fácil para un país con cientos de miles de muertos, con una gran historia de violencia y de dificultades, y no será fácil en el futuro, por mucha voluntad política que haya, conseguir al final llegar a un acuerdo. Alguien lo ha dicho aquí: el acuerdo de paz era un punto de partida, pero no era no era el acuerdo definitivo.

Eso sí, creo que este Parlamento y la Unión y la Comisión y el alto representante que venga tienen que tener en cuenta que hay una situación de emergencia humanitaria también, que tiene que ver con los refugiados que se están moviendo de Venezuela y que tiene que ver con el cierre de las fronteras que hay alrededor, y para lo que el país, Colombia, necesita también la ayuda humanitaria, para la atención en este momento y para la atención de lo que vendrá en el futuro, porque no parece que ese chorro de personas que están atravesando la frontera se vaya a terminar.

Hay que ser extremadamente exigentes con esos fondos adicionales que se dediquen, con las ayudas que se sigan dedicando con toda la voluntad para el proceso de paz, pero, al mismo tiempo, no hay que cejar en el empeño, porque la estabilidad de toda la región y los propios principios de la Unión Europea están en juego en este proceso.

Clare Daly (GUE/NGL). – Mr President, I wish we had a peace process in Colombia, but it exists now really in name only and not because of Venezuelans – who, incidentally, are leaving Venezuela not because of Maduro but because of the economic stranglehold being applied by the USA – nor because of the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), who have largely held their peace, despite not having much to show for it, but precisely because of the Government's failure to honour the Peace Accord. Land has not been distributed; there has been a deepening of the extreme social inequality; and hundreds of activists are being systematically murdered by right-wing paramilitaries who know that they have the Government on their side.

This is a reign of terror, and we, as a European Parliament and a European Union, can use the leverage that's at our disposal. Despite our explicit formal responsibilities in the peace agreement, our trade relations with Colombia run contrary to that peace. We import palm oil and coal under the EU-Colombia/Peru/Ecuador trade agreement because money is to be made. There's leverage in that. Environmental rights and workers' rights are being trampled on. Title IX of that agreement is supposed to protect those rights, but there are no legal mechanisms to enforce them, so they are being ignored by the Government. We've got to act and use our leverage.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Tytti Tuppurainen, President-in-Office of the Council, on behalf of the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. – Mr President, allow me to say that this exchange of views was very useful and very timely. I would like to take this opportunity to thank honourable Members for their interventions, comments and suggestions. Out of the many valuable remarks, I would like to respond to MEP Arena's question: what is the EU doing to protect human rights defenders and indigenous and social leaders?

The EU, in coordination with Member States, supports actions to help ensure that human rights defenders are protected and respected and can operate in a safe and enabling environment. Assistance is provided to defenders at risk through protection programmes such as ProtectDefenders.eu

On 11 June 2019, the EU delegation together with several Member States launched the campaign '*Defendamos la vida*' to protect and give visibility to human rights defenders and social leaders. On 10 July, the EU launched the project strengthening the Special Investigation Unit of the Office of the Attorney General of the nation, EUR two million. The Special Investigation Unit aims to implement a secure judicial investigation system able to prevent, react, control, prosecute and seek criminal punishment for grave violations against human rights defenders and members of social and political movements perpetrated by criminal organisations. And in addition, the EU will continue to provide financial support to organisations working with human rights defenders in Colombia.

From this debate I conclude that the only path towards lasting peace in this difficult context is to continue implementation of the peace agreement with full support of the EU and international stakeholders. This is our message to the government and the people of Colombia. But I would like to remind us that while the peace process remains at the heart of our engagement with Colombia, our relationship has deepened and broadened in recent years with the implementation of the free trade agreement, cooperation on security and defence, and on the environment, to mention just a few key areas. The current challenges are very serious and we will continue supporting Colombia in addressing them, but the overall relationship and perspectives for the future are very positive.

Allow me to express my appreciation for your attention and support in maintaining this important file at the top of our agenda.

(The sitting was suspended for a few moments)

17. Reanudación de la sesión

(The sitting resumed at 20.10)

18. Situación en Cachemira (debate)

President. – The next item is the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the situation in Kashmir (2019/2815(RSP)).

Tytti Tuppurainen, *President-in-Office of the Council, on behalf of the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.* – Mr President, the tensions in the region have increased following the announcement by the Indian Government on 5 August of the revocation of Article 370 that grants partial autonomy to the state of Jammu and Kashmir. This step has been accompanied by restrictions on fundamental rights and freedoms.

The Indian Government has deployed a significant number of additional military and paramilitary troops in Kashmir and along the Line of Control. The action was presented by the Indian Government as a means to prevent violent protests. Pakistan has also deployed additional troops on its side of the Line of Control. On both sides, the issue of Kashmir resonates strongly with internal political dynamics.

While some of the restrictions are reported to have been lifted, the situation has not returned to normalcy. There have been arrests of political leaders, activists and human rights defenders. The European Union has been following the situation closely since the early days of this escalation of tensions. In early August, High Representative Mogherini spoke on the phone with both her Pakistani and Indian counterparts. In both conversations, the High Representative underlined the importance of avoiding a further escalation and stressed that dialogue between India and Pakistan through diplomatic channels is crucial.

Our position on Kashmir remains unchanged. We encourage India and Pakistan to seek a peaceful and political solution, respectful of the interests of the Kashmiri population on both sides of the Line of Control. This remains the only way to solve a long-lasting dispute that for too long has caused instability and insecurity in the region.

We remain concerned about the situation on the ground with its restrictions on fundamental freedoms. It is crucial that freedom of movement and means of communication are fully restored, as well as access to all essential services. The High Representative conveyed these concerns to the Indian Minister for External Affairs, Mr Jaishankar, during their meeting in Brussels on 13 August. The Minister debriefed the High Representative on the state of play and on the security situation. Ms Mogherini reiterated the call to avoid an escalation of tensions and stressed the importance of steps to restore the rights and freedoms of the population in Kashmir.

The EU has also raised the situation in Jammu and Kashmir at the Human Rights Council meeting in Geneva in an Item 2 Statement on 10 September. In the Statement, we encourage the lifting of the remaining restrictions temporarily imposed and to maintain the rights and fundamental freedoms of the affected population. We continue to urge both parties to engage in direct dialogue with a view to a peaceful solution in full respect of their international human rights obligations.

In a moment of rising tensions in different regions around the world, no one can afford another escalation in Kashmir. Regional cooperation in South Asia is now more essential than ever and we will continue to encourage India and Pakistan to resume dialogue and find a peaceful solution to their disputes.

Traian Băsescu, în numele grupului PPE. – Domnule președinte, doamnă ministru, în mod categoric situația din Cașmir este alarmantă. Aș spune chiar și inacceptabilă. Încălcarea continuă a drepturilor omului, violență stradală, dispute politice și, mai ales, două puteri nucleare aflate aproape în conflict. Aceștia sunt parametrii în care lucrurile evoluează în Cașmir, fără ca în acest moment să avem speranța unei soluții rapide.

Am luat notă de poziția pe care o are președinția rotativă a Uniunii Europene și mi se pare înțeleaptă și eficientă. Aș vrea să fac, însă, o observație cu privire la noi, europenii. În această sesiune am discutat despre Hong Kong, despre incendiile din Amazon, despre Burkina Faso, despre situația din Columbia, despre situația din Cașmir, dar nu discutăm despre problemele noastre, uneori destul de dificil de rezolvat, probleme care adesea au nemulțumit cetățenii Uniunii Europene.

Mă refer la securitatea și inviolabilitatea frontierelor Uniunii Europene. Mă refer la migrație, la care încă nu am dat un răspuns pentru cei 500 de milioane de cetățeni. Mă refer la riscurile teroriste. Mă refer la lipsa de coeziune între statele membre atunci când discută cu China, cu Statele Unite, cu Federația Rusă, ceea ce vulnerabilizează poziția Uniunii Europene pe plan extern. Mă refer la abandonarea unor state care au devenit membre recent și care întârzie, pur și simplu, procesul de integrare, deși prin tratatul de aderare sunt obligate să adere la moneda euro. Mă refer la povestea lansată și neclarificată a creării armatei europene. Mă refer la necesitatea compatibilizării industriei de armament din (Președintele a întrerupt vorbitorul)... statele membre ale Uniunii Europene și, nu în ultimul rând, mă refer la lipsa de îndrăzneală pe care o avem... (Președintele a retras cuvântul vorbitorului)

Maria Arena, au nom du groupe S&D. – Monsieur le Président, depuis 1950 la constitution indienne accordait un régime particulier au Jammu-et-Cachemire. L'article 370 prévoyait davantage d'autonomie au Cachemire indien en lui octroyant une large marge de manoeuvre et en limitant l'intervention de la législation indienne dans la gestion du Jammu-et-Cachemire. La défense, les affaires étrangères et la communication étaient les seules matières qui relevaient du gouvernement central de New Delhi, le reste était administré par une assemblée législative locale. L'article 370 conférait également à l'État fédéré une constitution distincte.

Or, depuis le 5 août, date de la révocation par l'Inde, du statut d'autonomie du Cachemire, plus de 3 000 personnes ont été arrêtées de manière arbitraire, dont des responsables politiques, des militants, des universitaires. Tous les moyens de communication, téléphone, internet, ont été suspendus. Les services d'urgence, les hôpitaux sont confrontés à une pénurie de matériel et de personnel. Les journalistes étrangers, les ONG n'ont plus accès au territoire et cette situation se détériore avec le couvre-feu qui bloque la circulation des locaux, singulièrement des malades et des médecins. Des dizaines de milliers de soldats ont été envoyés en renfort dans cette région qui est l'une des plus militarisées du monde avec plus d'un million de soldats sur le territoire.

Déjà les rapports des Nations unies publiés en 2018 et en 2019 faisaient état de graves violations des droits humains à l'égard des populations civiles: kidnappings, assassinats, déplacements forcés, violences sexuelles. Mais évidemment ces violations étaient perpétrées aussi bien par les forces indiennes que par les forces pakistanaises. La décision unilatérale du premier ministre indien du 5 août dernier ne fait qu'envenimer cette situation déjà au bord de l'explosion.

L'Europe ne peut rester inactive, elle doit plaider pour la mise en place d'une enquête internationale indépendante et transparente sur les violences perpétrées au Cachemire. L'Europe doit peser de tout son poids dans ses relations avec l'Inde pour rendre au Cachemire le statut d'autonomie dont la région jouissait depuis 1950. Mais l'Europe doit aussi soutenir les démarches des Nations unies dans la recherche du dialogue entre l'Inde et le Pakistan, parce que c'est dans le dialogue que la solution sera trouvée.

Shaffaq Mohammed, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, I would like to start by declaring an interest: that I was born in Kashmir, and moved to the United Kingdom at the age of four. However, it pains me to see what's happening in Kashmir. Kashmir is in crisis: an international and human rights crisis. The people of Kashmir have suffered, and continue to suffer. The EU is an organisation which proudly stands for human rights, right across the world, and we must stand today with the people of Kashmir.

The ongoing crisis in Kashmir threatens the peace and security of the wider region – one of the most volatile in the world. It's our responsibility to do something. The recommendations of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) offer a good starting point for their actions. We must support them and implement the findings of their reports, which they published last year in June and this year in July.

The institutions of the EU and their Member States exist not only to protect the human rights of citizens in the European Union, but they must also be defenders of human rights across the globe. The situation in Kashmir will not improve by trying to blame either side: all the while people try to apportion blame, the people of Kashmir are suffering and deserve better. The people of Kashmir should be the ones who decide their fate and their future. Self-determination and upholding human rights are fundamental values in our European Union, and we should demand no less from others around the world – particularly those that want to trade and have relationships with us.

The fighting in Kashmir has been going on for decades, but, in the end, the crisis is going to be ended only when people sit around the table and talk. The EU can be a natural facilitator in this role, and that allows both sides to talk. The people of Kashmir are crying out in the darkness. The EU must help them provide a light in that darkness.

Gina Dowding, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, reports of serious human rights violations have been coming out of Kashmir for more than a month now. The accounts of raids, arrests, clashes and unlawful detentions are truly appalling – and all of this while mobile phone networks are still largely under lockdown. We UK Green MEPs demand that these human rights violations stop – not only for the sake of the population of Kashmir, but also for the hundreds of thousands of British citizens who are of Kashmiri origin.

No peaceful resolution to the Kashmir conflict is conceivable while these abuses continue. We demand that the Indian authorities restore the basic freedoms of the Kashmiri population, and we urge continued EU attention to this crisis.

Bernhard Zimniok, *im Namen der ID-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, meine Damen und Herren! Die EU will und soll zur Lösung des Kaschmirkonflikts beitragen – ein Konflikt, der seit 70 Jahren existiert, der sich verfestigt hat, Kriege ausgelöst hat, ein Konflikt mit unzähligen Toten, mit Terrorakten, Repressalien und viel Leid. Dieses Problem kann aber nicht von der EU gelöst werden, sondern nur von den betroffenen Konfliktparteien selbst. Wir als Außenstehende können diesen Prozess nur begleiten, und zwar als neutrale Mediatoren.

Wenn ich nun der Presse entnehmen muss, dass Mitglieder dieses Hauses Partei ergreifen und sogar so weit gehen, Boykottmaßnahmen gegen Indien zu verlangen, dann werden sie selbst Teil des Problems und sind keine ehrlichen Makler mehr. Ich kann aus Erfahrung heraus nur sagen: Das funktioniert nicht. Sobald wir uns auf eine Seite schlagen – sei es jetzt auf die indische oder die pakistanische –, verlieren wir den Ruf des ehrlichen Maklers. Alle seriösen Bemühungen unsererseits zur Lösung des Konflikts verlaufen im Sande und werden konterkariert.

Geoffrey Van Orden, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – Mr President, Kashmir is one of the most beautiful areas of India and with security and stability could be so enormously prosperous, but for over 70 years it has had an unsettled status and has been under threat, afflicted by externally sponsored terrorism and extremism, and at last there is an opportunity to rectify the situation.

Legally, the whole territory should have been part of India from the start but instead it was invaded and partly occupied by Pakistan, which then allowed its special services to support subversion and terrorism, costing thousands of lives across the Line of Control into India. Tourism dried up, the economy was put in jeopardy, and under the temporary Article 370 of the Indian Constitution people lived under different locally imposed rules. Now the changes brought in by Prime Minister Modi will give the same rights to the people of Kashmir as those in the rest of India, and we should look at what's happening in Pakistan if we really want to see abuse of rights, women, religious minorities and transgender people, and all the difficulties that they face in that country.

Our governments and the European Union support dialogue and constructive engagement between India and Pakistan.

(The speaker agreed to take a blue-card question under Rule 171(8))

Fulvio Martusciello (PPE), *domanda «cartellino blu»*. – Onorevole Van Orden, io sono d'accordo con il Suo intervento e Le voglio chiedere se ha letto la minaccia che è stata fatta dal Pakistan di usare le armi nucleari, perché questo è il vero tema di cui dovrebbe occuparsi il Parlamento europeo: l'utilizzo delle armi nucleari da parte del Pakistan e soprattutto il fatto che il Pakistan è un territorio che ha allevato – e la storia lo dice – nel corso di tutti questi anni numerosi terroristi, che hanno compiuto sanguinosi attentati in Europa, per non parlare poi di tutti i diritti umani violati in Pakistan.

Geoffrey Van Orden (ECR), *blue-card answer*. – Pakistan has been a source of nuclear proliferation. It has given sanctuary to terrorist organisations and terrorist leaders, and it promotes terrorism across the Line of Control into India. Yes, we are talking about two nuclear-armed states, but I don't think that is relevant to this particular matter at this time. If the European Union wants to be helpful, it should not be carping. The High Representative should listen more closely to Foreign Minister Jaishankar and what he had to say, because you are getting a very distorted picture from the contributions we've heard in this Parliament so far.

Idoia Villanueva Ruiz, *en nombre del Grupo GUE/NGL*. – Señor presidente, no podemos encuadrar la situación de Cachemira como un asunto conflictivo interno de la India, sino en el resurgir nacionalista encarnado por Modi en conexión con Trump, Bolsonaro y la internacional reaccionaria. Modi ha llegado al Gobierno atacando a las ONG y cercenando las libertades públicas. Frente a esto, la Unión Europea no puede seguir haciendo *policy as usual*.

Necesitamos posicionarnos con un discurso alternativo, abierto, basado en derechos humanos y actuar condicionando la acción exterior y las relaciones bilaterales en el mismo. Hoy eso significa condicionar el acuerdo estratégico a un cambio sustancial en los derechos humanos en Cachemira, apostar por una solución pacífica del conflicto negociada entre la India y Pakistán. Si no hacemos esto, Cachemira será un nuevo ejemplo de los límites del voluntarismo de la Unión Europea.

Hoy necesitamos definir el tipo de actor mundial que queremos ser. Nosotras apostamos por que sea un actor político independiente, con autonomía, que pueda dialogar en pie de igualdad sobre derechos humanos, gobernanza multilateral, comercio y tecnología con los grandes países.

Milan Uhrík (NI). – Mr President, since this is an issue of foreign policy I'm going to speak in English. Many of you are talking about violations of human rights and some other bad things happening in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. However, we are once again relying only on secondary information because no one here really and truly knows what is happening in India.

When I had a debate with the Indian ambassador in the Slovak Republic, I asked him how many times had the Indian Parliament interfered or condemned any European country for its internal policy. It had never happened and we should do the same. We should respect the sovereignty of India because it's not our task to interfere in the internal affairs of countries 6 000 kilometres away. We are here to solve the problems of Europe, so please, let's do that.

Richard Corbett (S&D). – Mr President, let me also declare an interest, in that I visited Azad Kashmir last month.

The unilateral action by India revoking the autonomy that it granted to the part of Kashmir that it controlled – splitting the territory into two, sending in thousands of extra troops, instituting a media shutdown and arresting many local politicians – has inflamed an already volatile situation.

This conflict has gone on for nearly 70 years now. It cannot be in India's interest that it continues. It costs India a fortune. It's a stain on its international reputation. It's time to press for a solution, but frankly there is only one viable long-term and peaceful solution and that is self-determination for the people of Kashmir. That is what the United Nations laid down in 1947, when India took the dispute to the UN Security Council. It's time to implement that, and the EU should use the combined diplomatic leverage of its 28 countries and its own powers on trade, and so on, to press for that outcome. It's not too late.

Phil Bennion (Renew). – Mr President, Kashmir joined India only on the condition that it retained its autonomy, and this included a clause denying India the right to change that arrangement unilaterally. The Indian Supreme Court has upheld this principle in previous judgments, and it's interesting that opposition politician Shashi Tharoor has today described the actions of the Indian Government as unconstitutional.

I do not deny that there have been terrorist problems, and that has provoked some action. In Geneva last week, I took the trouble to discuss this with Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, and I asked him that Pakistan do more to clamp down on insurgents. Others have described the situation on the ground, and I think it's important to know that I've been discussing this with people who were in Srinagar at the time.

What should happen now? Well, the curfew should be lifted, the Kashmiri Regional Government reinstated and political prisoners released, and UN observers should be allowed access. For the long term, we call on Pakistan and India to agree on an independent mediator to facilitate talks that includes Kashmiri people from both sides of the Line of Control.

(The speaker agreed to take a blue-card question under Rule 171(8))

Bernhard Zimniok (ID), Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“. – Ich möchte den Sprecher nur kurz fragen, wie er sich denn eine Autonomie unter Eigenregie, unter Verwaltung der Kaschmiris vorstellt, denn dieses Land würde mit Sicherheit am Tropf der Gemeinschaft hängen. Sie haben ökonomisch nichts zu bieten; sie müssen sich Indien oder Pakistan oder geteilt, wie auch immer die Lösung ist, anschließen. Alles andere ist eine Illusion. Selbst die Kaschmiris selbst würden diese Lösung nicht wollen. Ich war dort vier Jahre als Diplomat tätig. Ich habe die Region zigfach bereist, und ich glaube nicht, dass Sie dafür irgendeine Mehrheit finden würden.

Phil Bennion (Renew), blue-card answer. – Certainly we don't know whether there would be a majority, because it hasn't been tested. But I think the assertion is that this is a very undeveloped and backward area. Despite the fact that this has been an area of conflict for 70 years, and we know that conflict actually does depress the economy, if you actually look at the indicators – and I have actually looked at virtually every indicator in terms of well-being, incomes, literacy; virtually every indicator you can think of – Kashmir comes out better than the rest of India, and as one of the top areas of India.

Klaus Buchner (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident! In den Berichten über Kaschmir wird nur viel zu selten über die massiven Menschenrechtsverletzungen berichtet, die dort von beiden Seiten – von Pakistan und Indien – begangen werden. Das darf uns nicht kalt lassen. Aber wir stehen auch am Rande eines Krieges zwischen diesen beiden Nuklearmächten.

Meiner Meinung nach gibt es nur einen Weg, einen solchen Krieg und auch die Menschenrechtsverletzungen zu verhindern: Das ist die Durchsetzung der UNO-Resolutionen zu diesem Thema – zugegeben, vielleicht etwas optimistisch von meiner Seite. Aber wir können das einfach nicht so laufen lassen, und das bedeutet, dass die UNO hier tätig werden muss, dass sie – notfalls auch mit einer Friedensmission – dorthin muss, im Einklang mit beiden Seiten, was schwierig ist, das gebe ich zu. Aber es gibt nur diese Lösung. Wir können nicht zulassen, dass es so weitergeht. Deswegen bitte ich die Hohe Vertreterin dringend, hier tätig zu werden.

Silvia Sardone (ID). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la situazione in Kashmir era difficile anche prima, ci sono situazioni di violenza note negli anni.

Trovo questa discussione un po' squilibrata: penso che il dialogo si faccia non attaccando una parte o esprimendosi a favore dell'altra. Stiamo parlando di una regione del mondo dove da tempo ci sono gruppi terroristici legati all'estremismo islamico, dove ci sono fenomeni di radicalizzazione assolutamente preoccupanti. In quest'area sono state viste bandiere dell'ISIS e ci sono violenze da troppo tempo. Allora forse bisognerebbe analizzare il contesto storico, basarci su fonti e informazioni realmente autorevoli e, in generale, sostenere chi combatte i terroristi.

Centinaia di migliaia di indiani, dagli anni Novanta, hanno lasciato questa regione a causa delle violenze. Mi chiedo perché non discutiamo delle numerose vittime di attentati e di scontri e perché non parliamo delle minacce e delle discriminazioni religiose portate avanti dal Pakistan.

In generale penso che noi, come Europa, dovremmo rispettare la sovranità degli Stati e rispettare e stare vicino a chi porta avanti misure di sicurezza per contrastare i fenomeni terroristici.

Nosheena Mobarik (ECR). – Mr President, we in the European Parliament uphold the principles enshrined in the Treaties. Therefore, I am ashamed by the lack of resolution on Kashmir.

There will always be those who will support India in deflecting the world's attention away from its shortcomings and placing blame on others, their perceived foes. But, on this occasion, India alone is responsible for revoking Article 370 and for the current deplorable, bellicose and destructive situation in Kashmir.

If we profess our belief in human rights and religious freedom, then why are we silent? The most fundamental right, the right to self-determination, has been denied to the Kashmiris for more than 70 years. How long do we stay silent? How bad does it have to get?

Let us put aside our apathy, or indeed our eagerness to conclude a free-trade agreement, and examine our conscience: democratic principles, peace and stability are ultimately in the interests of India too.

Neena Gill (S&D). – Mr President, to those Members who have spoken today of their indignation towards India, I am astonished by your partiality, oversight and lack of any real empathy with the Kashmiris.

Why do I say partiality? When Pakistan took the same measures in Gilgit and Baltistan, we didn't speak up. When they gave away territory that wasn't theirs to China we didn't speak up. Or when Sikh and other minority women are abducted and forced to convert, we don't speak up. The fact is that there are human-rights violations in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and very many honourable colleagues look the other way.

Let me be clear: the solution to Kashmir is not going to be found in this Chamber. The solution to Kashmir will come when state-sponsored terrorism and global misinformation by Pakistan ends, then dialogue will follow. Pakistan may talk the talk, but it does not walk the walk when it comes to human rights, and it beggars belief that it has GSP+ status.

And I say to those colleagues concerned about the rescinding of Article 370, you are focusing on one part and ignoring the other issues that are dear to the hearts of many of us. Not only will this improve the rights of LGBT people, women and minorities, it will also improve environmental and other protection measures, and ban the outrageous 'triple talaq' divorce. Why should Kashmiris have fewer rights than those enjoyed by Indians elsewhere?

Gilles Lebreton (ID). – Monsieur le Président, le premier ministre indien, Narendra Modi, a décidé de révoquer, le 5 août dernier, le statut d'autonomie du Cachemire. Cela s'explique par le fait que les forces de sécurité indiennes ont récemment été victimes d'attaques perpétrées par des groupes islamistes au Cachemire, revendiquées la plupart du temps depuis le Pakistan.

Il est de notoriété publique que le Pakistan, à plus forte raison depuis l'accession au pouvoir d'Imran Khan, soutenu par les partis islamistes, a une attitude plus que bienveillante pour les groupes terroristes au Cachemire, contre le gouvernement indien.

La volonté de reprise en main de Narendra Modi témoigne de sa volonté de lutter contre le terrorisme islamiste et de mettre face à ses responsabilités le Pakistan, dont les services secrets ont longtemps été les protecteurs de Ben Laden.

Au Pakistan, des manifestations ont été organisées par l'ensemble des mouvements islamistes et encouragées par le gouvernement, pour protester contre la décision du gouvernement indien.

Le Cachemire, faut-il le rappeler, est une région faisant partie de l'Union indienne. On s'étonnera, une fois de plus, de la réaction du secrétaire général de l'ONU, stigmatisant la position de l'Inde. Alors que ce pays maintes fois victime du terrorisme au Cachemire, comme dans l'ensemble de son territoire, par exemple à Bombay en 2008, n'a jamais bénéficié du moindre soutien dans les moments où il a dû faire face au péril islamiste.

Comme l'a rappelé notre collègue Thierry Mariani, à la commission AFET, le Cachemire est indien. La question du Cachemire est par conséquent une question interne à l'Union indienne et rien de plus. On n'ose croire entre ces murs que Bruxelles puisse, à ce sujet, adopter la dialectique du Pakistan.

Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Przypomnijmy ważny fakt – Indie to największa demokracja świata. A także – w kontekście naszej demokracji – powiem, że to chyba nasz jedyny demokratyczny sojusznik w tej części Azji. Myślę, że trzeba spojrzeć szerzej, trzeba spojrzeć na szereg aktów terrorystycznych, które miały miejsce w Indiach, także w Dżammu i Kaszmirze. I ci terroryści, oni nie spadli z księżycy, oni niestety przychodzili od sąsiada. Należy widzieć to także w tym kontekście.

W moim przekonaniu my, jako demokracja europejska, powinniśmy wspierać demokratyczne Indie. Ten sąd, który odbywa się tutaj nad Indiami, mnie osobiście się nie podoba. A pan Corbett, który właśnie przed chwilą wyszedł, powiedział to, co powiedział, tak jakby nie pamiętał, że siedemdziesiąt parę lat temu jego kraj, Wielka Brytania, przestała już mieć hinduską kolonię. Indie nie są kolonią Wielkiej Brytanii.

Giuliano Pisapia (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la situazione in Kashmir, come tante altre nel mondo, necessita di un intenso lavoro diplomatico, fondato sul diritto internazionale e sul rispetto dei diritti umani.

Da un lato vi è una modifica costituzionale, approvata a larga maggioranza dalla Camera alta e dalla Camera bassa. Dall'altro, è del tutto mancata la consultazione dei cittadini del Kashmir. Ricordo le parole di Jawaharlal Nehru: «abbiamo dato la nostra parola d'onore per una soluzione pacifica, va rispettata».

Il primo rapporto ONU sui diritti umani in Kashmir prevedeva una commissione d'inchiesta per le violazioni commesse da ambo le parti. I diritti umani sono la stella polare che guida tutte le iniziative dell'Unione.

Come Unione europea e come Parlamento europeo, abbiamo il dovere morale e politico di mettere a disposizione la nostra esperienza per trovare una soluzione pacifica che promuova la democrazia e la pace. Auspico e confido che questa sarà la strada che percorreremo insieme.

Julie Lechanteux (ID). – Monsieur le Président, les critiques à l'égard de l'Inde, la plus grande démocratie au monde, entendues dans cet hémicycle se fondent sur une représentation des faits qui est mystificatrice.

On se focalise sur la réforme constitutionnelle, mais on oublie la poussée séparatiste et la question de sécurité. La situation au Jammu-et-Cachemire s'est aggravée. Une série d'attaques islamistes a eu lieu contre les forces de l'ordre, comme le 14 février, quand une voiture piégée a tué 40 policiers, ou le 2 août dernier, avec la découverte d'un arsenal qui aurait dû servir pour commettre un attentat contre les milliers de pèlerins hindous qui se rendent chaque année dans la grotte sacrée d'Amarnath.

Dans ce cadre, les mesures de sécurité prises par Narendra Modi, le premier ministre indien, visent à garantir la sécurité du pays, la protection de ses concitoyens et l'étanchéité de la frontière avec la République islamique du Pakistan qui, depuis 2018, se retrouve à nouveau sur la liste américaine des États à l'attitude ambiguë à l'égard du péril terroriste. Voilà les faits.

Anthea McIntyre (ECR). – Mr President, 43 days ago the Indian Government revoked Articles 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution, removing at a stroke the guarantee of Jammu and Kashmir's autonomy. We've seen a huge surge in the number of troops deployed there, a total communications blackout, curfews and house arrests. We hear continually of violations of human rights, including the use of shotguns against civilians.

Take the case of Asrar Ahmed Khan. Despite denials by the Indian Government, medical records released by the hospital present clear evidence that he died as a result of a shotgun pellet to the head. I visited Azad Kashmir last year and heard accounts of even infants being fired at with shotguns. There can never ever be any excuse for killing, maiming and blinding small children.

I really cannot understand why a great nation like India, which prides itself on the strength of its democracy, behaves in this way. India aspires to be a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Events of the past month are not the actions of a credible candidate.

Dinesh Dhamija (Renew). – Mr President, India is the largest functioning democracy in the world. There are 200 million Muslims who live peacefully with others in India, and it's also a member of the G20. There are two Supreme Court actions going on: the continued stopping of mobile and internet services in 7% of Jammu and Kashmir, and the setting aside of Article 370 and Article 35A. The EU does not want to appear neo-colonial on matters that are sub judice. The Indian Supreme Court is independent and does a really good job.

According to Indians, there are 40 new laws that will now apply to Kashmiris: a ban on the triple talaq divorce that is terrible for women, prohibition of child marriage, protection of women from domestic violence, etc. – are these not human rights? There are 40 of them. So, please, look at the other side. There was a mention of the UN plebiscite that they asked for in 1947: I have a video to show the US State Department why this plebiscite didn't happen – because the Pakistani troops wouldn't move back from the Line of Control.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Søren Gade (Renew). – Hr. formand! (*mikrofon slukket*) I de sidste 70 år har Kashmirområdet været plaget af vold og ustabilitet. Mange af de fremskridt, Indien i mellemtiden har gjort hen imod det moderne demokrati, er ikke fulgt med under Kashmirs særstatus. Det gælder blandt andet en uafhængig retsstat, beskyttelse af mindretal, herunder seksuelle minoriteter, sikring af uddannelse af børn og sikring af kvinders grundlæggende rettigheder. De betydelige midler, som Indien i årevis har postet ind i Kashmir, er stort set blevet stjålet af en korrupt elite, og dette er sket for næsen af en fattig lokalbefolkning.

Det jerngreb, som artikel 370 i årevis har holdt Kashmirs befolkning i, har aldrig været dem til gavn. Jeg opfordrer til, at vi fra Parlamentets side og som fortalere for grundlæggende demokratiske værdier og menneskerettigheder fokuserer på de positive sider for Kashmirs befolkning, for deres kvinder og for deres mindretal, som denne nye situation også kan give anledning til.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señor presidente, el Parlamento Europeo tiene una reputación por debatir problemas de violaciones flagrantes de los derechos humanos en latitudes que no han conocido jamás la democracia, ni rastro de ella.

No es el caso de la India. Es —como se ha dicho— una democracia constitucional, con su Constitución de 1950, y sucede que es la democracia más extensa en población del mundo. Integra la diversidad de un orden federal de gran complejidad y ha garantizado esa convivencia de distintas minorías, incluida la minoría musulmana, en un país con mayoría de otras religiones.

En el caso de Jammu y Cachemira, por tanto, creo que el Parlamento Europeo hace bien en manifestar una autocontención prudente a la hora de valorar una suspensión de la autonomía, garantizada por el propio orden constitucional, de acuerdo con la propia Constitución —en su artículo 370—, y en la medida en que además está desplegando un esfuerzo importante por prevenir la radicalización del islamismo que vive y late dentro de la enorme complejidad del rompecabezas indio.

Chris Davies (Renew). – Mr President, I really welcome the words of the Minister in her introductory remarks. We know we have a divided house but I think the position taken by the High Representative in expressing concern for human rights is the right balance.

India is a great country, a great democracy, but you can't ignore the fact that Kashmir is a disputed territory, recognised as such by the United Nations. It's effectively been under military occupation with an army that's been allowed to maim and murder without any proper supervision or jurisdiction. And communication bans, loss of any sort of sense of self-determination must feed a sense of injustice in Kashmir.

It is because we are friends of India that we have to ask this great democracy – which we know, where Prime Minister Modi has the support of his country; he knows there is majority support for the actions he's taken – but we have to question whether this is the right course of action and whether it will result in positive benefits.

So I have to ask the Minister: words have been very good, will there be any actions to follow them up?

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Tytti Tuppurainen, *President-in-Office of the Council, on behalf of the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy*. – Mr President, this exchange of views was very useful and timely. I would like to thank the honourable Members for their contributions, comments and suggestions. I can only conclude that the EU will continue to monitor the situation closely, with our key focus on de-escalating a situation involving two nuclear powers. We must make every effort needed to avoid an escalation of the conflict.

President. – Thank you very much, Minister Tuppurainen, and thank you for coming to Parliament especially at this late time in the day.

The debate is closed.

19. Orden del día de la próxima sesión : véase el Acta

20. Cierre de la sesión

(The sitting closed at 20.57)

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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

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
GUE/NGL	Grupo de la Izquierda Unitaria Europea/Izquierda Verde Nórdica
NI	No inscritos