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VOLLEDIG VERSLAG VAN DE VERGADERINGEN VAN 2 OKTOBER 2018

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VOLLEDIG VERSLAG VAN DE VERGADERINGEN VAN 2 OKTOBER 2018

PRESIDENZA DELL'ON. ANTONIO TAJANI

Presidente

1. Opening van de vergadering

(La seduta è aperta alle 9.02)

2. Rectificatie (artikel 231 van het Reglement): zie notulen

3. Voorbereiding van de bijeenkomst van de Europese Raad van 18-19 oktober 2018 (debat)

Presidente. – L'ordine del giorno reca la discussione sulle dichiarazioni del Consiglio e della Commissione sulla preparazione della riunione del Consiglio europeo del 18 e 19 ottobre 2018 (2018/2771(RSP)).

Juliane Bogner-Strauss, President-in-Office of the Council. – Mr President, when we meet in October, leaders will return to the key themes recently discussed at the informal summit in Salzburg: migration, security and Brexit.

First, the European Council will discuss migration. We should continue working on all aspects of our comprehensive approach. To start with, we must do better in taking the fight to people-smuggling networks, from monitoring and disrupting their communications online to supporting cooperation between our police forces. Protecting our external borders and facilitating returns are of course key. In addition to everything that has already been done in this respect, the discussions in Salzburg showed the sheer determination that the recent Commission proposals should be examined as a matter of priority.

Finally, we need to work more closely with countries of origin and transit by building new partnerships. This means, in particular, reaching out to African countries to expand and deepen our cooperation. In this context, Chancellor Kurz and the President of the European Council, President Tusk, recently met President Al-Sisi in Cairo and in New York to intensify cooperation. During the informal discussions in Salzburg, backing from the European Council was found for this and similar dialogues.

In the coming weeks, Chancellor Kurz, President Tusk, the Commission and a group of Member States will continue reaching out to other African partners. As agreed in Salzburg, there will be an EU-Arab League summit in February 2019 in this respect. The European Council in October will look into all these issues, and the Chancellor will report on the reform of the Common European Asylum System and on the prospect of progress on its various elements.

Second, the European Council will agree on immediate priorities to strengthen our internal security. In the past few years, we have achieved much collectively, including through important legislation agreed with this Parliament, from the passenger name record to the fight against terrorism financing, as well as better police, judicial and intelligence cooperation. We have certainly made headway.

We need to continue this work, while focusing on effective implementation. Fostering a strong sense of security in Europe is our collective responsibility and, indeed, a priority of the Presidency. Safeguarding our security also means being prepared for new types of threats, whether they take the form of cybercrime, disinformation or any type of manipulation. How we should adapt to this evolving environment was a central issue for the leaders in Salzburg.

One thing is clear: ahead of the next European elections, we need to protect our democratic processes. In the light of events, the European Council may also discuss international developments, but strengthening security is also about building up resilience to any kind of risks and being prepared when crises strike, be it as a result of hybrid attacks or natural disasters. Forest fires this summer demonstrated the importance of European cooperation in that field. The European Council will address these issues in October, but the leaders' reflections on the longer-term aspects will also feed into the preparation of the next strategic agenda.

Finally, on Brexit, the European Council will need an Article 50 format to review the state of negotiations with the United Kingdom. As President Tusk said in Salzburg, this European Council will be the moment of truth for the Brexit negotiations, where we expect maximum progress and results in the Brexit talks.

Jean-Claude Juncker, *Président de la Commission*. – Buongiorno Monsieur le Président, Madame la Présidente du Conseil, Mesdames et Messieurs les députés, je serai très bref ce matin puisque la Présidente du Conseil a résumé à la perfection les résultats ou quasi-résultats du sommet informel de Salzbourg. C'était une réunion informelle, par conséquent, aucune conclusion n'a été tirée. Néanmoins, je dois me féliciter du fait que d'une façon générale – pas en détail, mais sur les grands principes –, les propositions récemment et antérieurement soumises à l'attention et à la méditation du colégislateur ont reçu un appui assez large.

Il n'y a aucun accord, sur rien, sauf sur quelques points, notamment sur les propositions de la Commission visant à retirer de l'internet les messages à caractère terroriste dans un délai d'une heure, ou pour ce qui est de la protection des résultats des élections européennes et de la protection de la campagne électorale nous menant à cette date importante.

Sur les autres points, le Conseil européen a exprimé le point de vue selon lequel toutes les propositions soumises par la Commission méritent d'être traitées comme des priorités absolues lors du Conseil à venir et lors du Conseil du mois de décembre. Cela concerne à la fois la réforme du système de Dublin et la protection des frontières extérieures. À ce propos, j'ai tout de même été surpris que ceux qui n'ont cessé de réclamer une meilleure protection des frontières extérieures avancent aujourd'hui à pas hésitants vers la solution intégrale que la Commission a soumise.

Pour ce qui est de l'union de la sécurité, les propositions de la Commission ont fait l'objet d'un large accord entre les États membres.

Je voudrais que d'ici la fin de l'année, nous nous mettions d'accord sur la réforme du système de Dublin, qui ne peut plus attendre, et que nous nous accordions sur les contours exacts de la protection des frontières extérieures.

As far as Brexit is concerned, I don't want to add remarks to the remarks already made by the President of the Council. We will have an interesting meeting as far as Brexit is concerned.

Just two points: we want a deal. Those who think that a no deal would be the better solution are not aware of the difficulties such a scenario would imply. When it comes to the border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, we are sticking to the point of view we have expressed so many times. Ireland first.

Manfred Weber, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Mr President, before we talk about the next European Council, it is really worth looking back to Salzburg, because there was something unique, namely unity on Brexit, and that was good to see. 27 Member States united in one main message, and this message was that when we talk about Brexit, we are not only always focusing about what is going on in Great Britain. We talk a lot about the Tory convention, we talk about how a majority in the House of Commons is possible. We first of all underline – when we talk about Brexit – what we believe in.

I want to mention one concrete example about the freedom of movement, which was so heavily discussed in the Brexit referendum campaign. The idea that millions of Europeans can freely decide where they want to earn their money and where they want to live with their families is a huge achievement in view of the history of Europe. I hope that the Brits can simply understand that we still believe in this idea and that we still want to defend it. That was a big achievement of Salzburg, that we clarified our position in this regard. This is not about punishment, it's simply about the question that we stick to the four principles of the single market, the four freedoms which we worked on during the last decades.

Brexit is a tragedy, that's clear, but it shows all those people what populism means, what populism brings – less growth, less certainty and less future. Now we experience a new level of populism when the Foreign Minister of Great Britain, Jeremy Hunt, is again comparing the European Union with the Soviet Union. I don't want to answer, I only want to quote the former Foreign Minister of Poland, Radosław Sikorski, he said 'Please, Mr Hunt, show us the Gulag. Please, Mr Hunt, show us the Soviet Union army troops in your country. Please show us the Stasi system in your country.' Sikorski is right; Mr Hunt, you should apologise for what you said.

(Loud applause)

Brexit means leaving the European Union and this means losing the advantages of this Union. That is the simple principle behind this. The biggest challenge for the politicians in Great Britain, like Hunt and Johnson, is probably that after March next year they have to take over responsibility. For the first time, they will have to explain to people what they did, what are the mistakes of their political engagement, and they cannot blame Brussels anymore for what is happening in Great Britain. That will be a big change for them.

For us, we will not answer to these provocations in the same way. We will simply define what is important for us and for the European People's Party (EPP) family. I want to clarify that the citizens are at the centre of the whole debate in two main questions. Firstly, about the Northern Ireland border: I fully support Jean Claude Juncker's 'Ireland first', since we don't accept a treaty that would lead to a hard border, put at risk the Good Friday Agreement, or put at risk the Peace Process. Secondly, on the millions of EU citizens in Great Britain and millions of British citizens in the European Union: we must find a way to guarantee the legal status of these citizens, even in the case of a hard Brexit. Even in the case of a hard Brexit, we need an idea for a ring-fencing agreement to guarantee the legal status of these citizens. Not money, markets or products are important; for us, citizens are important.

On Brexit, a never-ending story is going on. Our principles are clear: border protection, border control, ten thousand Frontex officers. I and my Group have no understanding why there is opposition to the idea that we share the burden of border protection between the European level and the national level, to do it together. Why is there is opposition to this? We cannot understand this.

A second point is that Europe must be still a continent that is ready to help people in need. We need a strong and an ambitious resettlement programme, and we should not reopen the dossiers which we have already agreed in this migration dossier. The third point: today we look to Syria, but tomorrow we will look more and more to Africa. That is why Europe cannot have a good future if our neighbour continent, Africa, is in a chaotic situation. That is why we have to care. We have to do our best to help.

Finally, one short remark on the EurAsia Summit, which is also taking place in two weeks' time. We are partners. The European People's Party is a party of free and fair trade. The US stopped the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement. The US wants to build up walls and, having this in mind, Europe must be the continent that wants to build bridges.

We want to work together with our Asian friends, but with the idea of a common level playing field. For example, on investment security we need a common understanding of what this means and we have to defend our critical infrastructure and our critical industry, so not all investments in the European Union are free-market based investments, and that's why we have to do more on this to guarantee really free and fair trade. We shouldn't be naive, we should defend our interests and we should be united on this.

Finally, because trade is also an issue, let me underline that the Americans have concluded with our Canadian friends a trade agreement. That shows us that Washington is still ready for a compromise, probably that is a good moment after the successful trip of Jean Claude Juncker to Washington. This is the moment to give a new mandate to the Commission to start real negotiations with our American friends. We would support a free trade area between Europe and the US without tariffs.

Udo Bullmann, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, colleagues, let me share in the criticism of the irresponsible leadership in the United Kingdom. But even more, Mr President of the Council, we have to make a difference, and here the questions are going to start. One month after Salzburg – and my Group was looking forward to Salzburg and to making progress in solidarity – there is no solidarity. It is stuck, and the Council is not delivering solutions; the Council is collecting failures. MEPs represent hard-working people, hard-working people who are looking for solutions to our major problems, but there is no delivery.

Look at the reform of the asylum system. We had an awkward summer where people started dying at sea again. Even the EU missions were in danger, because harbours were closed. What do you say to this? Where is the reaction? Where is the policy for better solidarity and new solutions? And let me ask you this: what gives you the right to push for the unpacking of the asylum package, which was voted in this House by an overwhelming majority?

Warum haben Sie das Recht, diese Form der Solidarität zu zerstören, die es hier gegeben hat? Und was versprechen Sie sich davon, wenn Sie weiter blockieren, dass es eine Asylreform gibt?

This is what I cannot understand, and this is what we are critical of. We have a common responsibility as Europeans to overcome the major challenges of our time. Migration is a global phenomenon, and we need to shoulder it if Europe is to be a credible project for our citizens. If Europe is humanity and dignity, as our Treaties say we are, Europe has to stand as the global player for the good. But we also have to tackle those domestic issues that are worries for our people. Let me ask...

Lassen Sie mich fragen, Frau Präsidentin: Wann ist sozialer Schutz, sind die Rechte der Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmer, der Kampf gegen die Kinderarmut zuletzt das Hauptthema eines Gipfels gewesen? Warum setzen Sie das nicht auf die Tagesordnung? Warum widmen wir uns nicht diesen Problemen, die die Menschen umtreiben und die dringend einer Antwort bedürfen? Wir müssen das zusammen angehen, aber ich sehe Blockaden. Bisher sind Sie nicht der ehrliche Broker, bisher ist diese Präsidentschaft nicht der Brückenbauer, bisher haben Sie keinen Durchbruch erzielt. Meine Botschaft an Sie ist heute: Sagen Sie doch bitte Herrn Strache und Herrn Kurz, dass sie auf dem falschen Weg sind, wenn sie versuchen, Europa weiter zu spalten. Wir haben das Recht, von dieser Präsidentschaft etwas Anderes zu erwarten.

Wir unterstützen Michel Barnier in seiner großartigen Arbeit, weil er deutlich macht, dass Europa zusammensteht, und weil er deutlich macht, dass Europa ein Konzept hat, gemeinsame Rechte, aber auch gemeinsame Pflichten. Ich glaube, dass die Mehrheit der Menschen im Vereinigten Königreich mittlerweile weiß, dass sie auf einen falschen Pfad geführt wurden und dass es ein großer Fehler war, diese Entscheidung zu treffen, die Gemeinschaft zu verlassen. Es ist ein großer Fehler, den die nächste Generation im Vereinigten Königreich am härtesten zu bezahlen hat, wenn es keine Korrekturen gibt. Und wenn diese Regierung scheitert – und danach sieht es aus – finde ich, dass die Briten ein Recht darauf haben, ihre Meinung direkt dazu zu äußern. Das ist die Botschaft, die wir in diese Verhandlungen zu geben haben.

Lassen Sie uns einen neuen Versuch wagen, europäische Solidarität zu leben. Aber dazu müssen Sie auch bereit sein, einen radikalen Wandel einzuleiten, einen radikalen Wandel in Ihrer Arbeitsmethode. Gehen Sie auf die Menschen in Europa zu, widmen Sie sich wirklich den Sorgen, die die Menschen haben. Unsere Unterstützung hätten Sie dann. Aber, *it needs change*. Der Status Quo kann so nicht weiter verwaltet werden.

Hans-Olaf Henkel, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – Mr President, leaving the people to my left and some of the people in my own political group aside, I have not yet met one person in this Parliament who doesn't regret Brexit, and I haven't met one person in this Parliament, except me, who is trying to avoid it.

As Mr Bullmann said, Mr Barnier is indeed very active, but he seems to be very eloquent in describing the economic impact on Britain. He never says anything about the economic impact on Europe. Britain leaving the common market is equivalent to 19 small and medium-sized countries leaving the common market at the same time. To come up with a new trade deal with one country is one thing, but to disentangle the relationships of thousands of companies, which have grown over 40 years, is quite another.

Mr Juncker, had you at the time offered Britain a special deal on freedom of movement, Brexit would not have happened.

(Murmurs of disapproval)

Yes, it is absolutely true and, by the way, for those who moan here, I would like to remind you that Mr Schröder got a special deal in 2004 when Poland joined – against my opposition at that time – with a restriction on freedom of movement of Poles coming into Germany for seven years which was, by the way, a restriction the British Prime Minister did not want.

In order to end the confusion in London, we must end the ignorance here in Brussels. Mr Juncker, as a German I always felt that it was right that Britain won the Battle of Britain. Make sure you are not going to lose the battle for Britain.

(Applause)

Guy Verhofstadt, *on behalf of the ALDE Group*. – Mr President, my proposal is that Mr Henkel repeat that speech at the Conservative Party Congress, not here in the European Parliament. He may deplore the situation, but it's there that they have made the wrong decision and not here.

Minister, I think that you have three priorities at the next European Council, after Salisbury. The first is to unblock the migration file and especially the migration file on Dublin because, let's be honest, the Commission has a proposal and Parliament has an opinion, but when will the Council have an opinion?

It's fantastic to find always ways and new proposals on migration, but you have to have a position. Take a position and we can start negotiations, because it is this broken Dublin system that really is the source of the rise of racism, problems with migrants, and also of nationalism and populism.

My second point to you is to put on the agenda in October the question of our values. We see it everywhere in Europe – and certainly in a number of countries: illiberalism is on the rise, and it will not be by being silent that it will go away. On the contrary, it will continue. I think that the time is here to put it on the agenda, because the Kaczyński government is continuing, they are now already abusing the SES system, the Schengen Information System, to stop democracy advocates and activists. Mr Orbán is even financing, I think with European money, a campaign against the European Parliament, Mr President. You spoke about that yesterday. My question to you, to the Presidency of the Council, is are you going to put Article 7 concerning Poland and Hungary on the agenda of the next European Council?

(Applause)

I want a clear answer from you. You are obliged to do so based on the Treaties and based on the fact that the Parliament has activated Article 7.

My third priority, colleagues, is naturally to keep and to reiterate unity on Brexit – unity between the Member States, unity between the institutions. This unity is absolutely needed when you see these insane notions of some Tory politicians the last days, like Boris Johnson whose latest invention, you've seen, is to build a bridge. He will solve the problem by building a bridge between the UK mainland and Ireland, when Mr Boris Johnson is more known for burning bridges than for building bridges!

Then there is Mr Rees Mogg who is saying, yeah I have the proposal for the future of Brexit and ordinary citizens can be secure that their savings will be secure after Brexit, and in the meanwhile he's opening himself an investment fund in Ireland to transfer his money to Ireland!

Manfred Weber has already talked about Jeremy Hunt comparing the European Union with the Soviet Union, but in his case I have to tell you that is not so abnormal for him, Manfred, as he once even confused Japan with China. So that is not the first time that this is happening. But that said, the previous time he was insulting his wife, but here he does something far more different. He is insulting not us, but millions of ordinary citizens who lived under Soviet rule for such a long time.

(Applause)

That is in fact a point on which he has to apologise, I think, because we cannot accept such a thing he said.

My proposal, Minister, is that you have three clear messages at this Council meeting. First, on the migration system, we will never accept discrimination based on skills and on nationality, as Javid this morning proposed. Secondly, that we will never accept – and I say it also very clearly to the British colleagues here – an extension of this whole procedure. Mr Boris Johnson this morning has said 'we want an extension of Article 50'. I think it's a very bad idea. Enough mess has been created by Brexit; enough uncertainty has been created by Brexit. Let's stop it. The third is that we will never give in and undermine the principles of our Union. We will never undermine the principles of the Union European project to rescue a political party in Britain which is not even capable to find a common line on the exit from the mess of Brexit.

(Applause)

Philippe Lamberts, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, a fortnight ago, the Heads of State and Government of the European Union met informally in Salzburg. First, they carefully ignored this Parliament's call to open an Article 7 procedure on Hungary, and then they focused on what they believe is their main topic, migration, as if this were the existential topic that our union is facing. Once again, they failed to reach any substantial agreement. I have only one thing to say about this: a year ago, the vast majority of this Parliament had the strength and the audacity to go beyond Dublin and to agree on how our union, by acting together, can fulfil its humanitarian duty in a responsible and effective way. The European Council would be well advised to follow in our footsteps.

However, one thing on which the EU 27 did agree, was their stance on the Brexit negotiation. I shall readily agree that some statements made after Salzburg were unnecessarily blunt, but they came nowhere close to what we heard from the British Foreign Secretary, who took over the now commonplace rhetoric of the far right, comparing the European Union with the Soviet Union. Let him be reminded that the United Kingdom decided freely to join the European Union. It also decided freely to hold a referendum on its membership in which the citizens voted freely. A majority chose to leave, and we respect that decision.

However, to those – especially in the United Kingdom – who blame the EU27 for lack of flexibility, I will say this: we cannot be held responsible for resolving intractable contradictions in the British position. Indeed, it is this Government's choice to interpret the referendum as a decision to leave both the single market and the customs union. It is also its choice to refuse any form of special status for Northern Ireland, and it was its free choice to be party to the Good Friday Agreement that brought peace to Ireland. These three constraints are incompatible with one another, and resolving this British contradiction can in no way justify the dilution of the single market, one of the Union's key pillars.

To both leavers and remainers, I will say that it is in no-one's best interest to have the United Kingdom crash out of the European Union. This would imperil peace in Ireland, it would jeopardise the prosperity of too many of our fellow citizens, and it would poison the relationship between the two sides for the foreseeable future. We should now focus on the only thing that matters, namely finding, in the next few weeks, an agreement on the terms of the withdrawal. This will then provide both sides with the time needed to build our future relationship and, in our view, no relationship between the UK and the EU surpasses EU membership. Who knows, there may come a day in the near, or distant, future when the majority of British citizens will assert that the only way for Britain to be global is to be part of the European Union. Our door will remain open to you. You will always be welcome where the United Kingdom really belongs.

(Applause)

Gabriele Zimmer, im Namen der GUE/NGL-Fraktion. – Herr Präsident, meine Damen und Herren! Ich glaube, wir sind jetzt in einer Phase der Brexit-Verhandlungen, wo es immer enger wird und wo ich den Eindruck habe, dass versucht wird, die Schuld für ein mögliches Scheitern immer möglichst weit von sich zu schieben. Ich rede hier insbesondere von der britischen Regierung. Ich gehöre bestimmt nicht zu denjenigen, die mit dem Ansatz in die Brexit-Gestaltung hineingegangen sind, die Briten für ihre demokratische Entscheidung bestrafen zu wollen oder eine Symbolentscheidung treffen zu wollen. Aber was wir erleben, ist doch, dass vor dem Hintergrund auch von Machtkämpfen, von unklaren Verhältnissen insbesondere in der Regierungspartei diese Regierung in Großbritannien nicht in der Lage ist, auch nur eine einzige klare Formulierung für die hauptsächlichen Probleme, die vor uns liegen, vorzulegen. Was wir bekommen, ist hü und hott und nein und ja und geht nicht, und es ist der Versuch, sich vor dem Scheitern der Verhandlungen – vor dem möglichen Scheitern und immer wahrscheinlicher werdenden Scheitern – zu profilieren und sich selbst eine neue Ausgangsbasis zu schaffen. Das führt bis hin zu äußerst peinlichen Erklärungen von britischen Ministern, die absolut nicht akzeptabel sind.

Worauf ich – auch mit Blick auf die Irlandfrage – aufmerksam machen möchte, ist, dass man der britischen Regierung gegenüber noch einmal ganz konkret Folgendes deutlich machen muss: Wenn sie keine Lösung will, wenn sie keine Akzeptanz des Karfreitagsabkommens will, wenn sie die Passage, die in der Erklärung vom Dezember vergangenen Jahres enthalten ist, ihr Zugeständnis, das sie dort gemacht hat, ihre Verpflichtung, die sie dort übernommen hat, wenn sie die nicht umsetzen will, soll sie es doch klar sagen. Dann erspart sie uns Zeit, Geld, Manpower, dann erspart sie uns, dass wir uns über Dinge zerrupfen, die überhaupt nicht gelöst werden sollen. Dann haben wir wenigstens eine klare Ansage.

Mein zweiter Punkt: Wir sind zwar noch lange nicht so weit, dass wir auch über das reden, was danach kommen sollte, zum Beispiel über Freihandelsabkommen. Da gilt aber auch meine Ansage an uns, an den Rat, an das Parlament, an die Kommission: Wir sollten nichts tun, was künftige Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten, auch demokratische Entscheidungsmöglichkeiten anderer Regierungen in Großbritannien, aber auch innerhalb der Europäischen Union von vornherein einschränkt, beispielsweise sich zu entscheiden, stärkere soziale Verpflichtungen zu übernehmen, mehr Demokratie zu entwickeln im jeweiligen Land. Das sollten wir auch nicht durch Verhandlungen zu einem *free trade* später irgendwo einschränken. Das möchte ich hier nochmal ganz klar sagen. Denn dann würden Sie beispielsweise auch die Unterstützung von meiner Fraktion verlieren für eine faire Lösung, die wir für die Gestaltung der gemeinsamen Zukunft brauchen.

Zum Rat. Also, ich muss noch mal ganz klar sagen: Der Rat hat unter der österreichischen Präsidentschaft bisher nichts eingelöst – nichts eingelöst! Ich denke da insbesondere auch an die Absage des Treffens der Sozialminister mit der Begründung, dass man noch nicht so weit wäre. Ich glaube, das hat es in den letzten Wochen und Monaten überhaupt nicht gegeben, dass man sich vor dem Hintergrund, dass vor einem Jahr in Göteborg ein Sozialgipfel stattfand, nicht mal in der Lage sieht, hier zu fordern, zu stärken und die sozialen Signale wirklich auch auszusenden.

Zur Migration haben meine Kollegen schon vieles gesagt. Das unterstütze ich voll und ganz. Die Frage der Dublin-Reform. Wer will denn aber von der österreichischen Präsidentschaft auch erwarten, dass da etwas kommt, wenn sich die entsprechenden Minister mit den italienischen Ministern, mit Salvini, mit anderen treffen und dort schon Lösungen diskutieren, dass man die Kontrolle beziehungsweise Asylentscheidung schon auf dem Meer treffen will. Haben Sie mal darüber nachgedacht, was das bedeutet, dass allein im Monat September jeder fünfte der aus Libyen Geflüchteten entweder tot oder verschwunden ist? Können Sie sich überhaupt ein Bild von dem machen, was da passiert? Haben Sie da nicht eine eigene Verantwortung, das endlich mal voranzutreiben, zu Lösungen zu kommen, die menschlich sind und die uns als Union weiterbringen und unsere gemeinsame Verantwortung stärken? Also ich kann nur sagen: Leider erfüllen Sie alle Vorbehalte, die wir mit Beginn der österreichischen Präsidentschaft gesehen haben. Ich verlange von Ihnen ein aktiveres Handeln, ein menschliches Handeln, ein demokratisches Handeln und nicht einfach,

dass Sie Leute, die letztendlich etwas ganz anderes im Blick haben, auch noch stützen.

Und ich bitte Sie da auch um Folgendes: Wenn wir über Ungarn und Polen reden, bitte schauen Sie auch auf Italien. Das Gesetz, das Dekret, das vorige Woche durchgewunken worden oder vorgelegt worden ist, einen Migrationsstopp zu machen – es sollte genau geprüft werden, inwieweit hier Werte der EU verletzt werden. Ich denke insbesondere an die Umkehrung der Unschuldsumutung für Migranten und Asylsuchende.

Nigel Farage, *on behalf of the EFDD Group*. – Mr President, as the moment of truth approaches for the Brexit negotiations in a couple of weeks' time, I have to say that Brexiteers are dismayed at the way that our Prime Minister has acted. I've got to hand it to you, Mr Juncker: your negotiators are very much better than ours. The previously undiscussed issue of the Irish border, never a problem at any point during the referendum, has very effectively been weaponised by Barnier. But of course, this has got nothing to do with the Good Friday Agreement. Nothing to do with the peace process whatsoever. No, Barnier is much cleverer than that. This is all to do with making sure that the United Kingdom stays with the European regulatory framework. The one thing Barnier has been scared of from the start is us leaving and us becoming competitive. Sadly, the British Prime Minister has fallen hook, line and sinker for this, and we find ourselves now going into this next summit in a very weak position.

There is of course a better approach to all of this that would satisfy democratically both the Brexit vote and, I think, the demands of German industry and exporters. Don't forget what an important marketplace we are. Your exporters call us 'Treasure Island', so many motor cars and so much wine and Belgian chocolate do you sell us. We should go for a simple free-trade deal. For 20 years here, everybody from Commissioner Kinnock to Valéry Giscard d'Estaing has said to me: if you want to leave political union and have a free-trade deal, that's fine by us, we just need a prime minister who actually understands it.

I know the European Commission would not necessarily want this, because they're trying to use the Brexit vote as a means of saying that leaving this club comes at a price, but I do believe it would be possible. But we get to the heart of what this European Union is when we see the behaviour of the unelected bureaucrats, people like Mr Tusk, whose behaviour at Salzburg was arrogant, low-grade and pretty vulgar in every respect. But that is what you get when you design a form of government that gives power without accountability. Nobody voted for these guys, and nobody can get rid of these guys, they can do what the hell they like, and increasingly the nature of this club is authoritarian, taking away voting rights from Hungary, Poland and who knows next.

There is one little victory though that I'm pleased with. For a decade here I have noticed that that centralising authoritarian tone began to sound very like the old Soviet Union, with the concept of limited sovereignty of individual nation states. I have even talked in the past about the 'Volkerkerker', the old Austro-Hungarian prison of nations, and to see the British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt now using that language means that we have shifted the centre of gravity, we have shifted this debate. I know many of you here still think that we're a hostage and that you're going to demand some extraordinary ransom from us. We are not. We are a free people. Under the right leadership we'd say to you: let's have a free-trade deal, or we would simply walk away.

(Applause)

Presidente. – Qualche differenza con l'Unione Sovietica c'è, visto che l'Unione Sovietica ha provocato anche milioni di morti. Non credo che l'Unione europea abbia provocato milioni di morti.

Gilles Lebreton, *au nom du groupe ENF*. – Monsieur le Président, le Conseil européen d'octobre portera principalement sur les migrations. C'est une bonne chose, car rien n'est plus grave que la submersion migratoire dont l'Europe est victime depuis 2015. Et le plus dur est devant nous car l'Afrique va doubler sa population d'ici 2050, ce qui risque d'amener un afflux supplémentaire de migrants économiques, sans même parler du dérèglement climatique qui risque d'amplifier le phénomène.

Face à ce défi, l'Union européenne adopte, hélas, une position contradictoire, car elle fait preuve de fermeté dans les intentions, mais de faiblesse dans les actes. Dans ses discours, l'Union annonce sa volonté d'enrayer la submersion migratoire grâce, notamment, aux accords de coopération conclus avec la Turquie et d'autres pays. On aimerait la croire, mais le contenu catastrophique de l'accord conclu en 2015 avec la Turquie montre qu'elle est incapable de défendre les intérêts européens. Par comparaison, l'Italie a beaucoup mieux défendu ses intérêts et, par conséquent, nos intérêts en négociant directement avec les autorités libyennes.

Il y a pire: l'Union ruine de toute façon les efforts qu'elle prétend déployer en essayant d'imposer aux États européens sa folle politique de relocalisation des migrants. C'est un formidable appel d'air pour les millions d'étrangers qui rêvent de venir en Europe et pour les ONG irresponsables qui veulent les amener. Heureusement, des États courageux résistent, comme la Hongrie et la Pologne. Par leur fermeté, ces deux États nous montrent la seule voie à suivre si l'on veut sauver l'identité des peuples européens.

Pour arrêter l'immigration de masse, aider l'Afrique est nécessaire. Conclure des accords de réadmission est nécessaire aussi, mais l'essentiel est de donner un signe fort en refusant les relocalisations.

Diane Dodds (NI). – Mr President, as we approach the October Council, let me once again make some things clear to both Mr Barnier and the Member States who continue to use Northern Ireland and the impossible demands of the backstop as a sword hanging over the outcome of the negotiations. The idea, as proposed in the backstop, that we would allow Northern Ireland to become some sort of semi-detached part of the United Kingdom is both offensive and outrageous. Protecting the constitutional and economic integrity of the United Kingdom is a red line that cannot be broken or bent.

I say to the EU as well as my own government, that when it comes to the stability of the United Kingdom and the security of northern Ireland's place in it, mark my words, we are not bluffing. The Irish Sea checks proposed by Mr Barnier, would put in place customs and regulatory differences within the United Kingdom, cutting our province adrift and creating a border within the United Kingdom from day one. Mr Juncker, you may only be concerned about the Irish Republic and the Dublin government, with your 'Ireland first' comment, but I am concerned about the jobs and prosperity of families in Northern Ireland, whose economy is structurally linked to the rest of the United Kingdom. The sooner Brussels realises this, the sooner we can get to a place where a sensible trade negotiation as possible.

IN THE CHAIR: MAIREAD McGUINNESS

Vice-President

Angelika Niebler (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin! Herr Kommissionspräsident, Vertreterin des Rates, liebe Kolleginnen, liebe Kollegen! Beim nächsten Ratgipfel muss neben dem Brexit die Migration weiterhin das Topthema Nummer eins bleiben. Ich gestehe, dass ich beim letzten Gipfel im Juni dachte, wir haben jetzt endlich einen Durchbruch erzielt, wir sind hinsichtlich der gemeinsamen Ansätze in Sachen Migration ein Stück weitergekommen, wir haben uns auf Grundzüge unter den Mitgliedstaaten geeinigt. Aber wenn ich jetzt das bewerte, was beim informellen Rat im September erreicht wurde, muss ich gestehen: Es ist sehr sehr, sehr enttäuschend! Was ist passiert? Die Aufstockung von Frontex auf 10.000 Mann: nicht vereinbart. Anlandeplattformen außerhalb der EU: Sie haben zwar über Ägypten gesprochen, aber auch hier ist zu wenig, viel zu wenig passiert. Ankerzentren in der EU: Ich stelle nicht fest, dass sich da etwas entwickelt hat. Lange Rede, kurzer Sinn: Ich hoffe sehr, dass die Ratspräsidentschaft bei ihrem nächsten Gipfel weiterhin ihre Bemühungen fortsetzt und nicht nachlässt, um auch in Sachen Migration einen substanziellen Schritt nach vorne zu machen.

Der zweite Punkt, den ich gerne ansprechen möchte, ist das, was mein Fraktionschef, Herr Weber, schon thematisiert hat, nämlich das Verhältnis zu den USA. Herr Kommissionspräsident, Sie haben ja mit Herrn Trump verhandelt. Ich möchte Ihnen nochmals ein großes Kompliment aussprechen. Vor der Sommerpause ist es Ihnen ja gelungen, hier mal unsere Beziehungen auf Halt zu stellen. Ich glaube, es wäre in der Tat jetzt an der Zeit, das transatlantische Verhältnis neu zu justieren. Ich würde Sie einfach auffordern, bitten, ermuntern, alle Anstrengungen zu unternehmen, um zu vernünftigen Beziehungen mit den USA zu kommen.

Tanja Fajon (S&D). – Gospa predsednicam, spoštovani, zelo kritična bom do avstrijskega predsedstva.

Pravite, da se moramo z izzivi migracij spopadati na vseh ravneh, žal pa delate ravno nasprotno. Vso energijo usmerjate izključno v varnost. Varnost Evropejcev je ključna, se strinjam, ampak varnosti ne bo, če gradimo trdnjavo Evrope, če ne bomo imeli učinkovite evropske migracijske in azilne politike in če bodo ljudje zunaj evropskih zidov še naprej umirali.

Upravljanje z migracijami ne pomeni krepitev varnosti. V Evropskem parlamentu smo pred poletjem sprejeli vso potrebno zakonodajo, pogajali smo se v dobri veri in dosegli dogovor z evropskimi vladami, vi pa želite zdaj to razbiti. To govorim kot poročevalka za uredbo o kriterijih za mednarodno zaščito in to ni edini dogovor, ki ga želite razbiti. Vaša država resno spodkopava tudi schengen z neopravičenim podaljševanjem notranjih mejnih kontrol, tudi na meji z mojo državo Slovenijo in to težko pojasnim mojim državljanom, zato vas pozivam, da veliko bolj odgovorno in razumno vodite Unijo do konca leta, ker nam je mar, kaj se dogaja z Evropo.

Helga Stevens (ECR). – Voorzitter, beste collega's, we moeten de illegale migratie naar Europa stoppen. Dit kan enkel door ons te baseren op het Australische model. Het is onbegrijpelijk dat ngo-boten migranten oppikken tot vlak voor de kust van Noord-Afrika en vervolgens richting Europa varen in plaats van naar een veilige haven in de regio. Mensenlevens redden is nobel, maar clandestiene migratie naar Europa ondersteunen is dat niet. Op de Europese top van juni werd beslist om te onderzoeken of regionale ontschepingsplatformen een alternatief konden zijn. Deze centra in derde landen zouden dan de drenkelingen opvangen. Die praktijk is volledig in lijn met het internationaal recht. In één adem werd beslist dat alle boten die in de Middellandse Zee actief zijn de Libische kustwacht niet mogen hinderen. Dus ook niet wanneer Libië, die platformen indachtig, boten richting Europa tegenhoudt. De reddingsoperatie die niet meer automatisch resulteert in een asielaanvraag in Europa zal sterk ontradend werken. Net zoals in Australië zal dat de tragische verdrinking tot nul herleiden. Zo kunnen we de migratie terug onder controle krijgen wat het draagvlak bij de burger vergroot voor de echte behoeftigen en de mensensmokkelaars verliezen hun bron van inkomsten. Net als de Europese regeringsleiders, vraag ik aan de Commissie en alle bevoegde ministers in de Europese Unie om het Australische model over te nemen. Hopelijk komt de Europese top eindelijk tot concrete afspraken om de illegale migratie kordaat aan te pakken.

Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE). – Madam President, with regard to the previous speaker, I don't agree with her policy choices but I agree with one thing and that is that the attitude of the Council when it comes to migration is absolutely shameful. The Council has become the bottleneck for mainly all policies, but in particular migration, because the European Commission has made proposals for a common policy, the European Parliament has managed to agree, across the political groups on a policy. Even the Pope – and I am not known for praising the Pope – is supportive. NGOs are supportive. Opinion polls show that the vast majority of Europeans are very pragmatic and they expect us to act when it comes to migration.

Local authorities are taking a different attitude. There are 28 individuals, national government leaders, blocking any kind of decent and efficient asylum and migration policy. It is your responsibility in the Council to unblock that situation.

The same goes for the rule of law. I'm glad that the Council has at least twice discussed the situation in Poland, but I think you should take your responsibility and discuss the situation in other countries where there are reasons for concern, such as Romania, Hungary, Slovakia and Malta, but also finally agree to a broader mechanism that will treat all Member States equally and gives an annual assessment of the health of democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights throughout the European Union and not dither any longer.

Finally, on Brexit, I can see that the biggest ego in this House, Mr Farage, after making his speech has left again, as he always does. He is literally playing Russian roulette with his Russian friends with the well-being of the British people, and now by criticising Mrs May he is trying to dodge responsibility for the mess that he has created and for which the British people are going to pay the price. I'm very glad, and with this I'll conclude Madam President, that the EU is united, because the real problem is not unity in the European Union. The real problem is the lack of unity in British politics.

(The speaker agreed to take a blue-card question under Rule 162(8))

Bill Etheridge (EFDD), *blue-card question*. – Thank you for accepting the question. You seem really outraged about a lot of things. Do you not understand that maybe the Heads of Government are reticent about taking on these noble ideas you have, because actually they have to be elected by the people in their countries, and these opinion polls you speak about are not relevant to those Heads of Government? Do you not see that?

Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), *blue-card answer*. – Mr Etheridge, I come from a party that has actually won the elections – and we are in government now – with the noble rhetoric that you are talking about. Maybe if you were to adopt the same rhetoric, then you too would finally get elected in your own home country.

(Applause)

Molly Scott Cato (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, hearing Jeremy Hunt use the far right trope of associating the European Union with the Soviet Union is an abuse of history and an insult to those who suffered under Soviet repression. I'd like to offer my apology on behalf of the many British people who respect the brave struggle for freedom fought by our friends in Central Europe and the Baltic states.

For many countries, the EU has supported their path away from authoritarianism and towards prosperity. Our current cooperation in peace, democracy and human rights celebrates that achievement. Coming from a country that has always prided itself on diplomatic prowess, for me the speech was part of an unfolding national tragedy. This is where the ignorance of Brexit has led us. Insulting our friends, misrepresenting our history, indulging our fantasies of a return to the colonial past. But the Brexiteers are running out of steam. In an equally lacklustre speech yesterday Dominic Raab claimed that democracy is sacrosanct. So I'm waiting for him to join me in calling for a criminal inquiry into 'Vote Leave', of which he was a board member, and into Russian interference in the Brexit campaign. True democracy cannot be based on deceit and an empty prospectus; it requires that British people make a choice on the deal as negotiated so that they can decide whether this is the Brexit they voted for. When it comes to Brexit democracy demands a people's vote.

(Applause)

(The speaker agreed to take a blue-card question under Rule 162(8)).

James Carver (NI), *blue-card question*. – Thank you, Molly. You and I will of course disagree, but we have always had a courteous exchange going right back to Pembrokeshire back in 2001.

In your call for a second referendum, do you not realise, with respect, that the goalposts have moved? People like myself, who campaigned against the European institutions for the last 22 years, were warning about ever closer union, warning about qualified majority voting on taxation – as Mr Weber often calls for – and warning about EU militarisation. This has, of course, all been discussed since the referendum result. Is it not the case now that were Britain to change its mind, foolishly, we would actually be going towards a federal model?

Molly Scott Cato (Verts/ALE), *blue-card answer*. – I agree that times have moved on. We've learned that the Brexit referendum was fought on the basis of cheating, criminality, manipulation and psychological operations. The goalposts have definitely moved, because we now know that the people are waking up to the fact that they were lied to, the fact that this cannot be sorted out in an afternoon, that we haven't got trade deals, that we're heading for a calamity. Therefore, I completely agree with you. The goalposts have moved, and that is the biggest justification there can be for a new referendum.

Marina Albiol Guzmán (GUE/NGL). – Señora presidenta, en la próxima reunión del Consejo volverán a debatir sobre migración, pero el debate no se centrará en qué hacer para que quien lo necesite pueda llegar de una forma segura a Europa o en cómo poner en marcha una operación en el Mediterráneo para que no muera ni una sola persona más. El debate será, una vez más, sobre cómo aumentar el control y proteger nuestras fronteras. Y la pregunta es, ¿protegerlos? ¿De quién? ¿Quiénes son los enemigos de los que hay que protegerse con vallas, deportaciones, palizas o, incluso, a tiros?

¿Personas como Hayat Belkacem, una chica de diecinueve años asesinada por la marina marroquí gracias al acuerdo por el cual Marruecos es el guardián de la frontera sur de Europa?

¿O más bien el enemigo es el chico de diecisiete años que tenían encerrado en un centro de internamiento para extranjeros en Murcia y que ha sido deportado saltándose toda la legislación internacional en materia de derechos humanos?

Como siempre, señalan a los de abajo para que no miremos hacia arriba.

Marco Valli (EFDD). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, mi rivolgo al Presidente Juncker e al Consiglio.

Per quanto riguarda la posizione del governo italiano sull'immigrazione, abbiamo ricevuto una situazione esplosiva riguardo all'immigrazione, perché quello che è stato creato in Libia dalle bombe in passato, da governi che non erano rappresentati da noi, ha creato grossi problemi. È questo il punto fondamentale su cui si deve focalizzare anche la riunione del Consiglio: trovare una soluzione in Libia, Francia, Italia, Stati Uniti e Unione europea. Un tavolo per trovare una soluzione immediata, perché c'è un rischio ovviamente implosivo su una nazione che in questo momento è tutt'altro che stabile e i flussi saranno diminuiti ora, ma potrebbero anche peggiorare.

Il governo italiano cosa ha fatto? Nel momento in cui ci siamo ritrovati a ricevere questo problema, ha accolto e abbiamo accolto più degli altri paesi europei, perché abbiamo preso persone che molto spesso non avevano neanche i requisiti per avere richiesta d'asilo. L'Unione europea ci ha voltato totalmente le spalle e anche la revisione del regolamento di Dublino ci impone di fare delle procedure che renderebbero l'Italia il grande campo profughi dell'Europa. Su questo non c'è una presa di responsabilità da parte dell'Europa, e noi cosa abbiamo fatto? Abbiamo iniziato a sconfiggere il business dell'immigrazione, le ONG che portavano e traghettavano queste persone e facevano accordi molto probabilmente anche con il crimine organizzato in Italia, sono state sconfitte per ora da questo governo, ma una soluzione europea, ancora, non è sul tavolo e quindi per la Libia e per questo problema dovrebbe essere, appunto messa in primo in primo piano da parte del Consiglio.

Per quanto riguarda poi l'economia, mi scusi, ma se guardiamo anche ai conti e alle procedure del six pack, visto che ieri ha fatto delle dichiarazioni molto pesanti, vorrei capire come mai, Presidente Juncker, due anni fa, quando doveva essere messa sotto procedura la Francia, Lei, in un'intervista alla stessa domanda che ha ricevuto ieri, ha detto che la Francia non verrà mai messa sotto procedura e le regole non valgono per la Francia, perché la Francia è la Francia, mentre per l'Italia cos'è? Non è un governo che Le piace perché dice veramente quello che pensa e tende a difendere i diritti dei cittadini per una volta? Quindi cerchi di capire queste posizioni o nelle prossime elezioni europee del 26 maggio farà una brutta fine il suo partito.

Harald Vilimsky (ENF). – Frau Präsidentin, meine sehr geehrten Damen und Herren! Ich verwahre mich mit Nachdrücklichkeit dagegen, dass hier mit schlechten Worten gegen die österreichische Ratspräsidentschaft agitiert wird. Im Gegenteil: Die österreichische Ratspräsidentschaft ist geradezu ein *Best-practice-Modell*, wie man so eine Ratspräsidentschaft abwickeln kann. Und die österreichische Regierung ist zudem auch noch getragen von einer zunehmenden Stärkung und von einem zunehmenden Vertrauen durch die Bevölkerung.

Zur eigentlichen Causa hier, der Brexit-Debatte, kann ich Ihnen nur sagen, dass Sie hier in der falschen Art und Weise unterwegs sind. Die Briten haben sich entschieden, die Europäische Union zu verlassen. Ich bedaure das, da ich die Briten gern als Reformpartner gehabt hätte. Aber ein demokratisches Votum ist zu respektieren. Ich kann Sie nur ersuchen, dem nicht mit einer Racheaktion hier zu begegnen, sondern den Briten mit Freundschaft zu begegnen, und ich hoffe, dass Sie endlich in der Lage sind, als europäische Nomenklatura mit den Briten ein geordnetes Ausstiegsszenario zu verhandeln, das für beide Seiten von Vorteil ist und nicht die Briten in eine Racheaktion hineinbringt. Und Sie müssen auch, wenn wir die Ratspräsidentschaft und den aktuellen Rat diskutieren, endlich in der Lage sein, hier die Antwort darauf zu geben, wohin sich dieses Europa entwickeln soll. Die Zukunft kann nur darin liegen: mehr Föderalismus, mehr Subsidiarität, mehr Kompetenzen zurück in die Heimatstaaten.

(Der Redner ist damit einverstanden, eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“ gemäß Artikel 162 Absatz 8 der Geschäftsordnung zu beantworten.)

Maria Grapini (S&D), *întrebare adresată în conformitate cu procedura „cartonaşului albastru”*. – Doamna preşedintă, stimată coleg – dacă mă şi ascultaţi – aţi laudat preşedinţia austriacă. Puteţi să-mi spuneţi dacă dumneavoastră, de când s-a luat preşedinţia austriacă, aţi constatat că există vreun demers, vreo acţiune concretă legată de susţinerea principiilor Uniunii Europene: solidaritate, democraţie, unitate, o preocupare pentru a ţine Europa unită?

Harald Vilimsky (ENF), *Antwort auf eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“*. – Selbstverständlich unterstützt die Ratspräsidentschaft die durch Sie angesprochenen Themen. Aber Solidarität – da ist auch immer die Frage, wie sie beurteilt wird, ob jene Staaten in mehr Verantwortung genommen werden, die ohnehin jetzt schon eine Bürde von Problemen tragen. Die österreichische Ratspräsidentschaft hat das Motto gewählt: „Ein Europa, das schützt“, und damit trifft die österreichische Ratspräsidentschaft auch genau den Nerv der europäischen Herausforderung unserer Zeit, nämlich die Migrationsfrage zu lösen. Und mittlerweile ist ja sogar durch eine Mehrheit dieses Hauses hier klar, dass diese Frage gelöst werden muss. Nur manche stecken dazu ihre Köpfe in den Sand.

Zoltán Balczó (NI). – Elnök Asszony! Köszönöm a szót! Az uniós csúcs napirendjén első helyen a migráció kérdése szerepel. Idézek a június 28-i következtetésekből: „Biztosítani kell az EU külső határainak hatékonyabb védelmét, ... a migránsok Unió belüli áttelepítése önkéntes alapon fog történni.” Ezzel szemben áll a Sargentini-jelentés, amelyik a magyar határvédelmi intézkedéseket bírálja, valamint számon kéri Magyarországon, hogy nem teljesítette a migránsok kötelező kvóta szerinti betelepítését.

A június 5-i döntések közül egyet lehet érteni azzal is, hogy növelni kell a migránsok visszaküldésének eredményességét, valamint a problémát a gyökerénél, az afrikai államokkal együttműködve kell megoldani. Most már a végrehajtáson a sor.

És egy gondolat a brexitről: a legrosszabb megoldás mindkét fél számára a megállapodás nélküli rendezetlen kilépés lenne, ezt kölcsönös kompromisszumokkal lehet elkerülni. És vegyük tekintetbe, hogy a brit miniszterelnök asszonyt a népakarat köti, mert volt egy népszavazás is ebben a kérdésben.

Esteban González Pons (PPE). – Señora presidenta, cuando el Reino Unido abandone la Unión Europea, España se convertirá en el único país europeo con una colonia extranjera en su propio suelo. Gibraltar no es solo un conflicto político entre España y el Reino Unido, es también una mancha en el proceso de integración europea, un anacronismo histórico que antes o después debe ser resuelto.

En estos momentos, hay en marcha una negociación entre Londres y Madrid de la que este Parlamento debería estar al tanto. Primero, para saber cómo quedan las condiciones laborales de los más de diez mil ciudadanos europeos españoles que viven en el Campo de Gibraltar y que todos los días cruzan la frontera con Gibraltar; segundo, para saber qué medidas se pondrán en marcha para evitar que Gibraltar siga siendo una lavadora de dinero ilegal y un centro de evasión de capitales —un paraíso fiscal—; tercero, para evitar que siga habiendo contrabando de tabaco y de otras mercancías —que no menciono— desde Gibraltar al mercado único todos los días; cuarto, para que cesen los vertidos tóxicos provenientes de la colonia que dañan el ecosistema de la bahía de Algeciras; quinto, para la gestión conjunta del aeropuerto. Y sexto: el acuerdo del Brexit, en nuestra opinión, debería incluir un calendario para reiniciar las negociaciones bilaterales sobre la cuestión de la soberanía, en cumplimiento de lo dispuesto por las Naciones Unidas y por el Proceso de Bruselas.

El Reino Unido se va; España se queda con los amigos. No encontraremos una oportunidad mejor para resolver la impresentable situación de la última colonia que queda en Europa.

Josef Weidenholzer (S&D). – Frau Präsidentin! Ein Zusammentreffen der Staats- und Regierungschefs jagt das andere. Diese hektische Betriebsamkeit steht im klaren Gegensatz zu den Ergebnissen. Seit Jahren sind es die gleichen Themen – meistens geht es um Migration – nach dem Motto, dass man jetzt endlich die Lösung parat hätte. Man will ja nur nachher den heimischen Medien erklären können, man hätte sich durchgesetzt.

Die Vorschläge des Parlaments bleiben weitgehend ignoriert, die Probleme sind ungelöst – wie etwa die Situation in den seinerzeit vollmundig angekündigten Hotspots auf den griechischen Inseln. Die Unterkünfte für Flüchtlinge sind heillos überfüllt, die hygienischen Zustände untragbar. Die Menschen sind zu monate- und jahrelangem Nichtstun verdammt und können nicht mit schnellen, rechtssicheren Verfahren rechnen. Kinder sind besonders stark betroffen. Suizid, Selbstverletzung und auffälliges Verhalten unter den Minderjährigen stehen auf der Tagesordnung. Hier, geschätzte Kolleginnen und Kollegen, herrscht Handlungsbedarf. Wir brauchen eine reale Lösung der Probleme und keine Symbolpolitik.

Peter van Dalen (ECR). – Voorzitter, de brexit zal uitsluitend verliezers kennen aan beide zijden van het Kanaal. Dat bleek wel dit jaar uit een Brits rapport waarin aangetoond werd dat alle regio's in het Verenigd Koninkrijk klappen zullen gaan oplopen. En dat geldt niet alleen voor de regio's in het Verenigd Koninkrijk, ook Europese economieën zoals die van Nederland gaan miljarden schade oplopen. Ik hoop daarom van harte dat de brexit gekeerd kan worden. Misschien door nieuwe verkiezingen, wellicht door een tweede referendum. Mocht dat onverhoopt niet lukken dan hoop ik dat de Britse onderhandelaars dicht bij de huidige status-quo zullen blijven, zeker geen “no deal” en ook geen harde brexit, en evenmin het checkers-plan want dat is eigenlijk gewoon de krenten uit de pap halen. Ook na maart 2019 hebben we elkaar hard nodig en daarom vraag ik bijzondere aandacht voor de visserij. Al eeuwen delen we de visgronden van de Noordzee met elkaar en laten we die ook na maart 2019 gezamenlijk blijven beheren. Dus vooral niet elkaar het mes op de keel zetten, niet terug naar de oude visoorlogen, maar samenwerken. Want ook na maart 2019 moeten onze vissers aan beide zijden van het kanaal kunnen vissen in de Noordzee en moeten we onze vis en visproducten kunnen verhandelen.

Pavel Telička (ALDE). – Madam President, I also share the view of many colleagues that it is high time to unblock the Council on migration. Leadership of the Presidency here is needed, and many of the Members of the European Council are probably happy to have migration still on the agenda because it is a way to bash the EU all the time, and in fact the Czech Prime Minister says there is no other issue vis-à-vis the EU than migration.

But I am afraid migration is not the only issue, though it looks like that's the only problem. If we look at what our public says, 70 to 80% feel that the EU should have a higher role in trade policy. 70 to 80% want a European defence policy. Roughly the same number says that there are challenges in the economic area where Europe has a role to play. My question is, when are we going to close the gap on a number of those issues? When are we going to be delivering on those issues?

So migration, yes by all means, and let's finally settle it. However, we finally need to address these issues as well. One sentence on Brexit: I'm all in favour of unity, and it's great that we have it, but in terms of, for example, aviation safety, if EASA does not start technical talks with the CAA, we will be in a mess from next year on. That is my message to the Commission.

Reinhard Bütikofer (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin! Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Zum wiederholten Mal krallen wir uns an denselben Problemen fest. Zum wiederholten Mal beklagen wir dieselben Blockaden: Bei der Migration, bei der Frage der Flucht, beim Brexit oder wenn es darum geht, innerhalb unserer Europäischen Union die Rechtsstaatlichkeit generell verbindlich durchzusetzen. Mir geht es nicht darum, das nun auch noch einmal zu beklagen, sondern mir geht es darum, das Augenmerk darauf zu richten, dass wir währenddessen andere Fragen zu sehr aus dem Blick verlieren.

Über Handel ist gesprochen worden. Die USA haben jetzt mit Kanada und mit Mexiko einen neuen Vertrag zustande gebracht. Wir sollten uns nicht einreden, dass das nicht zusätzlichen Druck gegenüber der Europäischen Union bedeuten wird. Wir sind in einer Lage, in der wir uns wesentlich stärker zusammenschließen müssen, um in diesen Verhandlungen, die Herr Juncker wunderbar eingeleitet hat, auch ein gutes Ergebnis zu bekommen. Ich wundere mich, warum der Rat diese Frage nicht wesentlich weiter nach vorne bringt und warum der Rat nicht dafür sorgt, dass es endlich ein Mandat gibt, über das wir hier im Europäischen Parlament beraten können. Und ich wundere mich darüber, dass die Konnektivitätsstrategie, die vernünftigerweise von der Kommission und vom EAD vorgelegt worden ist, nicht auf der Tagesordnung steht. Denn auch da muss Zukunft gestaltet werden! Vergessen wir nicht, was um uns herum passiert, weil wir zu viel Bauchnabelschau betreiben.

Lynn Boylan (GUE/NGL). – Madam President, as we debate here this morning, the competing wings of British conservatism are battling it out in Birmingham about the meaning of Brexit. A carnival of reaction if ever I saw one. What's clear is that none of the Tories have any real concern about Ireland other than using us to score points in their internal party battle. None of them shows any commitment to previous agreements. They are so clueless that one thinks he can build a bridge between the islands, literally over a one million tonne unstable weapons dump, and another thinks he can currently spend sterling in Dublin.

So some selectively interpret the Good Friday Agreement to try to get privileged access to EU markets without having to follow any of the rules, while others would happily tear up that agreement along with the commitments they have already made in the Brexit negotiation.

And Mr Farage says the border was not an issue during the referendum. Well he's dead right it wasn't, because that just shows you the level of Brexiteer ignorance that there was during the referendum of the history of Ireland. So the Dublin government and the EU must hold firm and insist that the rights of people in Ireland are not up for negotiation and that Ireland will not be collateral damage.

Mara Bizzotto (ENF). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, negli ultimi anni l'Italia è stata invasa da 700 mila immigrati clandestini. E intanto la Commissione europea produceva aria fritta. Quello che voi non avete fatto in questi anni, noi lo stiamo facendo in pochi mesi, grazie al nostro leader Matteo Salvini: controllo delle frontiere, porti chiusi per le navi piene di immigrati illegali, pugno di ferro contro l'immigrazione clandestina.

Con il nuovo decreto Salvini finirà la pacchia per i clandestini e in Italia torneranno ad esserci sicurezza, rispetto delle leggi e giustizia. Gli immigrati irregolari che sono arrivati in Italia illegalmente si preparino a tornare in Africa. Noi andremo avanti con la rivoluzione del buon senso e difenderemo sempre gli interessi degli italiani, contro questa Europa complice dell'immigrazione di massa.

Macron e i falsi buonisti della sinistra sono avvisati. La smettano con le loro ridicole bugie e si sciacchino la bocca prima di parlare male dell'Italia e degli italiani.

Ελευθέριος Συναδινός (NI). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, δυστυχώς τα τέσσερα τελευταία χρόνια η λαθρομετανάστευση και τα δίκτυα των διακινητών οργιάζουν, όσο η Ένωση συνεχίζει να χρησιμοποιεί αποτυχημένα εργαλεία και να εφαρμόζει λανθασμένες πολιτικές. Τα εξωτερικά σύνορα είναι διάτρητα, η εθνική κυριαρχία περιορίζεται, δεν υφίστανται αντικίνητρα κατά των λαθρομεταναστών, ενώ εσχάτως εφευρίσκονται τρόποι νομιμοποίησης και περαιτέρω διεύρυνσης των διόδων μετανάστευσης.

Πλέον καταγράφεται επισήμως πως 1 στους 13 είναι υπήκοος τρίτης, μη ευρωπαϊκής, χώρας. Φυσικά η πραγματικότητα είναι ακόμα πιο δυσόωνη.

Η λήψη δράσης δεν απαιτεί κάποια καινοτομία, διότι ξεκάθαρα οι παρανόμως διαμένοντες αποτελούν de facto εγκληματίες. Εισήλθαν παρανόμως στις χώρες μας και παραμένουν εντός της επικράτειάς μας δίχως διευθέτηση του καθεστώτος παραμονής τους. Αποτελεί ζητούμενο η επαναφορά της νομιμότητας και του αισθήματος ασφαλείας μεταξύ των πολιτών, αποτρέποντας την έξωση λαθρομεταναστών και απελαύνοντας όσους εισήλθαν και στερούνται νομιμοποιητικών εγγράφων και νόμιμης παραμονής. Τα αιτήματα είναι απλά: Όχι στην παράνομη μετανάστευση. Όχι στη δημιουργία παράλληλων κοινωνιών. Όχι στην αλλοίωση της έννοιας της ιδιγένειας.

(Ο ομιλητής αρνείται ερώτηση με γαλάζια κάρτα της Jaakonsaari)

Elmar Brok (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, verehrte Ratspräsidentschaft, verehrter Herr Vizepräsident, Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Gestatten Sie mir einen Satz zu Beginn: Dieses Haus und die Kommission, die von diesem Haus bestätigt ist und deren Kommissionspräsident vom direkt gewählten Europäischen Parlament gewählt worden ist, sind voll und ganz demokratisch legitimiert. Und wir müssen festhalten, mehr legitimiert als die Premierministerin, die sich niemals einer Abstimmung im Haus ausgesetzt hat, sondern wo es ausreichte, den Ring der Königin zu küssen. Ich glaube, das sollten wir einmal festhalten. Wir müssen sehen, dass Herr Farage im Vereinigten Königreich ja auch noch nie für das nationale Parlament gewählt worden ist – trotz vieler Versuche.

Wir haben seit anderthalb Jahren auf den britischen Vorschlag gewartet. Dann kam Chequers. Dann hat Frau May erklärt: *Take it or leave it*. Das heißt: Wir warten anderthalb Jahre auf einen Vorschlag, der dann kommt und der dann von uns angenommen werden muss, und sonst sei es ein *insult*, wie gesagt worden ist.

Was wir jetzt machen sollen, ist eindeutig klar: Schnell den Austrittsvertrag machen. Da ist nur die irische Frage zu lösen. Bei gutem Willen geht das, es liegen genug Vorschläge der EU vor, um dieses Problem zu lösen. Und dann haben wir zwei Jahre Zeit, um einen anständigen Freihandelsvertrag auszuhandeln und auch die übrigen Verträge für die innere und äußere Sicherheit zu verhandeln. Lasst uns von der Rhetorik dieser Parteitage wegkommen, von den Beleidigungen von Herrn Hunt und anderen – wenn wir das machen sollten, wäre der Teufel los –, und endlich diesen Austrittsvertrag verhandeln, um daraus eine gute weitergehende Zusammenarbeit zu erreichen. Dies muss jetzt erreicht werden, und die Engländer müssen endlich zur Tagesordnung kommen.

(Der Redner ist damit einverstanden, zwei Fragen nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“ gemäß Artikel 162 Absatz 8 der Geschäftsordnung zu beantworten.)

Luke Ming Flanagan (GUE/NGL), blue-card question. – Mr Brok, like it or not, the UK and the Republic of Ireland are going to have to get on and it's going to have to work out. However that happens, it's going to be difficult, but it's going to have to work out. For that to work out, we don't need MEPs like you coming in here – I'm no fan of Ms May, no fan of the Conservative Party – but it doesn't help you coming in here and questioning whether their Prime Minister is legitimate or not. It's up to them to decide.

I'll say it again: no time for her, but you are not helping, you're making it worse, Elmar. Stop it.

Hans-Olaf Henkel (ECR), Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“. – Herr Brok, ist Ihnen eigentlich klar, dass es Herr Barnier war, der am Anfang gesagt hat, dass man – bevor man eine Lösung für das Grenzregime hat – ein Handelsabkommen haben muss? Das ist völlig unmöglich gewesen. Ich kenne kein Grenzregime, ohne dass man weiß, was für ein Handelsabkommen man hat. Allein dadurch wurde ein Jahr vergeudet.

Elmar Brok (PPE), Antwort auf eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“. – Frau Präsidentin! Ja, die verfassungsrechtliche Ordnung des Vereinigten Königreichs ist Angelegenheit des Vereinigten Königreichs. Aber bitte dann nicht uns angreifen, wir wären nicht demokratisch legitimiert! Das wollte ich zum Ausdruck bringen. Die Europäische Union ist demokratisch legitimiert durch nationale Parlamente und durch die Direktwahl des Europäischen Parlaments und daraus auch die Kommission. Und deswegen sollten Sie Schluss machen mit dieser Alibiveranstaltung mit der demokratischen Legitimierung.

Und ich muss sehen, dass 27 demokratisch gewählte Regierungschefs diesen Vorschlag Großbritanniens nicht akzeptiert haben. Es ist doch eine Normalität, dass so etwas passiert. Und aus diesem Grund muss man auch feststellen

(Die Präsidentin unterbricht den Redner.)

Und wir müssen feststellen, dass die Republik Irland als Mitglied der Europäischen Union möchte, dass wir uns auch um diese Angelegenheit kümmern. Und das werden wir tun auf Wunsch der Republik Irland.

Der Punkt, den Herr Henkel angesprochen hat: Dies ist einfach falsch! Dass die Irlandfrage mit im Austrittsvertrag steht, ist eine Vereinbarung am Beginn der Verhandlungen mit den *sequences*. Das ist völlig klar! Und es gibt klare Vorschläge, wie es gemacht werden soll.

Und wir wollen einen Freihandelsvertrag. Aber deswegen kann man die Grenzfrage vorher klären, damit es in anständiger Weise für die Iren läuft.

Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D). – Voorzitter, wat net gezegd is over de brexit kan net zo goed toegepast worden op het hele migratie-debat. De Commissie is twee jaar geleden met een agenda gekomen en dit Parlement heeft zich vaak kamerbreed uitgesproken voor de hervorming van dat beleid en wat doet de Raad – ook democratisch gelegitimeerd weliswaar – wat doet de Raad? Twee jaar kibbelen, het oneens zijn en met geen enkel deftig voorstel komen. Het enige wat er vandaag nog overschiet is het zogenaamde debat over de “disembarcation centers” en eerlijk gezegd: ik weet begot niet wat dat betekent. Wie bedenkt zulke namen in godsnaam? En tegelijkertijd, mevrouw de Voorzitter, tegelijkertijd is de Aquarius haar vlag kwijt, de Aquarius die sinds haar ontstaan dertigduizend levens heeft gered. Dat zijn dertigduizend glimlachen en zestigduizend handen, misschien wel honderdduizend dromen. Zijn er nog mensen vandaag in de Raad, in het politieke centrum, die bereid zijn om samen met ngo's de waarden van de Europese Unie hoog te houden?

James Nicholson (ECR). – Madam President, if I may take the opportunity. The Belfast Agreement, also often referred to as the Good Friday Agreement, states ‘it is hereby declared that Northern Ireland, in its entirety, remains part of the United Kingdom and shall not cease to be so without consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland’. This is the principle of consent that is the heart of the Belfast Agreement. Nothing can camouflage that.

Let me make it very clear to this House – and I have heard comments here this morning that I wished I would not have heard – the people of Northern Ireland, from all backgrounds, from all persuasions, do not want to ever, ever return to their past history. There has to be a solution found that ensures that that never happens in the future. That is the challenge. That is what politicians are here for. So I was very saddened this morning when I heard Mr Juncker say it is 'Ireland first'. I'm sorry, I am from Northern Ireland, and I say it is the United Kingdom and it is Northern Ireland that must be first.

Luke Ming Flanagan (GUE/NGL). – Madam President, I'd like to address this to Mr Juncker, because it is about an announcement he made in March 2017. They say if you fail to plan, you plan to fail. This is why I was happy to hear, in March 2017, Mr Juncker come here and talk about a plan for the future of Europe up until 2025. He spoke about five options, and basically the options were full fiscal, economic, monetary or military union on one end of the rainbow, and on the other end of the rainbow we go back to being a group of trading nations. We were meant to have a discussion about this, a debate, something that I think would have helped a couple of years ago in Britain and would have actually headed off Brexit. We also had a series of reflection papers, which we were meant to discuss. We were also in theory meant to have a series of debates around Europe. Mr Juncker came here and told us about varying numbers, they didn't add up.

On the Commission blurb, they talk about this process, and they said it would help decide on a course of action to be rolled out in time for the EP elections in 2019. I now ask the question: where is this white paper on the future of Europe? How is it sitting with the various parties here? What is happening in the European elections in relation to it? Where is it, Mr Juncker? Where are you? Could you not have stayed here for three hours? Do you not get paid enough to do your damn job?

Gerolf Annemans (ENF). – Voorzitter, dames en heren, hier aan de macht in de Europese Unie, in 2014 kwamen wij hier binnen met een nooit gezien aantal EU-kritische parlementsleden die door u uit de hoogte en met een zekere afkeer populistten werden genoemd. U nam zich voor om het anders te gaan doen, minder Europese Unie, minder federalisme, minder centralisme. Wat we hebben gezien vijf jaar lang is het omgekeerde, een explosie van federalisme, een verdere centralisering, "ever closer Union". Terwijl in geen enkele lidstaat een verkiezing heeft plaatsgevonden, inclusief de referenda in het Verenigd Koninkrijk, die niet het omgekeerde aantoonde, die niet de nieuwe tijd dichterbij bracht die wij hier vertegenwoordigen. Het ziet ernaar uit dat 2019 confrontatie wordt van die nieuwe en van die oude tijden. Vandaar mijn boodschap aan meneer Juncker en eigenlijk ook aan heel zijn Commissie en aan het nieuwe koppeltje Merkel en Macron die ons verder willen gijzelen in die strategie, en ik zeg het met de woorden van Aznavour: "*Il faut savoir quitter la table lorsque l'amour est desservi, sans s'accrocher, l'air pitoyable mais partir sans faire de bruit*".

"Il faut savoir quitter la table lorsque l'amour est desservi, sans s'accrocher l'air pitoyable, mais partir sans faire de bruit".

Kinga Gál (PPE). – Elnök Asszony! Az EIT visszatérő, központi témája a migráció-nyomás megfékezése. Ehhez meg kell végre védeni az Unió külső határait, szárazföldön és vízen egyaránt. Egyértelmű, hogy ez egy politikai akarat kérdése, az eszközök meglennének hozzá. A Frontex-nek ebben lehet fontos szerepe, de semmilyen körülmények között nem veheti ki a kezünkől saját határunk védelmét. Szét kell zúznunk az embercsempészek üzleti modelljét, és együtt kell működni azokkal az országokkal, amelyek képesek a migrációs útvonalak felszámolására. A tagállamok között az alapvető megoldási lehetőségekről és intézkedésekről nincs egyetértés, ezért elfogadhatatlannak tartom Avramopulosz biztos az ENSZ közgyűlésének egyik rendezvényén kifejtett nyílt bevándorláspárti álláspontját, mint az illegális bevándorlás legalizálása vagy a migránsok európai munkavállalásának támogatása, amelyek messze túlterjeszkednek hatáskörén és felhatalmazásán.

Sem Magyarország, sem a visegrádi országok nem kívánnak bevándorló orszaggá válni. Mi az illegális migrációt nem legalizálni, sem menedzselni nem szeretnénk, hanem megállítani akarjuk. Meg akarjuk őrizni polgáraink biztonságát és gyermekeink számára Európát olyannak, amilyennek mi ismerjük.

(A felszólaló elutasítja Liisa Jaakonsaari és Sophia in 't Veld „kékkártyás” kérdését)

Roberto Gualtieri (S&D). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, io penso che i problemi complessi che stiamo affrontando richiederebbero meno propaganda e più serietà. Meno propaganda, lo dico alla collega Bizzotto della Lega, che ci ha fatto il suo solito comizio. Qui la clandestinità e l'illegalità in Italia l'ha alimentata la Lega con leggi come la Bossi-Fini e il decreto Salvini non farà che peggiorare le cose.

Quindi per favore, invece di fare propaganda, aiutateci a sostenere la riforma di Dublino, che i vostri alleati come Orban continuano a bloccare. Basta propaganda, collega Valli, che forse ignora persino, che quando Juncker ha detto quelle famose parole, la Francia era in procedura di deficit.

Qui il problema non è la Commissione europea, qui il problema è che ci state portando alla bancarotta con le vostre affermazioni irresponsabili che ci porteranno, alla fine, ad avere più tagli e più austerità, e naturalmente basta propaganda su Brexit. È tempo di avere un accordo ambizioso, serio, equilibrato, noi siamo pronti, ma ci sono due condizioni irrinunciabili e credo che dopo Salisburgo tutti l'abbiano capito.

Occorre un backstop operativo che non è una frontiera, ma dei controlli che già in gran parte esistono e una zona di libero scambio si può costruire, ma senza fare a pezzi il mercato unico. Noi siamo pronti, siamo aperti, ma siamo uniti.

Richard Sulík (ECR). – Frau Präsidentin, sehr geehrter Herr Timmermans! Es ist offensichtlich, dass die britische Regierung nach den völlig unnötigen Wahlen viele Probleme hat, schwach ist und dementsprechend auch sehr zögerlich verhandelt. Die EU sollte sich aber nicht zu früh freuen, denn eine Einigung ist für die EU wichtiger als für die Briten. Die Exporte nach Großbritannien sind doppelt so hoch wie die Importe aus Großbritannien. Die Europäische Union hat mit Kanada ein Freihandelsabkommen abgeschlossen, und das sollte doch auch mit Großbritannien möglich sein. Ich denke, es sollte möglich sein, dass man diese vier Freiheiten trennt. Wenn das mit anderen Ländern geht, warum nicht mit Großbritannien?

Ein weiteres Referendum wird es in Britannien nicht geben. Damit sollten wir uns endlich abfinden und viel mehr Entgegenkommen an den Tag legen. Es scheint mir nämlich, dass die EU bereit ist, sich selbst ins Knie zu schießen, nur um die Briten abzustrafen.

Paulo Rangel (PPE). – Senhora Presidente, Senhora Presidente do Conselho, Senhor Vice-Presidente Timmermans, em primeiro lugar eu queria deixar aqui claro que, sem dúvida, a questão principal a tratar no próximo Conselho será o Brexit e que aí eu acho que nós, como União Europeia, não devemos reagir de modo, eu diria, muito hipersensível e hiperativo a algumas provocações que vêm, seja do lado do Reino Unido e até do seu Governo, como vimos ontem com a declaração de Jeremy Hunt, seja do lado de forças populistas aqui no Parlamento Europeu e na União Europeia.

Eu penso que nós devemos ter uma atitude construtiva. Não devemos dar nenhum argumento para que o Reino Unido diga que nós estamos a bloquear qualquer processo de negociações. Firmes nos nossos princípios, mas abertos à cooperação. Só desta forma poderemos vir a ganhar esta batalha de conseguir um acordo com o Reino Unido e de eventualmente, se não conseguirmos, ficarmos perante o eleitorado e a opinião pública com a certeza de que fizemos tudo para que não houvesse um golpe ou um bloqueio nas negociações. É fundamental ter uma posição construtiva. Isto não significa abdicar das quatro liberdades, isso não significa abdicar da defesa de uma fronteira flexível e aberta na Irlanda e, portanto, sem abdicar de nenhum dos nossos princípios, nós devemos ser tão fleumáticos quanto os britânicos em tempos passados nos habituaram a ser.

Birgit Sippel (S&D). – Frau Präsidentin! Die Gründung der Europäischen Union war ein visionärer, mutiger Schritt. Etwas völlig Neues entstand: ein grenzenloses, friedliches Zusammenarbeiten von verschiedenen Staaten. Und heute? Der Europäische Rat trifft sich als Versammlung nationaler Politiker, die verzagt auf nationale Umfragen starren. Wir produzieren immer neue sogenannte Sicherheitsgesetze, von denen keines komplett umgesetzt ist, aber die Grundrechte und der Schutz der Privatsphäre geraten unter Druck. Migration und Asyl müssen innerhalb und außerhalb Europas gemeinsam gestaltet werden.

Und der Binnenmarkt? Die Menschen in Europa brauchen eine starke soziale Säule. Stellen Sie sich doch endlich diesen gemeinsamen Herausforderungen! Denn die Zukunft unseres demokratischen Kontinents, die Zukunft von mehr als 500 - Millionen Menschen ist jede Anstrengung wert. Sie sollten endlich damit beginnen!

Mirosław Piotrowski (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Pierwszym tematem obrad zbliżającego się posiedzenia Rady Europejskiej będzie migracja. Punktem odniesienia natomiast konkluzje z czerwcowego posiedzenia Rady, w których odnotowano między innymi, że Unia podjęła wiele wysiłków, aby zapobiec nawrotowi niekontrolowanego napływu ludzi z roku 2015. Lepiej późno niż wcale, chciałoby się rzec.

Dobrze byłoby, aby na zbliżającym się posiedzeniu Rada Europejska poszła o krok dalej i stwierdziła, że otwarcie drzwi dla uchodźców w 2015 r. przez panią Angelę Merkel było nielegalne, a w sprawie migracji rację miały rządy krajów, takich jak Węgry i Polska. Wprawdzie pośrednio wybrzmiewa to z konkluzji czerwcowego posiedzenia Rady, gdzie nie powraca się do mechanizmu obowiązkowej relokacji uchodźców, a mowa jest o dobrowolnych przesiedleniach.

Trzeba jednak pamiętać, że najważniejsza jest ochrona granic, co leży przede wszystkim w gestii poszczególnych państw członkowskich, a oddziały Frontexu powinny stanowić jedynie ich wzmocnienie. Nie możemy dopuścić do sytuacji, w której dany kraj członkowski utraci kontrolę nad swoją granicą na rzecz Frontexu.

(Mówca odmówił wysłuchania pytania zasygnalizowanego przez podniesienie niebieskiej kartki przez Liisę Jaakonsaari)

Andrey Kovatchev (PPE). – Madam President, in the UK and recently also in Macedonia, referendums have put countries in a dead-end street. It is very clear that Brexit cannot be a success story, either for the United Kingdom or for the European Union. We would warmly welcome the UK back in if they decide to ask their citizens again and this is the will of the people. Brexit is the most irrational step in recent history which, if it not changed, will have a negative impact for the decades. You cannot have all EU benefits without being a member of the European Union.

I would like also to say some words on Macedonia. I hope the Council will reconfirm that the door for Macedonia is open for the European integration of this country and I'd like also to wish a lot of success to our countrymen there, for their European Atlantic way. European Atlantic integration remains the only way to secure stability in the Western Balkan region and to achieve historical reconciliation. I hope that the political class in that country won't fall prey to populism and cheap PR in the days and months to come.

On migration. Migration will be one of the most crucial topics in the next European elections and we need to prove to the European citizens that more Europe means more security and prosperity. The European Parliament has put the proposals on the table already, and I hope that the national leaders in the Council will swallow their egoism and find a workable solution to the problem. Among the concrete steps to tackle the migration flow are security on the external borders, prevention against radicalisation and terror and a united foreign and security policy in the Middle East and Africa.

Knut Fleckenstein (S&D). – Frau Präsidentin! Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Wir erwarten vom Rat konkrete Ergebnisse. Dazu gehört auch der Schutz unserer Außengrenzen. Es kann doch nicht sein, dass sich einige der Solidarität entziehen mit der Begründung, wir würden nicht genug für den Schutz der Außengrenzen tun, und wenn wir es dann vorschlagen, wieder zurückfallen in das Kleinklein der souveränen Staaten, die das lieber alleine lösen wollen. Und wir erwarten auch ein klares Wort von Ihnen, dass diejenigen Menschen, die andere im Mittelmeer retten, nicht mehr kriminalisiert werden.

In acht Monaten haben wir Europawahl. Acht Monate haben Sie noch Zeit, sozusagen ein Zeichen zu setzen, dass das, was Sie bisher abgeliefert haben, Ihnen selbst nicht ausreicht. Wer glaubt, dass er durch Nichthandeln irgendetwas retten kann, ist meiner Meinung nach auf dem Holzweg. Ich jedenfalls habe keine Lust mehr, mir hier die Sonntagsreden der Regierungschefs am Dienstag und Mittwoch anzuhören, wenn sie nicht endlich zur Arbeit kommen.

(Der Redner lehnt es ab, eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“ gemäß Artikel 162 Absatz 8 der Geschäftsordnung von Herrn Jurek zu beantworten.)

Michaela Šojdrová (PPE). – Paní ministryně, pane místopředsedo Timmermansi, Evropská rada má klíčovou odpovědnost a musí přicházet s řešením aktuálních problémů a těmi stále zůstávají bezpochyby migrace a bezpečnost. Kolegové a kolegyně, kteří voláte po řešení také dalších důležitých otázek, jako jsou otázky sociální, životní prostředí, tyto otázky jsou důležité, ale bez toho, že se navrátí důvěra občanům v této klíčové otázce bezpečnosti a migrace se nepohneme dál.

V Salcburku dosáhla Rada ministrů pokroku. Posilování evropské pohraniční a pobřežní stráže je nepochybně důležitý krok zejména formou navýšení lidských i materiálních kapacit. Je důležité, abychom také pokročili v otázce vytváření hotspotů mimo Evropu.

Neefektivní boj proti nelegální migraci a proti přílivu ekonomických migrantů totiž politicky znemožňuje pomoc těm, kteří ji skutečně potřebují. Lidem zranitelným nebo například dětským obětem válečných konfliktů. Hovořím z vlastní zkušenosti, neboť se již několik týdnů snažím přimět českou vládu, aby Česká republika dobrovolně, podtrhuji dobrovolně, přijala 50 nedoprovázených dětí z řeckých táborů, které nutně potřebují ochranu, péči a vzdělání. I takto symbolický návrh se setkává s nedůvěrou, kterou provokují populistické síly, které využívají strachu z ilegální migrace, kterou jsme v minulých letech bohužel zažili. Chci Vás ujistit, že Česká republika je solidární, přispívá finančně do fondu pomoci a na konkrétní humanitární projekty. Lidé v České republice chtějí pomáhat těm, kteří skutečně pomoc potřebují.

Cécile Kашetu Kyenge (S&D). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, sono mesi che i capi di Stato e di governo dibattono del fenomeno migratorio, giungendo ogni volta a soluzioni vaghe e irrealizzabili, peraltro su base volontaria. Alla Presidenza di turno vorrei chiedere: cos'è cambiato rispetto al vertice di giugno? È stato forse trovato un consenso sul regolamento di Dublino o la riforma è stata accantonata definitivamente?

Continuate ancora ad opporvi così tenacemente al sistema europeo centralizzato delle domande di asilo, basato sul principio di solidarietà e piena condivisione delle responsabilità, così come votato dal Parlamento lo scorso anno? Continuate ad essere intrappolati nella vostra logica emergenziale. Esultate per la riduzione degli sbarchi senza però mettere a punto strategie globali di gestione del fenomeno migratorio. Criminalizzate le ONG, rinnegando il principio della salvaguardia dei diritti umani.

Sì, ora mi rivolgo al collega Valli: le ONG diventano, ora, il capo espiatorio delle politiche fallimentari e disumane del governo italiano, sempre più populista e xenofobo, le triturate nel fango con accuse false e criminalizzando la loro attività umanitaria. Vergognatevi!

Eppure l'Italia è stata pioniera del sistema di ricerca e salvataggio nel Mediterraneo con l'operazione Mare Nostrum, e ricordo che domani ricorre il quinto anniversario della strage di Lampedusa.

Al Consiglio: inventate procedure legislative nuove pur di non assumervi le vostre responsabilità nel dibattere una proposta di regolamento già adottata dal Parlamento. Concentratevi su Dublino e non sulle vostre soluzioni alternative.

Dubravka Šuica (PPE). – Gospodo predsjedavajuća, tri su teme koje bi trebale dominirati Europskim vijećem.

Prije svega, neizostavni Brexit, za kojeg smatram da je bila ogromna pogreška, i sada kad smo već tu, zalažem se za to da se riješi pitanje s Irskom i da nam to bude prioritet, kao što smo već čuli.

Druga tema, koja je vrlo važna, zaštita je vanjskih granica i unutarnja sigurnost. Kad govorimo o vanjskim granicama, sigurna sam da dublinsko pravilo treba unaprijediti. Parlament je imao svoj stav, Komisija je imala svoj prijedlog i očekujemo od Vijeća da konačno donese odluku o Dublinskom sustavu. To bi bilo vrlo dobro. Govorim sada u ime Hrvatske koja ima najdužu granicu u Europskoj uniji, najdužu kopnenu granicu od 1350 km i strašno nam je važna zaštita vanjske granice. To je jedina zemlja koja je izvan Schengena s tako dugom granicom.

I treća tema sigurno je trgovina i trebalo bi govoriti o trgovačkim sporazumima. Nakon posjeta Jean-Claudea Junckera Sjedinjenim Američkim Državama, sigurna sam da treba unaprijediti transatlantske odnose, ali podržavam i Euroazijski samit.

Richard Corbett (S&D). – Madam President, chaos and confusion reign when it comes to Brexit. The British Government is torn apart by its internal divisions on the matter and is reverting to the tired old game of blaming Brussels for its own internal divisions. It is staggering, gradually zigzagging, towards a very damaging Brexit, a costly Brexit, a job-destroying Brexit, a rights-threatening Brexit, a Brexit that bears no resemblance whatsoever to what was promised by the leave campaign at the time of the referendum. In those circumstances, it is not surprising that more and more British citizens, especially those who voted leave, are saying ‘wait a minute, this is not what we were promised, this is not what we were told, and it’s damn well not what I voted for’.

The Labour Party at its congress last week decided that it will vote against any such damaging withdrawal agreement on a Brexit deal. If that doesn’t bring down this government and cause a general election, then we will support other options, including the possibility of a new referendum, a referendum on the actual Brexit deal.

People have a right to stand up for a proper democratic process. People have a right to say ‘this is not what we were told; this is not what we were promised’. The issue of Brexit in Britain is not settled, there is still a struggle going on to make sure we are not led over a cliff edge.

(Applause)

Othmar Karas (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, meine sehr geehrten Damen und Herren! Die Zeit drängt. Die Zeit drängt nicht nur beim Brexit. Ich muss den Bürgerinnen und Bürgern sagen: Für alle Vorschläge, für alle Probleme und Herausforderungen liegen Vorschläge der Kommission und Beschlüsse des Europäischen Parlaments auf dem Tisch. Wir warten ausschließlich darauf, dass der Rat seine Verhandlungsblockade beendet und einen Stil entwickelt, der sich an Lösungen orientiert statt an Blockaden.

Wer die Europäische Union handlungsfähiger, demokratischer und effizienter machen will, der muss entscheiden, statt den Außengrenzschutz, die Asylagentur, die legale Zuwanderung zu blockieren. Er muss sich entscheiden, die alte Rechts- und Wertegemeinschaft zu leben und das Artikel-7-Verfahren gegenüber Polen und Ungarn einzuleiten. Er muss zusammenhalten und europäische Verantwortung übernehmen, statt die Bürgerinnen und Bürger alleine zu lassen. Er sollte die Vorschläge der Kommission zur Beseitigung der Einstimmigkeit unterstützen und sich ohne Wenn und Aber für die liberale Demokratie und damit für die parlamentarische Demokratie einsetzen.

Das erwarten wir von der nächsten Ratssitzung. Öffnen Sie die Türe in die Zukunft und zum Umsetzen der vorgeschlagenen Lösungen!

Patrizia Toia (S&D). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, come sempre, il Consiglio promette momenti di verità – sono parole di Tusk – e decisioni forti, ma poi vive di rinvii. La storia più eclatante è quella della riforma di Dublino, la richiama la collega Kyenge, poteva già essere fatta e invece rischia di morire.

Il Consiglio così non smaschera le bugie degli euroscettici che sentiamo sempre anche in quest’Aula, non smaschera i loro inganni ai danni del popolo – l’ha detto il collega Corbett – il Consiglio copre soprattutto le proprie contraddizioni, le contraddizioni dei propri membri, cara Ministro, e fa anche il doppiogioco pur di proteggersi. Come chiamare diversamente se non doppiogioco quello che viene fatto, quando si dice, da un lato, si assicura una politica di solidarietà per l’immigrazione e poi si sancisce la base volontaria.

Qui il mio governo ha le sue grandissime responsabilità, anche in questo capitolo, come dire, se non è doppiogioco quello che fa il suo presidente Kurz, nonché Presidente del Consiglio, in questa fase, che da un lato parla di solidarietà e poi che fa, fortifica i confini nazionali. Doppiogioco è condannare Orban per le violazioni dello Stato di diritto e poi accettare la sua impostazione di egoismo nazionale sull’immigrazione.

Il Parlamento è molto solo, a volte con la Commissione, ma continuerà tuttavia con la consapevolezza di essere eletto direttamente dai cittadini europei a fare la sua parte.

Ivo Belet (PPE). – Voorzitter, de Europese Commissie heeft een concreet project op tafel gelegd. De versterking van de buitengrenzen van de Europese Unie met tienduizend extra grenswachten en kustwachten en ik denk dat we kunnen zeggen dat het Europees Parlement klaar staat om dat voorstel snel operationeel te maken, snel het groene licht te geven. Wij rekenen op u, mevrouw de Voorzitter, om binnen de Europese ministerraad ook dat voorstel vooruit te helpen. Sommigen in dit huis en ook daarbuiten zijn absoluut niet geïnteresseerd in een oplossing. Ze willen blijven roepen dat dit een continent is zonder grenzen, dat de achterdeur open staat enzoverder, die onzin blijven verkopen. Maar u, mevrouw de Minister, beschikt over een uitgelezen kans om nu een kordaat en helder en duidelijk signaal te geven aan

de Europeanen, een duidelijk signaal dat Europa de burgers en de mensen wel beschermt en duidelijk het vertrouwen van de burgers wel waard is.

Péter Niedermüller (S&D). – Elnök asszony! Miközben mi itt plenáris ülést tartunk, valahol kint, a Földközi-tengeren emberek hánykolódnak egy ócska csónakban Európa felé. Emberek, akiknek sejtelmük sincs arról, hogy ma Európában azon vetélkednek a kormányok, hogy ki tudja hatékonyabban lezárni a határait a menekültek előtt. Miközben mi itt plenáris ülést tartunk, Lesboszon, a görög szigeten, a Moria menekülttáborban közel 8000 ember várja borzalmas körülmények között, hogy szülessen végre valamilyen döntés az ügyükben, az életükről. De nem történik semmi, és nem történik semmi azért, mert a menekültek úgyge ma Európában politikai manipuláció tárgyává vált.

Avramopoulosz biztos nagyszerű beszédet mondott New York-ban, és világossá tette az európai menekültügyi politika alapelveit. Mindez azonban nem sokat ér, ha a Tanács, a miniszterelnökök nem a probléma megoldásával foglalkoznak, hanem saját politikai jövőjüket féltik. Politikai és morális bátorságot kellene végre mutatni, nem engedményeket tenni a szélsőjobboldalnak, mert így el fogjuk veszíteni azt az Európát, amit mindannyian közösen építettünk föl.

Maria João Rodrigues (S&D). – Madam President, the Austrian Presidency has launched its agenda under the motto ‘a Europe which protects’, but we fear that the understanding of a Europe which protects is being too limited. Starting with refugees and migration, it seems that most of all we need to protect ourselves from a kind of invasion coming from refugees. This is completely out of the reality. We need to ensure a proper way to rescue people drowning in the sea. We need to have a real European asylum system. We need to start discussing a legal corridor for migration in Europe and we need to have partnerships with the origin countries, which really helped these countries to provide a better life, for people to stay. This is the ambitious European policy we need to build up.

But then let me underline that if the motto is really ‘a Europe which protects’, the Austrian Presidency has a short time to deliver on key issues. The first one, I would say, is to protect fundamental rights and democracy, triggering Article 7 in the Polish and Hungarian case. Updating our law to protect us from cyber-manipulations. Then we have the need to protect people when it comes to social rights, delivering on the European pillar of social rights. Last but not least, we need to have the financial means and that’s why taxation, fair taxation, will be crucial to provide the means for us to sustain our welfare systems, our public services, but also the means to provide a community budget up to the level for the next years. Own resources are on the plate, and overall this is the short list of issues where the Austrian Presidency should be able to deliver until the end of the semester.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Λευτέρης Χριστοφόρου (PPE). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, εμείς όλοι πιστεύουμε σε μια ισχυρή και ενωμένη Ευρώπη, μια Ευρώπη που να μπορεί να ανταποκρίνεται στις προκλήσεις. Για να μπορέσει να πετύχει αυτή η Ευρώπη, θεωρώ ότι πρέπει να παραμείνει σταθερή σε θέσεις, αρχές και αξίες, είτε για το θέμα του Brexit είτε για το ζήτημα του μεταναστευτικού είτε για το κράτος δικαίου. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, είτε με τη Μεγάλη Βρετανία είτε χωρίς στη Μεγάλη Βρετανία, ενωμένη μπορεί να προχωρήσει και να είναι και πάλι ισχυρή και δυνατή, όπως την γνωρίσαμε και όπως την προσδοκούν τα 500 εκατομμύρια πολίτες.

Όμως η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση δεν μπορεί να πειραματίζεται και δεν μπορεί να κάνει εκπτώσεις στις αρχές και αξίες της. Και στο σημείο αυτό είναι η ευκαιρία: η ίδια η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή να ξεκαθαρίσει αν αυτή η ισχυρή Ευρώπη που θέλουμε υπερασπίζεται και διασφαλίζει τα εξωτερικά της σύνορα, υπερασπίζεται και διασφαλίζει την κυριαρχία των χωρών μελών. Και τα λέω αυτά, γιατί και πάλι χθες ο πρόεδρος της Τουρκίας εξαπέλυσε απειλές κατά της Ελλάδας και της Κύπρου, απειλές για τα ενεργειακά της αποθέματα, απειλές για τα κυριαρχικά της δικαιώματα.

Είσατε σε θέση, κύριε Αντιπρόεδρε της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, να διακηρύξετε και να διαμηνύσετε ότι η Κύπρος και η Ελλάδα δεν έχουν να φοβηθούν τίποτα και να στείλετε ισχυρό μήνυμα στην Τουρκία;

Elly Schlein (S&D). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, al vertice di Salisburgo di nuovo un nulla di fatto, la solita ossessione securitaria di controllo delle frontiere rispetto a chi fugge da violenze e da fame, nulla su Dublino o sulla solidarietà interna. Qualcuno vorrebbe addirittura fare accordi con l'Egitto, quando sono 32 mesi che chiediamo verità per Giulio Regeni, cittadino europeo torturato e ucciso e ancora nessuna risposta da parte del regime di Al-Sisi. State svendendo così i diritti fondamentali che sono alla base della nostra Unione.

Macron ha detto a Salisburgo che bisogna riformare Dublino prima delle elezioni europee. Finalmente ve ne siete accorti. Basta che adottiate la posizione espressa a maggioranza dei due terzi da questo Parlamento che obbligherebbe ogni Stato membro a fare la sua parte sull'accoglienza. Se lascerete finire questa riforma nel cassetto vi prendete la responsabilità dell'avanzata dei nazionalismi xenofobi e di non aver dato ai cittadini europei le risposte comuni europee che chiedono.

Marek Jurek (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! To zaskakujące, że przemówienie jednego byłego ministra na krajowej konferencji partyjnej jednej z kilkudziesięciu, czy może więcej partii politycznych w Europie wywołuje takie poruszenie – tak Państwa poruszyło porównanie Jeremiego Hunta do Związku Sowieckiego. Ja jestem przeciwnikiem ostrych porównań, ale chciałbym, żebyśmy ten standard stosowali w naszej Izbie. Pan przewodniczący Verhofstadt, który bardzo nie lubi kiedy ktoś nie chce słuchać jego przemówień, ale sam niechętnie słucha krytyki, bo jak widzimy nie ma go tutaj, porównał na tej sali, no wprowadził implicit, ale porównał premiera Orbána do Goebbelsa, mówiąc o paleniu książek przed parlamentem, i to nie wywołało tak radykalnej reakcji.

Ja z ogromnym niepokojem słucham, że tutaj w naszej debacie nazywano wykonywanie rządów prawa w odniesieniu do nielegalnej imigracji ksenofobią, obsesją. Myślę, że pan przewodniczący Timmermans, znany obrońca rządów prawa, powinien na to zdecydowanie zareagować.

Νεοκλής Συλικιώτης (GUE/NGL). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, η επικείμενη σύνοδος θα επανέλθει στην προσφυγική κρίση με έκθεση προόδου. Ευελπιστούμε ότι θα υπάρξει πραγματική εκτίμηση της προσφυγικής κρίσης, χωρίς εφησυχασμό λόγω του μειωμένου αριθμού αφίξεων στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση. Γιατί η τραγική πραγματικότητα, οι πνιγμοί ανθρώπων στη Μεσόγειο, δεν είναι μόνον αριθμοί. Η πρόσφατη συμφωνία των ηγετών στο Σάλτσμπουργκ για το προσφυγικό δυστυχώς κινείται προς λάθος κατεύθυνση. Οι συμφωνίες με τρίτες χώρες το μόνο που θα επιτύχουν είναι να αυξήσουν τους ελέγχους στα σύνορα, να ενισχύσουν τη λογική της Ευρώπης-φρούριο.

Εμείς επιμένουμε ότι χρειάζεται στρατηγική που να στηρίζεται στην αλληλεγγύη. Να καταργηθεί το Δουβλίνο II, να δημιουργηθεί ένα κοινό δίκαιο σύστημα ασύλου και μόνιμο δεσμευτικό και δίκαιο σύστημα μετεγκατάστασης των προσφύγων. Τα κράτη μέλη χρειάζονται έμπρακτη στήριξη. Για παράδειγμα, στην Κύπρο φτάνουν συνέχεια πλοίαρια με εξαθλιωμένους πρόσφυγες, μεταξύ των οποίων παιδιά και έγκυοι. Μπορεί ο αριθμός των προσφύγων να είναι μικρός· ωστόσο, κατ' αναλογία πληθυσμού της Κύπρου, οι ανάγκες που προκύπτουν είναι πολλές και η χώρα μας χρειάζεται στήριξη, για να ανταποκριθεί επαρκώς στη φιλοξενία των προσφύγων.

Γεώργιος Επιτήδειος (NI). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, η άτυπη Σύνοδος Κορυφής του Σάλτσμπουργκ δεν αφήνει και πολλά περιθώρια για ουσιαστική μεταβολή της πολιτικής της Ευρωπαϊκής Ενώσεως απέναντι στο σοβαρό θέμα της μεταναστεύσεως. Επαναλαμβάνονται τα ίδια επιχειρήματα: ότι πρέπει να προστατεύονται τα εξωτερικά σύνορα, που είναι σωστό· ότι δεν πρέπει να πεθαίνουν άνθρωποι, που κι αυτό είναι σωστό· πλην όμως εφαρμόζονται εσφαλμένες τακτικές και, επομένως, δεν μπορεί να δοθεί λύση στο πρόβλημα.

Πραγματική προστασία των εξωτερικών συνόρων επιτυγχάνεται μόνο αν την προστασία αυτή την αναλαμβάνουν οι ένοπλες δυνάμεις και τα Σώματα Ασφαλείας των κρατών. Δεν γίνεται από αποτυχημένους γραφειοκρατικούς οργανισμούς, όπως είναι ο Ευρωπαϊκός Οργανισμός Συνοριοφυλακής και Ακτοφυλακής, ο FRONTEX, και οι διεφθαρμένες ΜΚΟ. Επίσης δεν επιτυγχάνεται όταν η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση επιτρέπει στην Τουρκία να στέλνει κατά κύματα τους παράνομους μετανάστες και να έχει μετατρέψει την Ελλάδα σε ένα απέραντο στρατόπεδο δυστυχισμένων ψυχών. Επιπλέον δεν επιτυγχάνεται όταν αφήνουμε, όπως είπα και προηγουμένως, τους αποτυχημένους οργανισμούς να ενεργούν όπως ενεργούν.

Seán Kelly (PPE). – Madam President, I think Michel Barnier must have the most unenviable job in the world, especially if he was watching the debate here this morning. He has called for dedramatisation of the issues and it was the exact opposite we got. We had total drama. People playing to the gallery, people playing to their audiences back home without taking the issues seriously. I think Mr Juncker is right in terms of saying the Irish question first, because too much has been invested in the Good Friday Agreement. We have peace, we want that to continue and that has to be guaranteed. It has been guaranteed up until now and it will have to be into the future in the withdrawal agreement.

Statements like comparing the European Union to Soviet Russia are so wide of the mark and so disrespectful as to be risible and probably, maybe, best ignored. They are coming from people who have no interest really in trying to get an agreement. But an agreement we must get and we all have to work together to do so, and if we do so we can get it.

Marita Ulvskog (S&D). – Fru talman! Vad gäller migrationen vet vi ju att de människor som flyr till EU är i en oerhört utsatt situation. De måste dock få rätt att söka asyl i hela EU. Den situation vi lever med nu är ohållbar. Fler måste vara med och dela ansvaret. Om vi inte delar ansvaret, kommer det att leda till en svår obalans i åtagandena i övrigt inom EU-samarbetet och bryta sönder alla andra samarbeten.

Vad gäller brexit vill jag bara säga att jag som svensk socialdemokrat är väldigt sorgsen över att britterna är på väg ut ur EU. Vi har haft väldigt mycket gemensamt från svensk sida, från nordisk sida, med britterna. Det hade vi kunnat fortsätta med och uppnå fantastiska resultat. Nu försvinner ni bort, det är sorgligt. Då får det inte bli en kapplöpning mot botten när det gäller till exempel arbetstagares rättigheter.

Νότης Μαριάς (ECR). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, κύριε Timmermans, νομίζω ότι έχει έρθει πλέον η ώρα για την κατάργηση του Δουβλίνου III και την αντικατάστασή του με ένα νέο σύστημα εξέτασης αιτήσεων ασύλου που θα καταργεί ολοσχερώς την έννοια του κράτους πρώτης εισόδου. Ένα σύστημα που θα διατηρεί την εθνική κυριαρχία των κρατών μελών στον τομέα του ασύλου. Κύριε Timmermans, το σύστημα του Δουβλίνου έχει αποτύχει, καθώς έχει μετατρέψει την Ελλάδα και την Ιταλία σε αποθήκες ψυχών.

Τα νησιά του Αιγαίου, και ιδίως η Λέσβος, κατακλύζονται από συνεχείς αυξημένες μεταναστευτικές ροές, κατακλύζονται από χιλιάδες υπηκόους τρίτων χωρών, που, παρότι επιθυμούν να πάνε στις χώρες του σκληρού πυρήνα, εντούτοις εγκλωβίζονται στην Ελλάδα, στη φτωχοποιημένη από τα μνημόνια Ελλάδα. Ο Frontex, αντί να προστατεύει τα ευρωπαϊκά σύνορα, έχει μετατραπεί σε tour operator. Η φύλαξη των συνόρων της Ελλάδας πρέπει να ανατεθεί στις ελληνικές ένοπλες δυνάμεις και η κυβέρνηση πρέπει να εφαρμόσει το άρθρο 72 της Συνθήκης λειτουργίας της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης για λόγους εσωτερικής ασφάλειας και να αναστείλει τη Συμφωνία του Σένγκεν, το Δουβλίνο III και τις διατάξεις για το άσυλο και τη μετανάστευση.

João Ferreira (GUE/NGL). – Senhora Presidente, a crescente disseminação da retórica e de concessões próprias da extrema-direita no discurso e na prática da direita dita *tradicional* e da própria social-democracia fica bem à vista no debate sobre as migrações.

O conceito de *Europa fortaleza*, abertamente assumido e defendido, a explícita associação entre migrações e segurança, a visão seletiva instrumental das migrações com a gestão da força de trabalho imigrante feita unicamente em função dos interesses e das necessidades do grande capital, o apoio aos campos de concentração na vizinhança da União Europeia, a convergência na ideia de que o perigo vem de fora para esconder que o perigo para os trabalhadores e os povos está cá dentro na ação política que uns e outros levam a cabo.

Se juntarmos a tudo isto o profundo desrespeito pelos direitos de soberania dos povos e as políticas de retrocesso social aí temos o caldo de cultura criado para o ascenso da extrema-direita. Alguns dos que hipocritamente alertam para o perigo da serpente são dos mais velozes cuidadores dos seus ovos.

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Doamna președintă, domnule comisar, doamna ministru, sigur, vorbim de ce s-a întâmplat la Salzburg. Mă interesează ce veți face în viitor, în următorul Consiliu, pentru că s-au spus aici foarte multe lucruri din toate grupurile politice.

Europa este într-o criză. Nu putem ignora precedentul creat prin Brexit. Ce facem însă? Nu credeți, Comisia, Consiliul, că trebuie să resetați metodologia de lucru? Nu credeți că este deja percepția cetățenilor europeni în anumite țări că există o discriminare, că există definită democrația diferit, că nu există un tratament egal?

Iată, mâine nu putem vorbi la o dezbatere despre țara mea. Nu s-a mai întâmplat acest lucru. Deci, domnul comisar Timmermans, așeară, n-a răspuns la niciuna din întrebări. Ce democrație este asta? Ce să explicăm cetățenilor din țara noastră?

Stimată Comisie, stimat Consiliu, eu cred că trebuie să aduceți aici nu numai vorbe, ci fapte: cum faceți ca proiectul Uniunea Europeană să fie un proiect de viitor. Și cred, de asemenea, că trebuie să avem aceeași unitate de măsură și trebuie să ținem cont de sursele prin care ne informăm.

Λάμπρος Φουντούλης (NI). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, σύμφωνα με την ενημέρωση που λάβαμε όλοι μας, τρία είναι τα θέματα που θα μονοπωλήσουν τις συζητήσεις στην επερχόμενη Σύνοδο Κορυφής: οι συνεχιζόμενες διαπραγματεύσεις για την έξοδο της Μεγάλης Βρετανίας από την Ένωση, η μετανάστευση και η ασφάλεια.

Κοινό γνώρισμα και των τριών θεμάτων είναι το γεγονός πως οι ηγέτες της Ένωσης αδυνατούν να βρουν λύση. Σχετικά με το θέμα της Μεγάλης Βρετανίας, οι δήθεν διαπραγματεύσεις έχουν εκφυλιστεί εδώ και καιρό σε μια σειρά εκβιασμών, που δεν σέβονται πρώτα από όλα τη βούληση των Βρετανών, όπως αυτή εκφράστηκε στο δημοψήφισμα. Επιπλέον, η στάση των διαπραγματευτών που εκπροσωπούν την Ένωση θυμίζει περισσότερο παιδιά που μαλώνουν στην αυλή του σχολείου παρά ενήλικους.

Η μετανάστευση παραδοσιακά παραμένει ένα τεράστιο ζήτημα παρά τις χρονίζουσες πλέον προσπάθειες επίλυσής του. Σας διαβεβαιώ πως όσο προσεγγίζετε το θέμα υπό το πρίσμα των ιδεολογικών σας συμπλεγμάτων και αρνείστε να αντικρίσετε την πραγματικότητα, το πρόβλημα δεν θα λυθεί.

Τέλος, όσον αφορά την ασφάλεια, ας ευχαριστούμε τον Θεό που το χαλιφάτο ηττάται στη Συρία και δεν έχει πλέον τα μέσα να οργανώσει μεγάλης κλίμακας επιθέσεις, διότι τα μέτρα που λάβατε είχαν μηδενικό αποτέλεσμα.

Κώστας Μαυρίδης (S&D). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, το Brexit είναι μια αρνητική εξέλιξη, ωστόσο μπορούμε να αντλήσουμε ένα πολύ θετικό μάθημα. Η κυριότερη αιτία της απογοήτευσης των Ευρωπαίων πολιτών εντοπίζεται στη διάσταση ανάμεσα στις αξίες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, τις οποίες όλοι έχουμε κατά νου και γνωρίζουμε, και στις πολιτικές που πολλές φορές ακολουθούμε. Και αν είναι κάτι –και απευθύνομαι προς την Επιτροπή– το οποίο θα δώσει νόημα στην ελευθερία, ασφάλεια, δικαιοσύνη και αλληλεγγύη, ούτως ώστε οι Ευρωπαίοι πολίτες εν όψει και των ευρωεκλογών να κατανοήσουν τον ρόλο που διαδραματίζουμε, αυτό είναι: περισσότερη δημοκρατία.

Ξεκαθαρίζω: δεν υπάρχει δημοκρατία και ελευθερία, ενόσω η Τουρκία κατέχει μέρος της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Δεν υπάρχει ελευθερία και ασφάλεια, ενόσω δεν προασπιζόμαστε την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και τα σύνορα, από τα μικρά έως τα μεγάλα κράτη. Οι Ευρωπαίοι πολίτες πρέπει να είναι στο κέντρο της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης!

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Frans Timmermans, First Vice-President of the Commission. – Madam President, I have listened very carefully to the debate and on that basis I would like to react to two issues: migration and Brexit. To start with migration, it should be obvious to all of us that we can only find a sustainable solution to the challenge of migration if it is a comprehensive solution. Yes, we are working hard to strengthen our external border protection, but those who believe that we will solve this issue just by strengthening the external borders are delusional. We can only solve this issue in a European way – and I believe by now every Member State understands that this cannot be done just individually by Member States – but we can only find a comprehensive and sustainable solution if it comprises all elements linked to migration. Not just a stronger protection of our external borders, but also agreements with countries of origin for the return of people who do not have the right to asylum, as well as forms of internal solidarity in the European Union and the revision of the Dublin Agreement.

Why? Because frankly it boils down to a very simple truth: either we find a solution internally for that challenge that effectively shows the understanding that we cannot leave countries alone simply because of reasons of geography, because they are closest to where the migration flows come from. Either we understand that, or we condemn ourselves to reintroduce internal borders in the European Union. It is as simple as that.

That is why the Commission strongly believes that we need to revise the Dublin Regulation, but we need to do it in a way that expresses the new realities, which were not known when Dublin came into being, and expresses the future reality that we will only solve this issue on the basis of European-wide solidarity. Just imagine what would have happened in 2015 and 2016 if all nations in Europe had said we just close our borders and we will not let in anyone. What would have happened to Greece and Italy if everybody had taken that attitude, as some nations have? It would have been a tragedy of incredible proportions, a human tragedy. So leaders at that time took their responsibility, sometimes at incredible political cost, but on the basis of the values I hope we continue to share.

Let me end on one issue about migration. Our sister continent, Africa, is at the core of the problem and will have to be at the core of the solution. No other parts of the world will have to take a greater responsibility for the future of Africa than Europe. Only if we understand that the future of Africa is the future of Europe, will we be able to solve the issue. In that sense, I honestly believe the challenge we are facing – To bridge the Mediterranean – is of the same magnitude as the challenge our grandparents faced to bridge the Rhine after the Second World War, and the challenge we faced when we were younger, to bridge the Elbe after the fall of the Berlin Wall. That is the magnitude of the challenge, and the sooner we wake up to that challenge, the sooner we will find a comprehensive solution to an issue, migration, that will not go away simply by refusing entry, simply by building walls, simply by protecting better our external borders.

On the issue of Brexit, the British people have voted, and that means that for now, we are all under the obligation to do as little harm as possible. That is in the interest of all Europeans, whether they are in the United Kingdom or on the continent. And I believe this means trying to find solutions for the problem we face. But let me be very clear: carving out parts of the four liberties is not going to bring a solution. Let me also be very clear, if somebody says 'I want to leave your house but I'll take the key, and I'll come back in whenever I like, and take whatever I like from that house', that doesn't work. We have to make sure that we come to terms with the fact that the United Kingdom has expressed a wish to leave the European Union and that we negotiate in good faith to make this happen in a way that respects the integrity of the European Union, including its four freedoms, and respects the wish of the British people as it stands.

I want to make add two remarks. First of all, on the Good Friday Agreement.

How is it possible that people coming from the United Kingdom maintain that there is no link between the European Union and the Good Friday Agreement? The European Union is an integral part of the success of the Good Friday Agreement. It would not have been possible without the European Union. And you cannot just brush away that responsibility, which is a collective responsibility. The Good Friday Agreement was one of the most historic achievements of the United Kingdom, Ireland and the European Union, and we are all responsible for maintaining that legacy and for preventing the island of Ireland from going back to a past that I knew as a young man, and I hope I will never see again.

This Agreement was concluded 20 years ago, one month before I was elected to the Dutch parliament for the first time. And yes, Mr Farage, I was elected six times to a national parliament. I would like to see you try that in the United Kingdom at some stage – we'll see. But again, the issue of Ireland – I want to stress what Jean-Claude Juncker said – is central to our responsibility to do as little harm as possible in these negotiations, and just to brush us aside in London is completely irresponsible; the Commission will never take the responsibility to do the same thing, and that is why Michel Barnier is doing what he is doing.

Finally, of course, at this stage emotions run high on all sides. I have some understanding for that, and you have to sort of forget some of the things that are being said with all these emotions. But, I represent a college of Commissioners, where more than one third of its Members have personal experience with dictatorship, with oppression and with dictatorial communist rule inspired by the Soviet Union. They have all fought to liberate themselves from this. One of my colleagues, Vytenis Andriukaitis, was born in Siberia. Why? Because his parents, Lithuanians, were deported by the Soviet regime to the Gulag. Vytenis did not know sunlight, what it meant. He did not know what the length of a day was. He had never seen an orange as a child. All these things that he has told me over the years show clearly what the Soviet Union was. And any comparison to the EU is not just misleading. It is insulting to what the Union is, to what we have become.

(Applause)

Juliane Bogner-Strauss, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Madam President, honorable Members, thank you for your remarks and for your comments. I will convey them, of course, also to President Tusk. In our endeavours, whether on migration or on security, we should be clear that there is no silver bullet. We can only achieve results through a comprehensive approach and cooperation at the European level.

One of your main criticisms was on Dublin. You are for sure aware of the fact that mandatory allocation, which is at the heart of Parliament's mandate, continues to be the main stumbling block in the negotiations in the Council and divides not only the Member States, but also the electorates which you represent. To make progress in finding a compromise, the Presidency, in particular Chancellor Kurz, has conducted bilateral talks with all Member States over the summer, in order to find a possible middle-ground. The issue was discussed at the informal meeting in Salzburg and we will have a discussion at the Justice and Home Affairs Council on 12 October. We aim to present the outcome of our efforts to Heads of State and Government at the European Council later this month. We are also working on the other files to find a solution to the whole package. For example, I would like to inform you about the Africa-Europe high-level forum on taking cooperation to the digital age, which will take place on 18 December in Vienna. Chancellor Kurz and the President of the Republic of Rwanda, Mr Kagame, will host this high level forum, which will bring together European and African Heads of State and Government, accompanied by relevant ministers and CEOs of highly innovative European and African companies to promote innovation and digitalisation as important enablers for our development and also for the future development of Africa.

There were also concerns with regard to Article 7 on Poland and Hungary. The Council is dealing with this issue, as it is on the agenda of the General Affairs Council on 16 October, as you might know.

Finally, when it comes to Brexit, there is still a high degree of uncertainty about the outcomes of the negotiations, but it is clear that the European Union will continue to strive for the best possible deal.

President. – Before I close this debate, and while it is obviously the Chair's duty to be impartial, the issues of Brexit and Ireland are sensitive to me and I welcome the comments made by Mr Timmermans. Perhaps I can close this debate with words from the grave of a famous Irish poet, Seamus Heaney, and make of them what you will: 'All throwing shapes, every one of them, convinced he's in the right. All of them glad to repeat themselves and their every last mistake, no matter what.'

(Applause)

The debate is closed.

Written statements (Rule 162)

Iratxe García Pérez (S&D), *por escrito*. – Un mes después de la cumbre informal de Salzburgo no hay solidaridad. Mientras que los ciudadanos quieren soluciones a nuestros problemas, el Consejo Europeo no solo no aporta soluciones, sino que acumula fracaso tras fracaso. La reforma de la política común de asilo es un buen ejemplo. Es inaceptable que los jefes de Estado y de Gobierno no desbloqueen la reforma del paquete de asilo después de que el Parlamento Europeo la aprobara por mayoría. La migración es un fenómeno global y, si queremos que la gente deje de morir en el Mediterráneo, la UE debe actuar con humanidad, dignidad y credibilidad. Por otro lado, el Consejo Europeo tampoco aborda los problemas a nivel nacional. ¿Cuándo fue la última vez que la protección social, los derechos de los trabajadores y la pobreza infantil fueron los puntos principales del orden del día de un Consejo Europeo? Desafortunadamente, el Consejo Europeo está paralizado por los continuos vetos de los Estados miembros. Si no se tienden puentes para que emerja la solidaridad europea, el *statu quo* actual no es viable.

Agnes Jongerius (S&D), *schriftelijk*. – De Europese Top die komende maand plaatsvindt, is cruciaal voor de brexit-onderhandelingen. Bij die onderhandelingen gaat het er niet om dat “the winner takes all”. Belangrijk is wel dat er eindelijk een sociale deal komt. Want wanneer beide partijen blijven bluffen en voluit voor de winst gaan, racen zij blind richting de afgrond van 29 maart 2018. Zonder deal zal één partij het meest de dupe zijn van dit spel, namelijk de inwoners van de Europese Unie. Het is hun toekomst die wordt verspeeld.

Een harde brexit zal alleen al iedere Nederlander gemiddeld 300 euro per jaar kosten, laat staan de rekening die de Britten op hun mat krijgen. Daarom hebben we een handelsverdrag nodig. Een handelsverdrag waarbij sociale normen wederzijds worden gewaarborgd, de Europese normen en waarden worden gerespecteerd en alle werknemers op het continent bescherming genieten. In Salzburg leek een fatsoenlijke deal verder weg dan ooit. Ik verwacht dat bij de komende Europese Top de regeringsleiders eindelijk uitgedanst zijn en ter zake komen. Iedereen is winnaar met een sociale deal. Wordt wakker allemaal, het is geen spelletje. Het gaat om mensen en de daadwerkelijke consequenties van een slechte deal voor hun leven.

Evelyn Regner (S&D), *schriftlich*. – Die Halbzeitbilanz des österreichischen Ratsvorsitzes ist bescheiden. Anstatt Brücken zu bauen, werden diese jede Woche aufs Neue eingerissen. „It was a mess“ war der Tenor der internationalen Presse nach dem Gipfel in Salzburg. Präsident Juncker hat in seiner Rede zur Lage der Union einen klaren Auftrag an den österreichischen Ratsvorsitz erteilt: Solidarität in der Migrationsfrage dauerhaft zu organisieren. Das bedeutet, vernünftige Lösungen statt Hetze. Wir im Europaparlament haben unsere Position für die Asylreform verabschiedet. Das sind nachhaltige und realistische Lösungen: ein gemeinsames europäisches Asylsystem, rasche Verfahren in ganz Europa und legale Einreisewege.

Der zweite Punkt ist das Motto des österreichischen Ratsvorsitzes: Ein Europa, das schützt! Das bedeutet mehr als nur Zäune und Grenzschutz. Das bedeutet vor allem sozialer Schutz! Ein Bereich, den die Ratspräsidentschaft komplett vernachlässigt hat! Die österreichische Ratspräsidentschaft könnte ihren Beitrag zu einem sozialen Europa leisten! Die Work-Life-Balance oder transparente und zuverlässige Arbeitsbedingungen – um zwei davon zu nennen – sind aber absolut kein Thema! Im Gegenteil – auch sozialpolitische Entwicklungen in Österreich zeigen deutlich, dass der soziale Schutz, die Stärkung der ArbeitnehmerInnenrechte und auch der Kampf gegen Kinderarmut für die österreichische Regierung weder in Österreich noch in der EU zu ihrem Arbeitsprogramm zählen!

Ivan Štefanec (PPE), *písomne*. – Brexit je tragédiou. Vidíme, čo prináša nová forma populizmu. Je dôležité nájsť status pre Britov žijúcich v EÚ, hlavne v prípade hard-Brexitu. Čo sa týka Írska, EÚ nebude akceptovať takú dohodu, ktorá by určila fyzickú hranicu či narušila mierový proces. Európa musí byť kontinentom, ktorý pomáha ľuďom v núdzi. Veľké posuny v migračnej politike sú pozitívnym impulzom do budúcnosti. Trans-pacifická dohoda je o budovaní múrov zo strany USA, my chceme budovať mosty – rovnaké pravidlá pre všetkých, napr. pri investíciách a bezpečnosti či spoločnom zadefinovaní jednotlivých pojmov. Investície v EÚ nie vždy vychádzajú z trhových princípov, ale aj z toho, že EÚ chce garantovať slobodné a férové obchodovanie.

Tibor Szanyi (S&D), *írásban*. – Az Európai Tanács mostani ülése előtt ismét – immár sokadik alkalommal – az a kihívás áll, hogy érdemi, minden tagállam elkötelezettségét szavatoló döntéseket hozzon az Unió migrációs politikájának tartós és humánus átalakításáról. Úgy vélem, hogy ezúttal már nincs helye további halogatásnak, a közösségi döntéshozatal blokkolásának az EU súlyos politikai hitelvesztése nélkül, ami együtt járna az Európa-ellenes, populistá, nacionalista erők befolyásának növekedésével az EP-választási kampányban és általában az európai politikai folyamatok alakításában.

A döntés alapfeltételei most megvannak: a migrációs nyomás – nagyrészt az eddigi uniós intézkedések hatására – a 2015 előtt szint alá, történelmi mélypontra csökkent, s az Európai Bizottság végre konkrét javaslatokkal rendelkezik az uniós határok hatékony, közös védelme, a Frontex megerősítése, a Földközi-tengeri válsághelyzetek kezelése tekintetében.

Az EP erős politikai támogatást kínál az EiT-nek az európai szolidaritáson alapuló közös felelősségvállalást rögzítő jogszabályok meghozatalához, ám a tagállami egység változatlanul hiányzik. Európa felelős vezetői nem tűrhetik tovább, hogy Orbán és néhány más populista követője saját hatalmi érdekből blokkolja a döntéshozatal a közös migrációs politika reformjáról. A mostani EiT történelmi feladata, hogy meggyőzze idegengyűlölő nacionalisták „minél rosszabb, annál jobb” taktikáját, az EU előtt ugyanis ma már a migrációnál súlyosabb, távlatos gazdasági, szociális, fenntarthatósági és biztonsági kihívások állnak, s az EP-választási kampánynak is ezekről kellene szólnia.

Bogdan Andrzej Zdrojewski (PPE), na piśmie. – Na pierwszy rzut oka tematy poruszane podczas nadchodzącego szczytu Rady Europejskiej pozostają te same, jednak zawartość i szczegóły wskazują na pewien progres w każdej z podejmowanych spraw. Podczas nieformalnego spotkania liderów we wrześniu zawężono i określono dokładnie sfery wspólnego działania, które wydatnie zwiększą bezpieczeństwo wewnętrzne Unii.

To ważne, że kwestie poruszane od dłuższego czasu podczas obrad Parlamentu Europejskiego, jak współpraca sądownicza oraz wymiana doświadczeń w zakresie bezpieczeństwa cybernetycznego, znalazły się pośród priorytetów wspólnej agendy przywódców państw UE. Szczególnie w obliczu toczących się w Europie kampanii wyborczych ważne, byśmy dzielili się zarówno technologią, jak i strategiami zwalczania nieprawdziwych treści w sferze cybernetycznej. Czekamy także na kolejne namacalne rezultaty współpracy w ramach PESCO. Pierwsza grupa zatwierdzonych projektów była pozytywnym krokiem, ale potrzebujemy większego zaangażowania i ambicji przy okazji kolejnego wezwania do przedkładania projektów współpracy z zakresu bezpieczeństwa.

Kwestią, gdzie brakuje wyraźnego postępu, są negocjacje dotyczące wyjścia Wielkiej Brytanii z UE. Zarówno negatywny wydźwięk spotkania w Salzburgu, jak i słowa premier May o tym, że wyjście z UE bez jakiegokolwiek umowy jest możliwe, wskazują, że sytuacja jest poważna. Dla stabilności zarówno politycznej, jak prawnej po obu stronach konieczne jest ustalenie warunków wyjścia. W przeciwnym razie obie strony dryfują ku nieznanemu.

Carlos Zorrinho (S&D), por escrito. – A Presidência austríaca tem como mote a Europa que protege. Para dar conteúdo a esta ideia mobilizadora, é importante tomar medidas que façam os cidadãos sentir-se mais protegidos nos diversos planos, designadamente no acesso aos direitos sociais, ao emprego, à saúde, à educação, à segurança física e à proteção contra os novos riscos emergentes no plano ambiental e digital. Não é isso que tem acontecido. A cimeira informal de Salzburgo transmitiu, mais uma vez, uma imagem de desunião e incapacidade de resposta aos grandes desafios que se colocam à União Europeia.

O Conselho Europeu de 18 e 19 de outubro tem em agenda temas fundamentais de que são exemplo as migrações, a segurança e as relações externas. Para estar à altura do momento, o Conselho tem de avançar com políticas concretas em domínios como a reforma do acordo de Dublin e a dinamização das parcerias para o controlo e a gestão humanista das migrações. Passos importantes têm também de ser dados para assegurar que as próximas eleições europeias não serão afetadas por mecanismos digitais de instrumentalização e manipulação.

(The sitting was suspended at 11.25 pending the Formal sitting)

PRESIDENZA DELL'ON. ANTONIO TAJANI

Presidente

4. Plechtige vergadering – Montenegro

Presidente. – Signor Presidente, benvenuto a Strasburgo e alla sessione plenaria del Parlamento europeo. Sono particolarmente felice di questa visita, perché Lei è il primo capo di Stato di un paese dei Balcani ad esprimersi davanti a questo Parlamento.

Sono lieto di accoglierla per la quarta volta in poco più di un anno, e la regolarità dei nostri incontri conferma una realtà ormai consolidata: il Montenegro fa parte dell'Europa, non solo geograficamente ma anche perché condividiamo l'eredità culturale, la storia e i valori che hanno forgiato la nostra identità europea. E come italiano non posso non ricordare come la storia del Montenegro e quella dell'Italia si siano intrecciate più volte.

Questi incontri permettono di ancorare il Montenegro e, più in generale, i Balcani all'Unione europea. È importante dare al vostro paese una prospettiva chiara. Bisogna affermare con forza che il vostro processo di adesione all'Unione è irreversibile. La Sua leadership è essenziale in questo processo perché è un percorso politico e non burocratico. Può contare sul mio appoggio e su quello del Parlamento europeo. Dobbiamo intensificare la nostra cooperazione per affrontare le sfide in materia di sicurezza e la minaccia del terrorismo. È nostra responsabilità lavorare insieme, anche per gestire i flussi migratori.

L'Unione deve essere al vostro fianco anche per opporci insieme all'influenza di chi vuole destabilizzarci. Le agende degli estremisti e dei fanatici, dei radicalisti islamici sono contrarie ai nostri valori. La vostra stabilità è la nostra stabilità. Siamo anche a vostra disposizione per aiutarvi a fare le necessarie riforme dell'amministrazione e della giustizia. Sono strumenti preziosi per consolidare un clima degli affari sano e per attirare ancor più investimenti europei nel vostro paese.

Ora, signor Presidente, La prego di prendere la parola per parlare con i nostri deputati europei, per informarli della situazione del Suo paese, ma anche per darci un'immagine di ciò che sta accadendo nei Balcani.

Signor Presidente, ha la parola.

Milo Đukanović, President of Montenegro. – *(The following is a transcript of the interpretation of the original speech from Montenegrin into English)* Mr President, esteemed MEPs, ladies and gentlemen, you have bestowed a great honour upon me by inviting me to address this highest house in European politics in my capacity as the President of Montenegro – one of the youngest and smallest European states. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to inform you of the achievements and plans for Montenegro, the country that is the frontrunner in the negotiating process with the EU, and the country that, since its independence referendum in 2006, has been approaching its strategic national goal in a determined, stable and dynamic way. That goal is full membership in contemporary Europe's system of values.

I would also like to present our views on the future of the Western Balkans and the European Union. I would like to understand your invitation as yet another confirmation of the European Parliament's commitment and support, not only to the EU prospects of Montenegro, but also to the EU accession of the region and the EU's enlargement policy. So the question is: where is Montenegro today, 12 years on, as a country whose renewed independence was met by scepticism by many in the country and neighbourhood, but also in Europe and the world?

I would like to draw your attention to two of our key achievements. We have strengthened our internal stability and ensured dynamic economic, institutional and democratic development. Internationally, we have been achieving – and over-achieving – our very ambitious goals. We have been a NATO member for a year and a half; we are a candidate country for EU membership, and there are only two remaining chapters to open. We are a responsible neighbour and an important contributor to regional stability and cooperation. And as a result of all of this, we are a destination for investments and an inspiration for many renowned foreign partners.

With the moral and political capital of an ex-Yugoslav republic that did not see a war on its territory in the 1990s, we are now developing a civic society of multi-ethnic and multi-religious harmony, without outstanding issues with our neighbours, which is confirmed by our border agreements with Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, the first such agreement among ex-Yugoslav countries. Despite being one of the least developed ex-Yugoslav republics, our economy is the leading one in the Balkans today. Last year, we registered real growth in GDP of 4.7%, which is one of the highest rates in Europe. Throughout the period since the independence referendum, we have had average annual rate of real growth of the economy of over 3%, and the living standards of our population are now among the highest in the region. Twelve years ago, we were at 34% of the EU average, and last year it was 46%. All the other Balkan countries are below 40% and some, unfortunately, are even below 30%. From 2006 to the end of last year, our GDP grew nominally by 100%.

Consequently, GDP per capita in current prices in 2017 was close to EUR 7 000, compared to close to EUR 3 500 in 2006. In August this year, the average rate was EUR 511, which is nominally around 80% higher than the previous year. The average wages in Montenegro are the highest in the region, but still, unfortunately, three times lower than the EU average. This is a consequence of the historical lagging behind of this part of Europe in terms of economic development.

An important impetus to economic growth has been given by foreign direct investment in this period, with net inflows of over EUR six billion, or close to 18% of annual average GDP. We have also been registering very good results in tourism, which accounts for 20% of GDP. We have a population of over 600 000, and last year we had around two million tourists in hotel and private accommodation. Of course, we should recall that throughout a good part of this period, we had a devastating financial and economic crisis in Europe and the world, which has logically adversely affected our economy as well.

Insufficient employment, especially of young people, is still the biggest challenge in terms of social development in Montenegro for the period to come. It is necessary to strengthen macroeconomic stability and improve our competitiveness internationally through further structural reforms.

We have made a major step forward in the Euro-Atlantic Accession processes. Last year we became a fully-fledged member of NATO and, as such, we participated in the NATO Summit in Brussels and confirmed our readiness to contribute to the policies of the alliance as a responsible and credible ally. NATO membership for us is the greatest recognition of our enormous efforts in implementing comprehensive reforms and our contribution to regional and global stability through developing cooperation among partners.

Our NATO membership has produced positive effects, not only in terms of security and political stability, but also in other areas. We have more direct investments from NATO countries, and the share of tourists from NATO countries this year grew by 25%. Our NATO accession testifies to an important reform-based step forward for our entire society, economically and politically speaking, and of the results of the continuous efforts we are investing in building rule of law.

As a candidate country, Montenegro has made much progress in the process of EU negotiations. In the six years of negotiations, we have opened 31 negotiating chapters and provisionally closed three. Montenegro has fulfilled all the opening benchmarks, in total 22 of them that were set for 13 areas, thus completing this demanding phase. We have also submitted 32 negotiating positions and we are preparing for Chapter VIII – Competition. We hope that the remaining two chapters will be opened in the near future. Apart from Competition, there is Chapter 27 – Environment. At the same time we are committed to fulfilling the closing benchmarks in all the areas in which these parameters have been defined.

One should not forget that the negotiating process with Montenegro started with the new approach in which Chapters 23 and 24 are opened at the beginning, and the whole process depends on the progress of these two chapters, which is the greatest challenge for the region. Already today, Montenegro behaves as a member of the European Union when it comes to the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy. We unequivocally adhere to the common EU positions, despite the frequent pressures we are subjected to because of this. Furthermore, Montenegro is continuously contributing to peace and security through the participation of the Army of Montenegro in NATO, EU and UN operations and missions.

When it comes to the issue of resolving the migrant crisis, Montenegro is in line with the principles of solidarity and humanity, expressing the wish to receive migrants from African countries within the limits of its capacities. That is an expression of our dedication to humanitarian goals forged in the time of wars in the former Yugoslavia, when refugees of all ethnic origins at times made up a fourth of our population.

Economic and social progress is directly linked to the results in the field of the rule of law. During the negotiations in this field, we have passed approximately 70 reform laws, strengthened the strategic framework and created institutions such as the Special Public Prosecutor's Office and the Agency for the Prevention of Corruption. We have made progress in the fight against high-level corruption and organised crime. We know the importance of the rule of law for society as a whole, not only for the negotiations. We are working hard on fulfilling the provisional benchmarks, and we hope they will be recognised in the positive report and the closing benchmarks.

We are committed to enhancing justice, creating conditions for a full guarantee of the freedom of expression in the media, and cooperation with civil society; we are supported in this by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the OSCE.

We appreciate the financial, technical and any other form of assistance from the EU and its Member States. We also share our experiences with other candidate countries. We believe that the success of any Western Balkan country on the European path is the success of all, and we are convinced that the 'regatta approach', reconfirmed in the recent enlargement strategy, is a mechanism that represents a true incentive for the whole Western Balkans.

Integration of the countries of the region is a good strategy for the stability of the European continent. The enlargement process is important not only for the Balkans, but also for the stability and competitiveness of Europe. I underline this because it seems that the strong euro-enthusiasm, which was characteristic of Central and Eastern Europe and also of the Western Balkans, is losing momentum. There are two strong causes for this. It is the dissonant tones coming from different parts of Europe regarding the pace of the European enlargement, and also the unresolved problems and issues that have remained open in the regions since the Yugoslav crisis, such as the problems in the relations between Serbia and Kosovo, in Macedonia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These two causes are interdependent.

The confusion and uncertainty in Europe feed the illusions of the proponents of regressive politics in our region, who still dream of reshuffling the region and seek support for these ideas from some important international actors. They are counting on the short memory of the international community. That is why sometimes one has the impression that the destructive tones are louder today than in the 1990s. That is why I believe that the European prospects of the region in the certain and foreseeable future – which were implicitly announced at the Sofia Summit and in the last speech of President Juncker – will be wind in the sails of the pro-European elites.

Unfortunately, the results of the referendum in Macedonia are the best illustration of the problems I am referring to. Decades of neglecting the problem could not be overcome through the intensified Western support in the last few months. Also, the referendum was organised too soon and without enough preparation. Perhaps the domestic public should have been given more time to fully grasp the importance of such a decision.

However, one should not lose hope that, through a two-thirds majority vote in the parliament or through new elections, this outcome can be achieved. I hope that, in Brussels and in other capitals, this result will be understood as an alarm bell and a sign that it is necessary to take more decisive strategic policy steps.

What remains is the hope that this will not reflect negatively on the dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo, which is already very complicated even without this. Additional efforts are necessary to ensure that the result is achieved, even more so when knowing that there is enthusiasm, both in Pristina and in Belgrade. The most important thing is that the dialogue has been established and that it lasts, regardless of occasional incidents and the political temperature that has been raised on both sides.

I sincerely hope that all those involved in this process will take into account the traditionally fragile stability of the Western Balkans and strive for a solution that will be in favour of overcoming this historically burdensome gap between Belgrade and Pristina and, at the same time, not jeopardise broader regional security interests

Unfortunately, there also remains the unresolved issue of the functioning of Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is a strong feeling of dissatisfaction with the results of political players – both domestic and international – in the 25 years of implementation of the Dayton Agreement. Bosnia and Herzegovina will go to the polls soon, but regardless of the individual composition of the future three-member presidency, I do not expect either consensus to be reached or greater commitment of leading political structure and individuals to reforms that would take the country in the direction of adoption of the European system of values and integration.

It will take a new, broader international action to achieve that goal, with emphasis on the constructive consensus of all keen neighbouring countries and the most relevant international community players, who have a special role in that part of the country.

We understand very well the need of the EU to eliminate the causes of the crisis it is going through and to carry out the process of internal consolidation, but we do not think the answer to those problems is to stop or seriously slow down the missionary project of unifying Europe. On the contrary, I believe that full unification is the most important part of the answer to all problems that the EU is going through.

Of course, we are not trying to overlook the numerous weaknesses in the EU's architecture, but we do not want to fall into the despondency that suggests giving up on this vision. Therefore, I think it is necessary to consolidate the vision and fix the architecture. That is the road that will bring the best guarantees that Europe keeps its global competition. Everything else would lead to its weakening, and despite the differences in our views, primarily due to current differences in the level of development, it would lead to loss for all of us, the citizens of Europe.

In addition, if the European Union misses another opportunity to integrate the Western Balkans, this would bring a big threat of political involvement of other countries, third countries, which do not share the same strategic goals as the European Union. This would hold our region back within the zone of conflict and would make the European continent insufficiently stable and disunited.

The process of enlargement and full unification of the EU is therefore an optimal path for Montenegro, for the region and for Europe as a whole. However, whether this will happen certainly does not decisively depend on us. We will do what we can do, with or without enlargement policy. Whether it moves quickly or slowly, we will pursue the Europeanisation of Montenegrin society with even greater commitment. Besides, we are already well-advanced on the track that resembles a one-way street. We simply cannot go in the opposite direction. Montenegro does not want to have any other option.

When we speak critically of the European Union, it is because we believe that, as Europeans, we have the right to think and speak about a topic that is our common interest and responsibility, thus we also observe the deficiencies of European policy. We will certainly continue doing so in the future, because I believe that is how we contribute to the growth in support of the regional public for the European future of our states, not the stagnation or decline as is the case now.

We do not accept that we must speak of the EU uncritically, as if it were a new religion, but rather we see it as our joint home – the current one or the future one. In the worst case scenario, as the most important neighbour of all of us but without us being members. I am sometimes misunderstood myself, at home and in some European contexts, because of these statements that are tendentious or that are seen, due to lack of understanding, as euro-sceptical.

This is not Euroscepticism. On the contrary, I consider the idea of a united Europe to be absolutely superior, and I see the European path for the development of the Balkans as a path without an alternative, but we expect everybody to accept that we in the Balkans are partners in the negotiation process with the European Union, and not an experimental laboratory of its administration.

We in the region can complete this process of further unification with Europe much quicker and better if the vision is crystal clear and if the partnership is honest and in line with mutual respect. Everything that modern Montenegro has gone through is based on, and is fully in line with, the essential values that the European Union was founded on and continues to preserve, from preserving peace and multi-ethnic harmony in the 1990s, to the referendum on independence held in line with the highest European standards, and finally to the decisive and successful resistance to the brutal aggression in 2016, which aimed to take freedom away from Montenegro and divert it from the European and Euro-Atlantic path of development.

Therefore, we are right to emphasis Montenegro took a ground-breaking step forward after roaming the wastelands outside Europe, together with the region, throughout history. We have finally taken our ship of state into the direction of its natural European harbour, and we shall not give up on this intention of ours. The Western Balkans region is at a turning point too: it will complete its political and economic transition and join the club of European Union states, or it will continue to struggle with its interethnic and interreligious conflicts, complicated open issues, underdevelopment and low standard of living. Like a time bomb that can still jeopardise European security.

I believe I share the opinion of all of you when I say that all institutions and official authorities, as well as all individuals who are politically involved in any way at the national level or within the European framework, today have the responsibility to contemplate a better and safer future for a united Europe throughout the entire continent that is based on traditional values and embroidered with the spirit of the new times we live in.

It is very important that the forthcoming elections for the European Parliament are prepared and held in this positive atmosphere. The balance of power in Parliament will, to a great extent, define Europe's path and determine the future of European nations. I want to believe that this path will be a joint path for us from the Western Balkans too. With this, I would like to thank you all once again. I want to assure you that you will always have a reliable partner in the small country of Montenegro, which sees the EU as a lighthouse we are getting closer to.

(Loud and sustained applause)

Presidente. – Signor Presidente, caro Milo, come vede, l'applauso del Parlamento conferma il nostro sostegno al lavoro che il Montenegro sta compiendo per avvicinarsi all'Unione europea.

Noi, come ha annunciato più volte la Commissione, speriamo che questo percorso possa concludersi entro il 2025.

Grazie ancora per la partecipazione a questo incontro, grazie per aver illustrato la situazione in Montenegro e nei Balcani. Il Montenegro, ripeto, potrà contare sempre sul sostegno del Parlamento europeo.

(La seduta è sospesa per pochi istanti in attesa del turno di votazioni).

5. Hervatting van de vergadering

(La seduta è ripresa alle 12.04)

6. Mededelingen van de Voorzitter

Presidente. – Cari colleghi, desidero informarvi che in data odierna la Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea ha stabilito che il Parlamento europeo ha la facoltà di esercitare una parte delle sue prerogative in materia di bilancio a Bruxelles anziché a Strasburgo, nel caso in cui ciò sia dettato da necessità di carattere imperativo relative ad una corretta implementazione della procedura di bilancio. Di conseguenza, la Corte ha riconosciuto che il Parlamento europeo era autorizzato ad adottare il bilancio annuale dell'Unione per l'anno 2017 a Bruxelles.

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Il 10 settembre 2018 ho irrogato sanzioni nei confronti di Georges Bach, Guillaume Balas, José Bové, Edouard Martin, Claude Rolin, Maria Arena e Isabelle Thomas, per le azioni intraprese nel corso della sessione plenaria del 3 luglio 2018, che hanno disturbato gravemente i lavori del Parlamento e provocato l'interruzione della seduta.

L'11 settembre 2018 Maria Arena, Georges Bach, Guillaume Balas, Edouard Martin e Isabelle Thomas hanno presentato ricorso contro tale decisione. Nel corso della riunione di ieri l'Ufficio di presidenza ha esaminato i suddetti ricorsi e ha confermato le decisioni in merito alle sanzioni, che consistono, nel caso di George Bach, Guillaume Balas, Maria Arena e Isabelle Thomas, nella perdita del diritto all'indennità di soggiorno per una durata di cinque giorni e, fatto salvo l'esercizio del diritto di voto in sessione plenaria, nella sospensione dalla partecipazione a tutte le attività del Parlamento e dei suoi organi per un periodo di cinque giorni consecutivi in cui il Parlamento o uno qualsiasi dei suoi organi, commissioni e delegazioni si riuniscono e, nel caso di Edouard Martin, nella perdita del diritto all'indennità di soggiorno per una durata di otto giorni e, fatto salvo l'esercizio del diritto di voto in sessione plenaria, nella sospensione dalla partecipazione a tutte le attività del Parlamento e dei suoi organi per un periodo di otto giorni consecutivi in cui i

suoi organi si riuniscono.

Tali sanzioni, essendo state sospese nel momento in cui sono stati presentati i ricorsi, iniziano di nuovo ad applicarsi a decorrere da oggi.

* * *

A norma dell'articolo 166 del regolamento, in base alle conclusioni del Comitato consultivo competente per le denunce di molestie riguardanti assistenti parlamentari accreditati e deputati e avendo preso nota delle osservazioni scritte della deputata interessata, ho deciso di comminare una sanzione all'onorevole Giulia Moi per la sua condotta nei confronti degli assistenti parlamentari, qualificata come molestia psicologica. La sanzione consiste nella perdita del diritto all'indennità di soggiorno per un periodo di 12 giorni. La decisione è stata notificata alla deputata interessata, che può presentare un ricorso interno contro tale decisione dinanzi all'Ufficio di presidenza conformemente all'articolo 167 del regolamento. Tale ricorso ha carattere sospensivo della sanzione.

PRESIDENZA DELL'ON. DAVID-MARIA SASSOLI

Vicepresidente

Bruno Gollnisch (NI). – Monsieur le Président, mon rappel au règlement se fonde sur les articles 166 et 167 de celui-ci.

Nous venons d'entendre un certain nombre de sanctions à l'encontre de nos collègues de gauche. Il paraîtra surprenant que je défende leurs droits. Je considère qu'il est extrêmement important qu'avant qu'un député ne soit sanctionné, il soit entendu personnellement par le Président et qu'il en aille de même dans l'exercice des recours internes.

Il est tout à fait anormal, pour ne pas dire scandaleux, que, dans un Parlement tel que le nôtre, ce droit d'être entendu – qui est prévu par les textes que nous avons votés, à savoir la charte européenne des droits fondamentaux et le texte sur une bonne administration européenne –, par écrit peut-être mais verbalement aussi – c'est explicitement précisé – et assisté de la personne de son choix comme...

(Le Président retire la parole à l'orateur)

Presidente. – Onorevole Gollnisch, abbiamo ascoltato, abbiamo capito. La devo anche informare che tutte le persone che hanno ricevuto sanzioni sono state ascoltate dal Presidente e dall'Ufficio di presidenza. Onorevole Forenza, prego.

Eleonora Forenza (GUE/NGL). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, domani quest'Aula discuterà dell'accoglienza nell'area del Mediterraneo. Io desidero informare quest'Aula che nel frattempo in Italia è stato istituito e praticato il reato di solidarietà. Il sindaco di Riace è stato arrestato stamattina con l'accusa di favoreggiamento dell'immigrazione. Io chiedo a quest'Aula di manifestare tutta la sua solidarietà verso un sindaco che accoglie anziché respingere. A Mimmo Lucano tutta la mia solidarietà.

Udo Bullmann (S&D). – Herr Präsident! Ich beziehe mich ebenfalls auf die Sanktionen, die von Herrn Präsident Tajani angesprochen worden sind. Ich kann nicht beurteilen, ob Gespräche stattgefunden haben. Wenn das versichert wird, dann ist das für mich so. Aber ich möchte als der Vorsitzende der S&D-Fraktion eines deutlich machen: Ich weiß, dass die Mitglieder insbesondere meiner Fraktion, die sanktioniert worden sind, weil sie die Seite der Dolmetscherinnen und Dolmetscher eingenommen haben und weil sie Aktionen befürwortet oder unterstützt haben, mit denen hier die Dolmetschleistungen für eine Zeit lang ausgefallen sind, das nicht deswegen getan haben, um diese Institution zu unterminieren, sondern es deswegen getan haben, um das Recht auf Streik, was ein europäisches Recht ist, zu verteidigen. Ich möchte das in Erwähnung bringen, damit das Haus würdigen kann, um was es sich gehandelt hat.

Presidente. – Grazie onorevole Bullmann, riporterò le Sue osservazioni all'Ufficio di presidenza.

Edouard Martin (S&D). – Monsieur le Président, puisqu'il s'agit de moi, en l'occurrence – mais pas uniquement, car nous sommes sept à avoir été sanctionnés –, je tenais simplement à informer cette institution que j'accepte avec honneur une décision déshonorante pour le Parlement européen.

(Applaudissements)

Cécile Kashetu Kyenge (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, volevo che si aggiungesse all'ordine del giorno che domani sarà il quinto anniversario dalla strage di Lampedusa e che si potesse fare un momento di silenzio anche per ricordare questo anniversario. Ne approfitto per esprimere solidarietà al sindaco di Riace, sostenendo la proposta della nostra collega.

7. Stemmingen

Presidente. – L'ordine del giorno reca il turno di votazioni.

(Per i risultati delle votazioni e altri dettagli che le riguardano: vedasi processo verbale)

7.1. Verzoek om opheffing van de immuniteit van Georgios Kyrtos (A8-0291/2018 - Laura Ferrara) (stemming)

7.2. Derde landen waarvan de onderdanen bij overschrijding van de buitengrenzen in het bezit moeten zijn van een visum en derde landen waarvan de onderdanen van die plicht zijn vrijgesteld (A8-0290/2018 - Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg) (stemming)

7.3. Overeenkomst EU-Marokko inzake wetenschappelijke en technologische samenwerking: voorwaarden voor de deelname van Marokko aan het partnerschap voor onderzoek en innovatie in het Middellandse Zeegebied (het Prima-initiatief) (A8-0281/2018 - Aldo Patriciello) (stemming)

7.4. Luchtvervoersovereenkomst EU-Canada (A8-0254/2018 - Francisco Assis) (stemming)

7.5. Opname van de Italiaanse gemeente Campione d'Italia en de Italiaanse wateren van het meer van Lugano in het douanegebied van de Unie (A8-0284/2018 - Roberto Gualtieri) (stemming)

— *Prima della votazione:*

David Coburn, on behalf of the EFDD Group. – Mr President, under Rule 190(4), I ask Members to adjourn this vote as there has, so far as I can tell, been no impact assessment on the need for a hard border in the middle of Lake Lugano. The proposal extends the EU's customs area but does not address the border, to police it.

We need to know if the Commission will apply its Northern Ireland approach and demand a hard border. Switzerland is, after all, neither in the customs union nor fully inside the single market.

(Applause)

Presidente. – Onorevole Coburn, ma Lei sta parlando a nome del Suo gruppo politico? Il suo gruppo politico è d'accordo?

David Coburn (EFDD). – Mr President, my political group are generally in agreement with everything I say, sir.

(Laughter)

(Applause)

Roberto Gualtieri, *Rapporteur*. – Presidente, con tutto l'affetto e l'amicizia verso il collega Coburn però evidentemente egli non sa di cosa sta parlando. E quindi invito a rigettare la sua bizzarra proposta.

(Il Parlamento respinge la richiesta di aggiornare la votazione)

David Coburn (EFDD). – Mr President, well sir, it seems there is one rule for Northern Ireland and one rule for Switzerland and Italy. How strange.

(The President cut off the speaker)

Presidente. – Però, scusi, onorevole Coburn, non è un dibattito, qui stiamo votando, Lei ha fatto una proposta e l'Aula si è espressa chiaramente.

7.6. Beschikbaarstelling van middelen uit het Europees Fonds voor aanpassing aan de globalisering – EGF/2018/001 NL/Financiële dienstverlening (A8-0294/2018 - Ivana Maletić) (stemming)

7.7. Het aanbieden van audiovisuele mediadiensten (A8-0192/2017 - Sabine Verheyen, Petra Kammerevert) (stemming)

— *Prima della votazione sull'accordo provvisorio:*

Isabella Adinolfi, *a nome del gruppo EFDD*. – Presidente, volevo chiedere, così come previsto dall'articolo 59 paragrafo 3, del regolamento, di porre in votazione gli emendamenti presentati per il prossimo dossier.

(Il Parlamento respinge la richiesta)

7.8. Ontwerp van gewijzigde begroting nr. 5/2018: Annulering van de reserve in verband met de steun voor Turkije uit het instrument voor pretoetredingssteun en versterking van het Europees nabuurschapsinstrument en van de humanitaire hulp voor dringende andere maatregelen (A8-0292/2018 - Siegfried Mureşan)

Presidente. – Con questo si conclude il turno di votazioni.

8. Stemverklaringen: zie notulen

9. Rectificaties stemgedrag/Voorgenomen stemgedrag: zie notulen

(La seduta è sospesa alle 12.23)

IN THE CHAIR: PAVEL TELIČKA

Vice-President

10. Hervatting van de vergadering*(The sitting resumed at 15.01)***11. Goedkeuring van de notulen van de vorige vergadering: zie notulen****12. De bijdrage van de EU aan een bindend VN-instrument inzake transnationale bedrijven met betrekking tot de mensenrechten (debat)****President.** – The next item is the debate on:

— the oral question to the Council on the EU's input on a UN binding instrument on transnational corporations with respect to human rights, tabled by Linda McAvan, on behalf of the Committee on Development, Bernd Lange, on behalf of the Committee on International Trade, Pier Antonio Panzeri, on behalf of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (O-000078/2018 – B8-0404/2018);

— the oral question to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the EU's input on a UN binding instrument on transnational corporations with respect to human rights, tabled by Linda McAvan, on behalf of the Committee on Development, Bernd Lange, on behalf of the Committee on International Trade, Pier Antonio Panzeri, on behalf of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (O-000074/2018 – B8-0402/2018); and

— the oral question to the Commission on the EU's input on a UN binding instrument on transnational corporations with respect to human rights tabled by Linda McAvan, on behalf of the Committee on Development, Bernd Lange, on behalf of the Committee on International Trade, Pier Antonio Panzeri, on behalf of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (O-000075/2018 – B8-0403/2018) (2018/2763(RSP)).

Mirja Vehkaperä, laatija. – Arvoisa puhemies, hyvät kollegat, pidän puheenvuoron tänään kehitysvaliokunnan puolesta, joka yhdessä kansainvälisen kaupan ja ihmisoikeuksien valiokuntien kanssa on esittänyt suullisen kysymyksen komission varapuheenjohtajalle, neuvostolle ja komissiolle. Kysymys koskee EU:n osallistumista YK:n välineen laatimiseen, jolla pyritään vaikuttamaan monikansallisten yhtiöiden vastuuseen ihmisoikeuksista.

YK toteuttaa parhaillaan hallitusten välistä prosessia kehittääkseen kansainvälisen ihmisoikeuslain puitteissa maailmanlaajuisia järjestelmää, jolla voidaan puuttua liiketoiminnasta johtuviin ihmisoikeusloukkauksiin. Tämä on tärkeä edistysaskel. EU:n tulee olla aktiivisesti mukana prosessissa.

Kolmen valiokunnan yhteinen kysymys on todiste parlamentin kiinnostuksesta aiheeseen. Sen avulla yritämme paremmin ymmärtää EU:n tämänhetkistä varauksellista suhtautumista meneillään oleviin YK-neuvotteluihin. Työskentelemme yhdessä muiden EU:n toimielinten kanssa ymmärtääksemme paremmin heidän näkökulmiaan ja huoliaan. Haluamme myös tiedustella, milloin ja millä ehdoilla voimme odottaa EU:n virallista valtuutusta osallistua neuvotteluihin. Minkä aseman EU aikoo ottaa ensi viikolla, kun seuraava hallitustenvälinen neuvottelukierros järjestetään Genevessä?

Haluan muistuttaa, että kehitysvaliokunta on myös hyväksynyt aiheesta päätöslauselman, jossa se peräänkuuluttaa EU:ta osallistumaan YK:n vetämiin neuvotteluihin. Tavoitteena on saada aikaan sopimus, joka saattaisi ihmisoikeusloukkauksia tekevät monikansalliset yhtiöt vastuuseen. Päätöslauselmasta äänestetään torstaina täällä istunnossa. Odotan mielenkiinnolla muiden kysymyksen laatijoiden näkemyksiä.

Bernd Lange, Verfasser. – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, liebe Ratsvertreter, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Es ist völlig klar, dass wir im internationalen Handel mehr und mehr globale Wertschöpfungsketten haben. 70 % des internationalen Handels beziehen sich auf globale Wertschöpfungsketten. Da kann man natürlich nicht mit Verträgen mit einzelnen Ländern sicherstellen, dass diese globalen Wertschöpfungsketten fair ablaufen. Wir haben ja immer mehr die Situation, dass wir in unterschiedlichen Ländern dieser Erde eine Missachtung von Menschenrechten und Arbeitnehmerrechten festzustellen haben. Deswegen ist es umso wichtiger, dass wir diese globalen Wertschöpfungsketten in den Blick nehmen und die Verantwortung von Unternehmen für diese globalen Wertschöpfungsketten wirklich deutlich werden lassen, sei es beim Smartphone, sei es beim T-Shirt. Da müssen wir ran. Globale Verantwortung für Unternehmen muss das Ziel sein.

Nebenbei, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen: Wir haben ja im Bereich der Konfliktmineralien eine Gesetzgebung gemacht, die eine verbindliche Sorgfaltspflicht von der Mine über den Schmelzofen bis hin zum Produkt vorsieht. Und so gilt es in vielen Bereichen eine verbindliche Sorgfaltspflicht durchzusetzen. Deswegen begrüßen wir auch die Initiative von Ecuador und Südafrika, im Rahmen der Vereinten Nationen hier einen verbindlichen Kodex für die Sorgfaltspflicht durchzusetzen. Und deswegen haben wir auch Bedenken, wenn es aus der Kommission und aus dem Rat Stimmen gibt, dass sie sich aus dieser Diskussion zurückziehen wollen. Nein, die Europäische Union muss diese Diskussion proaktiv beeinflussen und nach vorne bringen, sodass wir letztendlich diesen Ansatz der Vereinten Nationen, der schon 40 Jahre alt ist, aufgreifen und eine klare Sorgfaltspflicht für Unternehmen durchsetzen.

Natürlich gibt es auch ein paar Schwächen bei den Ansätzen von Ecuador und Südafrika, z. B. warum nur multilaterale und multinationale Unternehmen berücksichtigt werden. Man kann auch Vorschläge machen, also proaktiv an die Sache herangehen.

Pier Antonio Panzeri, autore. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, il rispetto dei diritti umani nel mondo delle imprese è per noi una questione decisiva, in particolar modo perché molte società operano in paesi in via di sviluppo. Eppure manca ancora un approccio globale al fine di regolare il rispetto dei diritti umani nelle società transnazionali.

Le Nazioni Unite nel 2014 con una risoluzione del Consiglio dei diritti umani hanno appositamente istituito un gruppo di lavoro intergovernativo, al fine di creare uno strumento giuridicamente vincolante sulle società transnazionali e soprattutto per riempire un vuoto tra il rispetto dei diritti umani e gli interessi commerciali. Sebbene la protezione dei diritti umani sia uno degli obiettivi principali dell'Unione europea nelle sue azioni esterne, in linea con il trattato sull'Unione europea, la stessa Unione europea è stata molto riluttante relativamente al trattato vincolante.

E va ricordato che diversi Stati membri hanno votato contro la risoluzione sulla creazione del gruppo di lavoro nel 2014. L'Unione europea e gli Stati membri devono impegnarsi a svolgere un ruolo chiave in questo processo, mantenendo una sola posizione chiara e un mandato negoziale comune che al momento mancano.

Io sottolineo positivamente che dopo molti dibattiti interni, siamo riusciti a mettere in votazione, giovedì, la risoluzione con la posizione del Parlamento europeo su questa questione. A quattro anni dalla creazione del gruppo di lavoro, vorrei che il Consiglio, il SEAE, la Commissione debbano in qualche modo giustificare l'assenza di un mandato negoziale, consentendo all'Unione europea di partecipare in modo efficace al processo.

Viste le divergenze di opinione tra gli Stati membri riguardo alla necessità di uno strumento vincolante a livello internazionale, chiediamo qui oggi, Commissario, quali sono le principali questioni che gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea considerano problematiche in questo campo, in un dibattito che deve essere molto chiaro e trasparente a tutti.

Juliane Bogner-Strauss, President-in-Office of the Council. – Mr President, honourable Members, thank you for this opportunity to exchange views on the issue of the EU's input into a possible international, legally-binding instrument on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights. I shall endeavour to give you briefly the broad EU view from the Council's perspective, and afterwards the Commission will be in a position to elaborate on the topics concerned.

I would first of all like to stress that advancing on business and human rights is an important priority of the EU's human rights agenda, as set out in the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy for the period 2015-2019, adopted by the Council on 20 July 2015. It should be noted that the recurrent element which is underpinning all our actions identified in the action plan is the United Nations Guiding Principles of 2011 as the first, and so far only authoritative global framework to address the impact of business on human rights.

In its 2016 conclusions on business and human rights, the Council recalled the global consensus reached on the UN Guiding Principles adopted in 2011 and stressed that any possible further steps regarding the international legal framework for business and human rights at UN level must be inclusive, firmly rooted in the UN Guiding Principles, and address all types of companies, not only transnational. These three principles have always constituted our barometers for engagement in the intergovernmental working group process.

President, honourable Members, I can reassure you that the Council, in particular through its Working Party on Human Rights, continues working on the business and human rights file, including on developing our common position on the process regarding a possible legally binding instrument. The EU is, at the same time, progressing on other tracks, notably the Working Group on Business and Human Rights and the Annual Forum on Business and Human Rights, specifically on efforts to achieve a coherent approach throughout the EU on access to remedy for victims of business-related human rights violations.

The EU continues to offer its support to the accountability and remedy project led by the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, recognising that the initiative may provide best practices that can be implemented at EU and Member State level, including on improved cooperation between states in cross-border cases. I'm looking forward to the debate and to hearing the Commission's input.

Christos Stylianides, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, I would like to try to inform you of all aspects of this very challenging issue and to be constructive after the remarks on the Council side.

The European Union is fully engaged in the ongoing discussions on Business and Human Rights. We are not only exploring possible future initiatives, we are also intensively working both internally and with partners to implement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Already, 14 EU Member States have adopted a national action plan on business and human rights. Our policy is based on a mix of voluntary and regulatory measures that provide for tangible protection against human rights abuses. The EU is therefore not opposed, as a matter of principle, to discussing a potential legally binding instrument, and this is why we have engaged in the process led by Ecuador.

Nonetheless, we insist that the scope of the discussion should include all companies, not only transnationals or multinationals, as many human rights violations are committed by domestic companies. The draft text submitted by Ecuador last July contains important elements, including on access to remedy by victims of corporate abuse. Yet its scope is still too restrictive.

Another prerequisite for the European Union is that the negotiations are based on the existing UN Guiding Principles. What is also clear at this moment is that the process is not yet fully ripe for negotiations. For the moment, the Human Rights Council is still divided on this issue. We nevertheless engaged in discussions in Geneva in the hope that process issues would be solved and a meaningful discussion possible.

What is, in our view, essential is a process that would be chaired in an impartial manner and that would be inclusive, transparent and predictable. We also ask that rules and established practice in Intergovernmental Working Groups are respected.

We hope that we can count on the European Parliament to also signal the need for a better process. As the European Union, we have engaged in in-depth discussions with Member States, industry and NGOs on these very complex issues. We have done extensive work on the principles for EU engagement and on the possible format and points of substance of a possible legally binding instrument, and we stand ready to debrief the European Parliament at any stage of this process.

We believe the added value of any possible legally binding instrument should be to ensure a level playing field for companies globally. Therefore, it is essential for a proposal to reach sufficient traction amongst UN member states. It is also important to ensure policy coherence and avoid the duplication of efforts. We are reflecting on which format of a legally binding instrument would stand better chances to achieve this level playing field.

These discussions are also a good opportunity to encourage others to upgrade their standards. The European Union can offer its experience on corporate due diligence in the field of human rights, including transparency requirements and public procurement rules. We need better prevention of abuses, and better access to remedy for victims when abuses occur.

The European Union has measures in place to ensure judicial and non-judicial access to remedy for victims, including access to justice and acknowledgement of victims' rights, with a focus on provisions to clarify issues of jurisdiction, and to make international judicial cooperation and mutual legal assistance more effective. In addition, on access to remedy, the Commission is conducting a study aimed at collecting information on existing judicial and non-judicial mechanisms in the EU Member States concerning access to remedy for victims of business-related abuses. The results are expected by the end of next year, 2019.

To conclude, the European Union is committed to continuing a discussion with a view to finding feasible and sustainable solutions to the existing protection gaps, on a basis that ensures a true level playing field for all.

José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, *en nombre del Grupo PPE*. – Señor presidente, señor comisario, señora presidenta en ejercicio, señorías, como dice el artículo primero de la Resolución que será aprobada por el Parlamento mañana, la empresa juega un papel esencial en el proceso de globalización económica a través del comercio internacional de bienes y servicios.

Como le he oído decir muchas veces a su colega, la señora Malmström, hoy no podemos hablar simplemente de importaciones y exportaciones -y nos lo recordaba el señor Langen en su intervención- sino de cadenas de producción cada vez más complejas. Hoy, piezas y componentes, materias primas de diferentes países, se ensamblan en una línea de producción planetaria.

Además, señor presidente, está claro que las empresas deben ser un aliado del sector privado fundamental para la consecución de los objetivos del milenio y para ayudar a los países en desarrollo. Yo, personalmente, he tenido la oportunidad de ser testigo de muchas actividades en el ámbito de la responsabilidad social corporativa realizadas por empresas europeas.

Además, en el ámbito de los derechos humanos, en los recientes acuerdos que la Unión Europea ha concluido con países como Japón, Canadá, México, Vietnam y Singapur, o como los que estamos negociando con países como Australia, Nueva Zelanda o Chile, el elemento fundamental de estos acuerdos es una cláusula democrática. Y entiendo, señor presidente, que con esta cláusula democrática y con este espíritu deben actuar los agentes públicos y privados en el ámbito de las relaciones con otros países.

Evidentemente, esto no quiere decir que si en un contexto más amplio, como es el de las Naciones Unidas, se está negociando una actividad en la que la Unión Europea puede aportar su *expertise*, su compromiso y su experiencia en el ámbito de los derechos humanos, nosotros tenemos también que participar.

Por eso, señor comisario, me alegra saber que la Comisión está implicada y sigue de cerca este proceso negociador, pero creo que lo que se plantea en este debate es saber si existe un mandato formal para que la Unión Europea pueda participar en este ejercicio, y evidentemente se tiene que conseguir a través de los procedimientos legalmente establecidos.

David Martin, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, let me be unequivocal on behalf of my group. We are not against voluntary guidelines and we are not against guiding principles, but we don't think they are fit for purpose. We want binding instruments at the global level, because we have seen what happens to guiding principles, we have seen what has happened to the environment in Ecuador, we have seen what happens to workers in Bangladesh, we have seen how global companies still operate on the basis of corruption in many parts of the world, and we are not prepared to tolerate it.

We want to ensure that we have a system in place at the global level where we can protect workers, the environment and consumers against the power of transnational corporations. It trips off the tongue easily, doesn't it, when we say that Europe is a Europe of values. Well, if we're a Europe of values in Geneva, we should be leading the way, not being dragged, as we were, slowly into this negotiation, but leading the way. I welcome where the Commission has now got itself to, but we should have been there before.

I understand the problems we have with some of the Member States, but we should also acknowledge that some Member States are starting to unilaterally lead the way. The fact that France now has a corporate duty of vigilance law, the Netherlands has the Child Labour Due Diligence Law, and even the UK with its Modern Slavery Act, all show that countries are slowly coming round to the right way of thinking on this issue. As Bernd Lange rightly mentioned, at the EU level we are now in a position where we have the Conflict Minerals Regulation, which contains binding due diligence. This Parliament says that, even if nothing happens at the UN, we should be extending that to the garment sector to make sure we have due diligence in the whole garment chain.

I am pleased to say that we are also slowly making progress on our trade deals. The EU-Japan FTA includes, for the first time, a chapter on corporate governance. In relation to investment, while I have supported investment protection for industry, I equally think it's time for us to ensure that investors meet their legitimate obligation to protect the folk that they meant to serve as institutions.

Joachim Starbatty, *im Namen der ECR-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident! Herr Kommissar! Ich habe mir mal angeschaut, wer für die Resolution des Menschenrechtsrats eingetreten ist. Das sind Länder wie China, Kuba, Russland, Vietnam. Wer war dagegen? Österreich, Tschechische Republik, Estland, Frankreich, Deutschland. Also diejenigen, die dafür gestimmt haben, die haben mit den Menschenrechten in ihren eigenen Ländern nicht so viel am Hut, während die Länder, die dagegen gestimmt haben, die Menschenrechte einhalten.

Man muss jetzt auch einmal sehen, wie die Praxis grenzüberschreitender Unternehmen ist. Was machen sie denn? Sie bieten höhere Löhne, sie haben bessere Arbeitsbedingungen, sie haben bessere Gesundheitsvorkehrungen und sie haben mehr soziale Leistungen als die lokalen Unternehmen. Warum ist das so? Nicht weil sie so nett sind, die großen Unternehmen, sondern weil sie daran verdienen, dass es ihren Arbeitern gut geht. Denn gesunde und zufriedene Arbeiter sind produktiver als unzufriedene Arbeiter.

Weiter muss man sehen, es gibt *spill-over*-Effekte. Grenzüberschreitende Unternehmen haben Beispielfunktionen in vielen Ländern. Das darf man nicht unter den Tisch fallen lassen, wie sie auf andere wirken und wie andere dann auch nachziehen. Und wenn ich mir jetzt hier anschau, was in den einzelnen Ländern ist, wenn in Deutschland ein großes Unternehmen etwas macht, das gegen die Menschenrechte verstößt – beispielsweise Kinderarbeit unterstützt –, dann wird dieses Unternehmen gewissermaßen jetzt oft zur Schlachtbank geführt. Das will man in Deutschland nicht! Es wäre der Welt gedient, wenn die lokalen Unternehmen sich an den Praktiken der grenzüberschreitenden Unternehmen orientieren würden. Das ist die Wirklichkeit!

(Der Redner ist damit einverstanden, eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“ gemäß Artikel 162 Absatz 8 der Geschäftsordnung zu beantworten.)

Olaf Stuger (ENF), *„blauwe kaart“-vraag*. – Ik zou graag de collega willen vragen naar aanleiding van zijn zeer terechte kritiek op de Mensenrechtenraad, om ook eens te kijken naar de Verenigde Staten die eruit zijn gestapt. Is de heer Starbatty ook niet van mening dat wij als EU onze steun moeten intrekken nu het zo gek is geworden?

Joachim Starbatty (ECR), *Antwort auf eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“*. – Ich habe nur davon gesprochen, dass mir aufgefallen ist, dass diejenigen Länder für diese Resolution gestimmt haben, die in ihren eigenen Ländern die Menschenrechte nicht achten, und dass diejenigen, die gegen die Resolution gestimmt haben, in ihren eigenen Ländern die Menschenrechte achten. Das ist der entscheidende Punkt, nicht ob die Amerikaner dies oder jenes machen.

Louis Michel, *au nom du groupe ALDE*. – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, Madame la Présidente, l'Union européenne martèle à longueur de discours qu'il faut respecter les droits humains.

Les travaux engagés par les Nations unies depuis quatre ans maintenant – il faut quand même le rappeler, Monsieur le Commissaire! –, visent à mettre en place un instrument contraignant pour réglementer les activités des sociétés transnationales et de toutes les entreprises en général. Je voudrais saluer les rapporteurs et ma collègue, Lola Sánchez Caldentey, qui ont insisté pour que le débat d'aujourd'hui se conclue par le vote d'une résolution.

La meilleure façon d'aider les Nations unies à faire avancer ce débat, c'est d'apporter notre soutien au caractère évidemment contraignant de ces règlements. C'est essentiel pour la crédibilité de l'Union européenne en tant qu'acteur global.

Dans le fond, chers collègues, la question est avant tout de nature politique. Nous devons être cohérents avec les modèles développés par le passé. Je rappelle que l'on a avancé fortement sur le dossier des minerais issus des conflits, le règlement sur le bois et les produits dérivés, le règlement concernant l'enregistrement, l'évaluation, l'autorisation de substances chimiques ainsi que les restrictions applicables à ces substances.

Alors, chers collègues, l'Union européenne est une puissance normative en même temps qu'elle est une puissance économique. À ce titre, elle doit se positionner en tant que leader dans la diffusion des bonnes pratiques et dans l'élaboration de normes mondiales.

La Commission et le Conseil n'ont pas le droit, Monsieur le Commissaire, Madame la Présidente, de se soustraire à ce débat, et c'est la raison pour laquelle j'aimerais que vous clarifiez votre position quant au mandat. L'absence de règles contraignantes permet trop souvent des dérives inacceptables sur le plan humain... (*le Président interrompt l'orateur*)... Je suis un ardent défenseur de l'économie de marché mais l'économie de marché n'est pas toujours spontanément vertueuse, je crois qu'il faudrait s'en souvenir.

Judith Sargentini, *namens de Verts/ALE-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, als een dochteronderneming van een westers bedrijf in een ver buitenland zich schuldig maakt aan dwangarbeid of kinderarbeid, waar haalt die arbeider, waar haalt dat kind dan zijn recht? Mensenrechtenschendingen in landen buiten de Unie gepleegd of oogluikend toegestaan of simpelweg genegeerd door Europese bedrijven worden veelal niet vervolgd en zeker niet in ontwikkelingslanden, waar burgers moeite hebben hun recht te halen of waar regeringen samenwerken met die bedrijven vanwege economische voordelen. De noodzaak voor een wereldwijd bindend verdrag, zodat bedrijven zich niet in een andere jurisdictie verschuilen, is al zo ontzettend vaak aangetoond. Het is daarom hartstikke goed dat de Verenigde Naties in 2014 een proces zijn gestart om zo'n bindend verdrag te krijgen. Dat die ontwerptekst er nu ligt is mooi, maar een beetje meer ambitie mag nog steeds wel. Dekt dit verdrag werkelijk alle mensenrechten of niet? En zullen misdrijven door staatsbedrijven en lokale bedrijven ook worden meegenomen? En hoe gaan we het verdrag eigenlijk handhaven? Wat gaat de Europese Unie doen in Genève? In het verleden was de Europese Commissie eigenlijk de rem op de onderhandelingen. Heeft de Europese Commissie nu eindelijk een mandaat van de Raad om onderhandelingen te beginnen? Ik zal er zijn in Genève, met mij nog meer Europarlementariërs, en ik hoop deze keer de Raad en de Commissie wel aan onze zijde te vinden.

Lola Sánchez Caldentey, *en nombre del Grupo GUE/NGL*. – Señor presidente, Chevron, en Ecuador; Shell, en Nigeria; Bhopal, en la India... más de veinte mil muertos; Mango, Benetton, Primark y otros, en Bangladés.

Son solo algunos casos en los que empresas transnacionales violan derechos humanos y destrazan el medio ambiente con total impunidad.

La globalización ha entrado como una apisonadora en los países en desarrollo y algunas empresas occidentales hacen allí lo que jamás se atreverían a hacer en territorio europeo, cosas que ya no permitimos que ocurran en territorio europeo.

¿Por qué dejamos que algunas de nuestras empresas se comporten de esa forma salvaje, allí donde no las vemos?

Además, hasta ahora ha sido imposible lograr que las víctimas encuentren acceso a la justicia y a la reparación a las que tienen derecho. Por eso, hoy estamos ante un momento histórico, porque tenemos la oportunidad de que la Unión dé un impulso decisivo al tratado vinculante que se negocia en las Naciones Unidas desde hace ya cuatro años.

Por eso les pido su apoyo a la Resolución, aprobada ya en la Comisión de Desarrollo de este Parlamento. Demostremos al mundo que somos defensores de los derechos humanos y no todo lo contrario. Eso se hace haciendo...

(El Presidente retira la palabra a la oradora)

Ignazio Corrao, a nome del gruppo EFDD. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, è inammissibile che nel 2018 la comunità internazionale continui ad assistere alla sistematica violazione dei diritti umani da parte di alcune imprese multinazionali in paesi in via di sviluppo. E ancora più grave è che alle vittime non sia garantito alcun vero strumento di tutela giurisdizionale: i diritti umani, l'ambiente, i diritti dei popoli indigeni, le condizioni di lavoro di uomini, donne e bambini, tutto ciò passa costantemente in secondo piano davanti al Dio denaro.

Questa complessa problematica e tutti i suoi corollari sono stati affrontati estensivamente nella relazione sul «Corporate liability for serious human rights abuses in third countries», di cui sono stato relatore e che è stata approvata a bassissima maggioranza da quest'Aula nel 2016. Successivamente però la Commissione, la quale è stata ripetutamente sollecitata, non ha dato seguito a nulla di quanto richiesto dal Parlamento.

Adesso che le Nazioni Unite si sono fatte promotrici di un trattato internazionale in materia, a vocazione universale, contenente norme per una responsabilità d'impresa a carattere vincolante, ci aspettiamo che la Commissione dia seguito alle ripetute istanze del Parlamento e supporti attivamente questa iniziativa.

Olaf Stuger, namens de ENF-Fractie. – Voorzitter, ja, wat zijn mensenrechten nog waard als we kijken naar de Mensenrechtenraad van de Verenigde Naties? Bijna de helft van de leden van die raad schendt de mensenrechten waar het maar kan en dat is kennelijk geen beperking om lid te worden of te blijven. Leden zoals Congo, Saudi-Arabië, Rwanda en Pakistan bepalen in hun sancties welke landen de mensenrechten zouden schenden en welke landen zich netjes gedragen. U voelt hem natuurlijk al aankomen. Israël is de allergrootste schender van de mensenrechten en de braafste landen zijn Congo, waar nog steeds dagelijks massagraven worden ontdekt, Saudi-Arabië, daar waar als je als vrouw even je boerka oplicht om te niezen, je meteen vier jaar in de gevangenis zit, en over Pakistan hoef ik het helemaal niet te hebben natuurlijk. Nee, Voorzitter, de Verenigde Naties heeft het begrip mensenrechten afgericht tot een rauw politiek machtsinstrument en daardoor heeft het alle waarde verloren. De EU is te laf om hiertegen op te treden en is dus medeverantwoordelijk voor deze degradatie en daarmee haar slachtoffers. De Verenigde Staten hebben met het verlaten van de Mensenrechtenraad gekozen voor een zuivere invulling van het begrip in plaats van het gecorrumpeerde aftreksel van de VN. De EU zou het voorbeeld moeten volgen.

Bogdan Brunon Wenta (PPE). – Panie Przewodniczący! Dzisiejsza debata dotyczy transnarodowych korporacji, biznesu i ochrony praw człowieka. Jak wiemy, sektor prywatny jest ważnym partnerem w osiągnięciu celów zrównoważonego rozwoju oraz w mobilizowaniu dodatkowych zasobów na rzecz współpracy rozwojowej, dlatego też podmioty tego sektora muszą dostosować się do zasad skuteczności rozwoju i przestrzegać zasad odpowiedzialności korporacyjnej.

Globalizacja dzisiaj dotyczy wszystkich dziedzin życia, również działalności gospodarczej i łańcucha dostaw. Dlatego też rola korporacji w zapewnieniu poszanowania praw człowieka zyskuje na znaczeniu i tworzy sytuację, w której międzynarodowe normy i zasady są kluczowe dla uniknięcia łamania praw człowieka w państwach trzecich.

Niestety nadal brakuje całościowego podejścia do odpowiedzialności korporacyjnej za łamanie tych praw, a osoby poszkodowane napotykać liczne przeszkody w dostępie do środków zaradczych, w tym sądowych.

Pomimo poparcia Parlamentu Europejskiego dla procesu IGWG oraz jego wniosku o zaangażowanie ze strony Unii Europejskiej wyraziła ona obawy dotyczące dotychczasowego przebiegu procesu i nadal wydaje się być zagrożona przez przeszkody, które uniemożliwiają mu zaangażowanie się w proces negocjacji, co skutkuje brakiem mandatu negocjacyjnego.

Zdaniem naszej grupy politycznej Unia i jej państwa członkowskie powinny przystąpić do nowego, potencjalnie prawnie wiążącego instrumentu, jeżeli ich postulaty zostaną odpowiednio włączone, a jego mandat nie powinien wykraczać poza to, co jest prawnie ustanowione w Unii Europejskiej.

Jak wiemy, są państwa, które nie uczestniczą w tym procesie. Skuteczność traktatu jest uwarunkowana tym, że znaczna większość państw musi go ratyfikować i respektować.

Obecna forma zaproponowanej rezolucji stoi w wielu punktach w sprzeczności z tymi postulatami, i dlatego nasza grupa nie może jej poprzeć i złożyć alternatywny projekt.

(Przewodniczący odebrał mówcy głos)

Enrique Guerrero Salom (S&D). – Señor presidente, no se puede negar que la globalización y su extensión han tenido efectos positivos. Por ejemplo, han sacado a centenares de millones de personas de la pobreza. Pero tampoco se puede ignorar que han tenido muchos efectos negativos, entre ellos, han dado un excesivo poder a las empresas transnacionales. Algunas se han comportado responsablemente, pero muchas otras, sobre todo las más grandes, no lo han hecho. Han ignorado frecuentemente los derechos laborales, han violado en algunos casos derechos humanos, han alterado o destruido el medio ambiente o se han aprovechado de la debilidad de la fuerza de trabajo, en algunos casos del trabajo infantil.

Para enmarcar la actuación de estas empresas se viene negociando en las Naciones Unidas un tratado vinculante que afecte a todas las empresas, que les obligue a actuar responsablemente y que permita también el acceso de las víctimas a reparación.

El problema que tenemos es que la Unión Europea no es parte negociadora dentro de las Naciones Unidas y que los Estados miembros, en muchos casos, no han apoyado este proceso. Algunos que lo han apoyado no han puesto en marcha todavía las estrategias nacionales.

Tenemos que implicarnos más como Unión Europea, y hacemos la propuesta de que la Comisión, el Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior y las distintas comisiones implicadas de este Parlamento trabajemos conjuntamente para fortalecer la posición de la Unión Europea en las próximas negociaciones del 15 de octubre en Ginebra.

Este asunto merece nuestro respaldo. Se trata de defender a los más débiles cuando están sometidos al poder de los más fuertes.

Ruža Tomašić (ECR). – Gospodine predsjedavajući, kršenje ljudskih prava od strane transnacionalnih kompanija jedan je od najvećih izazova ekonomske globalizacije. Potraga za jeftinijom radnom snagom i novim tržištima često završi tamo gdje ne postoji primjerena regulacija koja bi zaštitila radnike i potrošače.

Podizanje svijesti o važnosti etičkog i društveno odgovornog poslovanja proces je u kojem se Unija, pružajući prvenstveno stratešku podršku civilnom društvu, mora jače angažirati. Obvezujući instrument UN-a bio bi prihvatljivo rješenje kad bi ga prihvatile i dosljedno primjenjivale sve globalne ekonomske sile. Ali, znamo da to nije realno za očekivati. Bez globalne implementacije i učinkovitog okvira za nadzor i sankcije u slučaju kršenja instrument je besmislen i kao takav predstavljao bi tek omču oko vrata zapadnim kompanijama.

Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea (ALDE). – Señor presidente, gracias, señor comisario, por estar aquí.

La defensa de los derechos humanos exige algo más que buenas palabras, exige eficacia. Y cuando hablamos de empresas transnacionales con centros en países de desarrollo, descubrimos que los instrumentos con los que contamos no han sido completa y realmente eficaces.

Necesitamos dotarnos de herramientas jurídicamente vinculantes. Así lo han establecido las Naciones Unidas desde 2014. Por ser el lugar de origen de muchas empresas transnacionales, la Unión Europea debería haber liderado la creación de estos mecanismos vinculantes.

Pero la Unión sigue sin contar con un mandato para participar en el proceso negociador, a pesar de que esta Cámara lo ha aprobado. Esta inacción, este desinterés no es aceptable desde ningún punto de vista, y sé que a algunos esto igual les suena a intervencionismo, que les parece poco liberal que la política se inmiscuya en el ámbito de los negocios privados.

Pero es justamente al revés: lo liberal es defender los derechos humanos en todo el mundo y no es aceptable que nuestras empresas hagan en el extranjero lo que aquí les está prohibido, lo que aquí nos parecería intolerable.

La globalización económica será un proceso beneficioso si viene acompañada de una globalización de los derechos y los deberes.

Heidi Hautala (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, it's self-evident that the EU must take the lead in responsible business conduct globally but, in order to be able to do so, it must implement at home, and that's why I need to emphasise the implementation at EU level of the universally agreed UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Where is our action? It's much too late now. We have to undertake to establish binding due diligence for companies operating in Europe. We must make sure that the victims of European companies acting abroad will get access to justice, and this is work that is long overdue.

So please Commission, please External Action Service, please let's finally do that because that's the only way we can be a global leader and take an active role in Geneva. There is no time to waste, because there's nothing more compelling in the political world today than the requirement on responsible business conduct.

Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar! Wir haben in diesem Haus schon viel Zeit damit verbracht, über den Schutz von Investoren und ihren Profiten zu reden. Heute sprechen wir endlich auch über die Pflichten, die sich für Unternehmen ergeben. Wir können nicht länger Geschäftsmodelle akzeptieren, die Menschenrechte und Umweltschutz ignorieren. Michael Frost, der Sonderberichterstatter der UNO zur Lage der Verteidigung von Menschenrechten, beklagt so das weitere Ansteigen von einschüchternder Gewalt und Morden gegen Menschen, die gegen Verstöße von Firmen vor Ort protestieren.

Ich fordere deshalb die Mitgliedstaaten, die Kommission und die Hohe Vertreterin auf, sich im UN-Menschenrechtsrat bei den Verhandlungen in Genf aktiv einzubringen, diesen Vertrag endlich fertig zu verhandeln und verbindlich zu machen. Konzerne müssen haftbar gemacht werden können, wenn sie Verstöße gegen Menschenrechte begehen. Dabei dürfen wir auch keine Schlupflöcher für Subunternehmen und Zulieferer zulassen. Das Beispiel Chevron/Texaco gegen Ecuador zeigt bis heute, dass nur konkrete, transparente und verbindliche Regeln und Verträge diese nachhaltigen Ziele gewährleisten können.

Ich hätte gerne Herrn Starbatty, der

(Der Präsident entzieht dem Redner das Wort.)

William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFDD). – Mr President, as we all know, the EU is committed to using external trade as a weapon, a tool to further EU policy. But trade agreements are supposed to be about trade and to mutual advantage. Trade agreements are not there to signal virtue backed up by economic threats.

The recent agreement with Canada, took up to seven years to negotiate. It was dragged out by the EU's attempt to impose conditions that had little or nothing to do with trade. And in passing, I have to say, fortunately, the topic of the Athabasca oil sands was glossed over, otherwise the EU would still be negotiating today, and we'd be into eight years of negotiations. In the meantime, profit and jobs would suffer.

It's bad enough when the EU tries on this tactic with rich countries, but these tactics are especially damaging when used against poor countries, and we've seen this with Sri Lanka, a country that had suffered civil war followed by a tsunami. Nevertheless, Sri Lanka had its trade preferences removed, entirely for political reasons. Human rights is one thing, extraterritoriality and the politicisation of trade is quite another.

Jean-Luc Schaffhauser (ENF). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, rappelons-nous que l'Union européenne a obtenu la personnalité juridique internationale par le traité de Lisbonne. C'est pour ainsi dire par un coup d'État s'opposant au vote des peuples français et néerlandais que cette personnalité lui a été octroyée. L'Union européenne n'a donc pas sa place autour de la table de négociation des Nations unies.

La responsabilité sociale et environnementale des entreprises est un sujet important de l'ONU. Elle peut certes sembler insuffisante, mais par quoi la remplacer? En fait, les abus, les pratiques scandaleuses, les crimes tiennent à la pratique de la globalisation sans règle du libre-échange, sans protection, à cette logique intrinsèque de l'Union européenne, avec ses traités du marché unique ouvert. On dénonce les effets, on adore les causes... En outre, cette réglementation vous conférerait un droit d'ingérence que vous utiliseriez pour condamner nos États européens, nos entreprises européennes, alors que vous accepteriez les pratiques de la Chine ou de la Turquie.

Francisco Assis (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, a criação de um Tratado que vinculou legalmente as empresas multinacionais ao respeito pelos direitos humanos é uma velha aspiração da sociedade civil mundial que vem desde os anos setenta. Esta aspiração prende-se com a insuficiência das regras adotadas voluntariamente pelas empresas, por um lado, e com a dificuldade de determinar claramente o âmbito jurisdicional dos Estados no caso de empresas que desenvolvam as suas atividades em países terceiros, por outro.

A globalização tornou este sistema mais complexo ao enfraquecer as fronteiras tradicionais e ao favorecer a mobilidade geográfica das empresas. Os potenciais efeitos negativos das atividades das multinacionais são particularmente preocupantes junto das comunidades mais vulneráveis e desprotegidas, como é, por exemplo, o caso das comunidades indígenas e campesinas.

Em 2014, a constituição de um grupo de trabalho intergovernamental da ONU para redigir uma proposta de Tratado vinculativo liderado pelo Equador e pela África do Sul deu um novo alento a essa velha aspiração. As atividades deste grupo foram, porém, acompanhadas com bastante ceticismo. A verdade é que não houve, por parte de vários atores, o empenho e o entusiasmo que se esperaria, incluindo por parte dos países da União Europeia. Não obstante, essa iniciativa começa a dar os seus frutos com uma primeira proposta de Tratado preparada pelo Equador.

O grande desafio é que o Tratado abranja as múltiplas situações do potencial impacto negativo dos direitos humanos que decorrem da atividade empresarial de forma indireta, por via das suas ramificações, empresas subsidiárias e empresas ou contratadas. É nesta dimensão que a União Europeia deve concentrar os seus esforços e contributos.

Estamos convencidos de que este Tratado poderá levar-nos a um novo patamar no que diz respeito à regulação da globalização, poderá abrir caminho a uma globalização responsável e sustentável, desde logo com garantias de acesso à justiça e reparação.

É por isso que a União Europeia, em fidelidade aos valores que a inspiram, deve ambicionar ter aqui um papel determinante e até mesmo liderante. Nesse sentido, deveremos apelar a que todos os Estados-Membros ultrapassem as suas divisões em relação a este Tratado e desenvolvam um esforço comum tendo em vista a sua aprovação.

Marietje Schaake (ALDE). – Mr President, respect for universal human rights is in Europe's DNA and should be the foundation of everything we do, from trade to development cooperation, from the way we shelter refugees to the approach we take towards new technologies. European leadership, also in making sure EU-based companies respect human rights no matter where they do business, is important. We have many examples to illustrate that. The exports of digital surveillance systems to dictatorships, slavery in the garment and conflict minerals industry, and North Korean forced labourers working here in Europe. But too often accountability lacks and if that's true for Europe, imagine the disregard for human rights in the rest of the world.

So while we need to do what we can and show leadership, it is an illusion to imagine Europe policing the rest of the world. Governments in third countries need to be brought on board with ambitious human rights agendas and their companies should take responsibility too. I'm very interested to hear more about what our European position towards the UN efforts on a binding instrument should look like, knowing that bringing any topic to the UN can also lead to a watering down or a hijacking of our well-intentioned high standards.

We must be mindful of what the end result could be, also with an eye on the level playing field and watching out that it is not other markets without regard for human rights that will be happy to take over our position.

Anne-Marie Mineur (GUE/NGL). – Voorzitter, mensenrechten behoren tot de kernwaarden van de EU. Dat staat in artikel 2 van het Verdrag van de Europese Unie. Maar in de praktijk worden mensenrechten nog vaak geschonden, ook door bedrijven. Het is daarom dringend noodzakelijk dat we een verdrag sluiten dat bedrijven dwingt om mensenrechten te respecteren, ook als ze over de grens opereren en zo aan nationale wetgeving kunnen ontkomen. We hebben de richtlijnen van John Ruggie, maar die zijn niet bindend. Daarom is een wereldwijd VN-verdrag noodzakelijk. De Europese Commissie lijkt zich niet te realiseren dat ze geen partij is in dit proces. Het is een VN-verdrag tussen landen. De beste rol die de Commissie in dit verband zou kunnen spelen is het ondersteunen van de lidstaten en hen aanmoedigen om zich uit te spreken voor een bindend verdrag. Ik roep ook graag het Oostenrijks voorzitterschap op om zijn rol heel serieus te nemen.

Elly Schlein (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, in un mondo così interconnesso e devastato da diseguglianze globali, ci sono enormi sfide che dobbiamo affrontare a livello internazionale. Per questo chiediamo all'UE e agli Stati membri di sostenere il processo ONU per stabilire uno strumento vincolante per il rispetto dei diritti umani da parte delle imprese transnazionali.

Strumenti volontari non sono sufficienti, le attività delle imprese, specie nei paesi in via di sviluppo possono portare a gravi violazioni dei diritti umani, per non parlare dei possibili effetti negativi sull'ambiente, per i quali spesso non sono previsti risarcimenti per le popolazioni colpite. Se vogliamo raggiungere gli obiettivi dello sviluppo sostenibile al 2030 anche le multinazionali devono allinearsi.

Alcune delle multinazionali che umiliano il lavoro sono le stesse che si oppongono alla transizione ecologica e che eludono il fisco per centinaia di miliardi di euro all'anno rubandoci il futuro. Ecco, non è solo una strategia industriale, ma il tentativo di imporre un modello di società che schiaccia i diritti e le persone, per questo dobbiamo stabilire standard comuni e rimedi effettivi che siano accessibili a tutte le persone che vedono violati i propri diritti.

Jude Kirton-Darling (S&D). – Mr President, today's questions on the UN binding treaty come down to a very simple point: is the EU serious about responsible business conduct? By putting sustainable development at the core of the EU's trade strategy in 2015, the Commission created high expectations, but what we've seen is the EU working actively for global rights for investors, but dragging its heels on binding human rights rules on multinationals.

Within this UN initiative lies an opportunity to deliver a real trade policy for all, but why wait for global rules? We could lead the field by introducing horizontal mandatory due diligence to clean up all of our global supply chains, guaranteeing that European consumers and businesses are not inadvertently supporting human rights violations here or elsewhere. Europe urgently needs a renewed mission to connect to voters. Let it be for decency. Let it be for rights for people and rules for business.

Cécile Kashetu Kyenge (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, dopo quattro anni dalla nascita del gruppo di lavoro intergovernativo dell'ONU sulle società transnazionali, è stata presentata una prima bozza del testo. Quest'ultima, nonostante stia mettendo le basi per un approccio realmente vicino alle vittime di violazione dei diritti umani e rispondendo alle istanze dei paesi del Sud del mondo, necessita ancora di un lavoro sostanziale.

Vorrei sottolineare che con questa interrogazione non cerchiamo solo risposte, ma vogliamo sottolineare quanto sia fondamentale un apporto dell'Unione nell'elaborazione di questo strumento vincolante. Ogni giorno, nelle nostre istituzioni, lavoriamo per combattere violazioni dei diritti dei lavoratori, accaparramento delle terre, inquinamento e danneggiamento ambientale, tutela dei diritti delle comunità; lavoriamo per ridurre le asimmetrie, per lottare contro la corruzione e contro ogni tipo di sfruttamento.

Ci auguriamo che l'impegno profuso quotidianamente dall'Unione sia messo al servizio del gruppo di lavoro intergovernativo attraverso una partecipazione attiva ai lavori per la stesura del testo finale.

Inmaculada Rodríguez-Piñero Fernández (S&D). – Señor presidente, señor comisario, la prosperidad de las empresas tiene un límite: la dignidad humana.

El respeto de los derechos humanos es un valor y un principio fundamental de la Unión Europea. El derecho a la vida y la integridad física, el acceso a la tierra, el trabajo digno son elementos fundamentales que no pueden confiarse al voluntarismo. Son demasiadas las lagunas jurídicas que permiten que las empresas que violan estos principios queden impunes. Y peor aún, son demasiadas las víctimas, la mayoría de ellas mujeres. Que lo pierden todo. Que no pueden acceder ni a la justicia ni a la reparación de daños que se merecen.

No podemos -la experiencia nos lo demuestra- seguir así. La Unión Europea tiene que liderar este proceso. Y por eso le pido, le exijo a la Unión Europea que tenga un mandato urgente para negociar un tratado internacional vinculante sobre empresas y derechos humanos.

Dejemos de mirar a otro lado. Miremos a las víctimas. Nos necesitan. La Unión Europea tiene que liderar este proceso.

Karoline Graswander-Hainz (S&D). – Herr Präsident! Werte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ausgangspunkt dieser Diskussion sind die häufigen Verletzungen von Standards im Bereich der Menschenrechte durch transnationale Unternehmen. Die Leitprinzipien für Menschenrechte und Unternehmen sind bereits ein erster richtiger Schritt in die richtige Richtung. Dennoch habe ich große Bedenken. Die Regeln sind nämlich weder verbindlich noch durchsetzbar.

Daher muss es in unser aller Interesse liegen, ein verbindliches Instrument im Rahmen der Vereinten Nationen zu entwickeln, um so viele Staaten wie möglich einzubinden. Nur so können wir das Argument der Konservativen entkräften, dass europäische Unternehmen Wettbewerbsnachteile erleiden würden. Da die EU aber leider formal kein Mandat hat, um aktiv an der Ausarbeitung teilzunehmen, fordere ich die Mitgliedstaaten auf, endlich eine einheitliche Linie zu verabschieden und sich mit großem Engagement und Ehrgeiz für ein verbindliches Instrument zum Schutz von Menschenrechten einzusetzen.

Doru-Claudian Frunzulică (S&D). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, chers collègues, malgré une sensibilisation et une compréhension accrues sur ce sujet, les atteintes aux droits de l'homme liées aux entreprises constituent un problème qui, malheureusement, garde toute son actualité.

Comme souligné dans la résolution accompagnant la question orale, l'internalisation croissante des activités commerciales et des chaînes d'approvisionnement renforce le rôle joué par les entreprises quant au respect des droits de l'homme, tout en conduisant à une situation dans laquelle la mise en place de règles et d'une coopération internationales est devenue nécessaire.

Je soutiens avec force l'élaboration d'un traité international contraignant concernant les entreprises et les droits de l'homme et j'insiste sur le fait qu'il faut continuer à inviter l'Union européenne et les États membres à participer de manière constructive à ce processus et à garantir une position cohérente sur ce sujet à tous les niveaux, dans toutes les politiques, les relations et les accords commerciaux, tout en incluant des règles concernant la responsabilité des entreprises au regard des violations des droits de l'homme dans le cadre d'accords commerciaux et d'investissement.

Julie Ward (S&D). – Mr President, putting in place binding rules that oblige companies to respect human rights is urgent. In many countries around the world transnational corporations take advantage of the soft legal framework that applies to their activities so as to favour their interests over human rights. This is also the direction of travel regarding Theresa May's hard Brexit. The land rights of indigenous people in particular are continuously violated and our own European companies are among the worst when it comes to human rights records in foreign countries.

I am saddened to see how difficult it is to reconcile the business world and human rights. It's urgent that we revise our business models and build a fairer and more inclusive paradigm, for instance through the development of social enterprises. Businesses should work for the common good, for the many and not for the interests of the few. I urge the European Union and the Member States to ensure the process for a binding treaty on business and human rights is kept alive, and to genuinely fight for the primacy of rights over private interests. Women, workers and indigenous peoples must be protected.

President. – The debate is closed.

I have a short announcement. When I chair the plenary, at least, I will not be giving space during the catch-the-eye procedure to anyone who has not been present for the debate. I think that colleagues know who I am talking about. I will make an exception today, but for me a debate is a debate and that means one has to be present.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Bogdan Andrzej Zdrojewski (PPE). – Panie Przewodniczący! Zawsze opowiadałem się za transparentnością, a więc kierunek debaty, gdzie ta transparentność jest uznawana za jeden z najważniejszych elementów, uważam za istotny i wartościowy. Z drugiej strony opowiadałem się zawsze za równymi szansami do prowadzenia działalności gospodarczej, także wobec tych firm, które nazywamy transnarodowymi czy ponadnarodowymi. Natomiast uważam, że część postulatów, które padły na tej sali, niestety kieruje ten wysiłek do kosza. Przede wszystkim nierealne oczekiwania – nierealne oczekiwania prawne, także te, które są związane z ewentualnymi prawami do odwołań, prawami do walki o prawa pracownicze – są tak sformułowane, jakby ich celem było wyrzucenie tych słusznie sformułowanych na początku postulatów do kosza. I na to zwracam uwagę.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señor presidente, señor comisario, esta pregunta oral ha sido planteada desde las Comisiones parlamentarias de Comercio Internacional, Desarrollo y Asuntos Exteriores, pero también podría haber sido planteada perfectamente desde la Comisión de Libertades, Justicia y Asuntos de Interior porque afecta a un eje vertebral de la acción exterior y global de la Unión Europea —el compromiso con los derechos fundamentales—, y es una exigencia de responsabilidad de la Comisión para que obtenga del Consejo un mandato negociador de la Unión Europea que cubra el vacío de normativa internacional con el que las multinacionales explotan a personas indefensas — particularmente niños y mujeres vulnerables— en sus acciones comerciales, sea en Uzbekistán, sea en Bangladés —como ha puesto de manifiesto este Parlamento Europeo—, o en cualquier lugar del globo.

Por tanto, el mensaje es claro: Comisión, Unión Europea, derechos fundamentales, derechos humanos en todas partes, también exigibles a la responsabilidad social de las empresas multinacionales.

Νότης Μαριάς (ECR). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, το θέμα της καταπάτησης των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων, και ιδίως των εργασιακών δικαιωμάτων, από την πλευρά των πολυεθνικών έχει συζητηθεί αρκετές φορές στην αίθουσα αυτή.

Γνωρίζουμε ότι οι πολυεθνικές, εφαρμόζοντας τη λογική του outsourcing, προκειμένου να μειώσουν το κόστος εργασίας και κυρίως να αποκομίσουν υπερκέρδη, μεταφέρουν τα κεφάλαιά τους σε αναπτυσσόμενες χώρες, όπου εκεί δεν τηρούν ούτε την εργασιακή νομοθεσία ούτε τη νομοθεσία για την ασφάλεια και την υγιεινή των εργαζομένων. Πολλές φορές, μάλιστα, έχουμε δει να υπάρχει παιδική εργασία και καταπάτηση των εργασιακών δικαιωμάτων.

Πιστεύω ότι ήρθε η ώρα να σταματήσει η ίδια η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση να υποκρίνεται στο ζήτημα αυτό, διότι εισάγονται αυτά τα πάμφθηνα προϊόντα από τον αναπτυσσόμενο κόσμο και οι πολυεθνικές συσσωρεύουν υπερκέρδη, τη στιγμή που δεν δίνουν καν σοβαρές αμοιβές στους εργαζόμενους.

Χρειάζονται λοιπόν συγκεκριμένα μέτρα και νομίζω ότι αυτό είναι και το αντικείμενο της συζήτησής μας: τα μέτρα που πρέπει να λάβει το Κοινοβούλιό μας και η Επιτροπή.

Linnéa Engström (Verts/ALE). – Herr talman! Herr kommissionär!

”Så trött på att bara duga ibland. Du vill ha lite kultur och sälja ditt land. Men i kulturen ingår vi och vårt blod. Att sälja landet till gruvbolag, det kallas folkmord.”

De här orden kommer från den samiska aktivisten Sofia Jannok, ur *Faller en, faller alla*. I mitt hemland Sverige förvägras ursprungsbefolkningen, samerna, sina mänskliga rättigheter. Det är ett solklart fall där skogsbolagens och gruvbolagens intressen går före människors och naturens rättigheter.

Så hur påverkas människor och miljö? Skogsbruket och gruvdriften omvandlar landskapet, utarmar den biologiska mångfalden och försvårar betet för renarna. Gruvindustrins enorma dagbrott påverkar mark och vatten och skapar enorma mängder farligt avfall. Sverige måste ratificera ILO-konventionen 169 om ursprungsbefolkningars rättigheter. Det är dags för rättvisa!

Τάκης Χατζηγεωργίου (GUE/NGL). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, συζητάμε για τα δικαιώματα των εργαζομένων πολυεθνικών εταιρειών σε όλο τον κόσμο. Επειδή το Κοινοβούλιο δείχνει πολύ θετική στάση υπεράσπισης αυτών των δικαιωμάτων –πράγμα που χειροκροτώ– και έχουν ληφθεί όλα τα σημαντικά, θέλω να αναφερθώ σε κάποιες λεπτομέρειες που νομίζω ότι θα ολοκληρώσουν την εικόνα.

Η Apple, αγαπητοί συνάδελφοι, έχει 1.600.000 εργαζόμενους και πληρώνει γι' αυτό 2,6 % των εσόδων της. Οι εργαζόμενοι πληρώνονται 1,5 ευρώ την ώρα. Ο μηνιαίος μισθός τους ισοδυναμεί με το μισό της αξίας ενός iPhone: 600 περίπου ευρώ δια δύο, δηλαδή 300 ευρώ τον μήνα, που σημαίνει, όπως είπα και προηγουμένως, 1,5 ευρώ την ώρα. Εργάζονται 60 ώρες την εβδομάδα, έξι διαδοχικές μέρες και πάνω από δέκα ώρες την ημέρα. Τα καθαρά έσοδα 14 δισεκατομμυρίων δολαρίων, σύμφωνα με τα στοιχεία του 2010 –υποθέτω σήμερα πολύ περισσότερα–, που αποκομίζει η Apple μόνο μέσα σε ένα τρίμηνο ισοδυναμούν με τον μισθό 11 ετών 300.000 εργαζομένων.

(Ο Πρόεδρος διακόπτει τον ομιλητή)

Eleonora Forenza (GUE/NGL). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, il 5 luglio del 2016, quest'Aula ha approvato la relazione di cui ero relatrice e che aveva come oggetto proprio i diritti umani e la responsabilità sociale d'impresa. In quel testo si auspicava una caratteristica vincolante di quelle clausole che riguardano i diritti umani e si auspicava un maggior impegno della Commissione in sede di Nazioni Unite, proprio a sostegno del trattato.

Non posso di conseguenza che essere convintamente a favore della risoluzione già approvata in commissione DEVE e chiedere con forza, anche da parte mia, che ci sia un maggior impegno comunitario e degli Stati membri a favore di un carattere vincolante e di un trattato vincolante per la responsabilità sociale d'impresa e la responsabilità delle multinazionali. Da ultimo, il caso glifosato di cui, come sapete, abbiamo molto discusso e stiamo molto discutendo in commissione PEST ci ricorda quanto sia urgente.

Λάμπρος Φουντούλης (NI). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, κανείς δεν μπορεί να αρνηθεί το γεγονός πως μεγάλες εταιρείες που δραστηριοποιούνται σε τρίτες χώρες παραβιάζουν συστηματικά τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα εργαζομένων. Όμως η λύση δεν θα δοθεί ούτε με τη δημιουργία νέων οργανισμών που θα απορροφούν επιπλέον κονδύλια ούτε με την αμφίβολης αξίας δικαστική συνδρομή, καθώς πολλές φορές το δικαστικό σύστημα των χωρών στις οποίες συμβαίνουν οι εν λόγω παραβιάσεις είναι ίσως περισσότερο διεφθαρμένο και από τις εταιρείες που καλείται να δικάσει.

Δύο μόνο ενέργειες μπορούν να δώσουν απάντηση στο σημαντικότερο αυτό πρόβλημα: μακροπρόθεσμα, πρέπει να επιδιώξουμε την ομαλοποίηση της λειτουργίας των κρατών αυτών, καθώς –για να λέμε τα πράγματα με το όνομά τους– τα περισσότερα από αυτά διοικούνται από διεφθαρμένους πολιτικούς που δεν υπολογίζουν καθόλου τους πολίτες τους, εξασφαλίζοντας με άλλους τρόπους την ψήφο τους, σε όσα βέβαια κράτη από αυτά διατηρούν έστω το προσωπείο μιας δημοκρατίας και δεν είναι απλά και ξεκάθαρα δικτατορίες.

Σε πιο άμεσο χρόνο όμως προτείνω την απαγόρευση λειτουργίας εντός της Ενώσεως όσων εταιριών παραβιάζουν τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα, καθώς και την απαγόρευση στις υπόλοιπες εταιρείες της οποιασδήποτε συναλλαγής μαζί τους. Μόνο εάν τις χτυπήσουμε οικονομικά, θα αναγκαστούν οι εταιρείες αυτές να αλλάξουν τις πρακτικές τους.

Γεώργιος Επιτήδειος (NI). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, δυστυχώς και στη σύγχρονη εποχή βλέπουμε να υπάρχουν περιπτώσεις παραβίασης των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων στον τομέα της εργασίας ως θυσία στον βωμό του κέρδους. Ένοχοι για αυτές τις παραβιάσεις είναι, ως επί το πλείστον, υπερεθνικές και πολυεθνικές εταιρείες οι οποίες εκμεταλλεύονται τις διασυνδέσεις τους με διεφθαρμένους πολιτικούς, καθώς επίσης και το χαλαρό νομικό πλαίσιο που επικρατεί στις χώρες στις οποίες δραστηριοποιούνται. Για τον λόγο αυτό, παριστάμεθα μάρτυρες της μεταφοράς της παραγωγής των εταιρειών, κυρίως της ενδύσεως, σε χώρες με χαμηλό εργατικό δυναμικό, ούτως ώστε να περιορίζουν τα εργατικά έξοδα και να κερδίζουν περισσότερα χρήματα.

Αυτές οι εταιρείες χρησιμοποιούν πολλές φορές στην εργασία και μικρά παιδιά και γενικώς υποχρεώνουν τους εργαζομένους να εργάζονται πολλές ώρες και κάτω από άσχημες συνθήκες. Για αυτό ακριβώς τον λόγο πρέπει τα κράτη, αλλά και η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση ως σύνολο, να θεσπίσουν αυστηρούς κανόνες, ώστε να εφαρμόζονται άμεσα, και επίσης να μην επιτρέπουν την εκμετάλλευση και πώληση των προϊόντων αυτών στις χώρες τους.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Christos Stylianides, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, I would like to thank honourable Members for this very fruitful debate and for their contribution in this really challenging field. I would like to reply and make some remarks on some of the observations.

First of all, let me underline what I said in my opening remarks. The European Union is not opposed, as a matter of principle, to discussing a potential legally-binding instrument, and this is why we have engaged in the process led by Ecuador. The second point, also on your observations. We nonetheless insist that the scope of the discussions should include all companies, not only transnational or multinational, as many human rights violations are committed by domestic companies. Some of you raised this issue.

My third point is about the European Union's position on this specific legally-binding instrument. The European Union is a staunch supporter of the United Nations in a rules-based global order and we expect all EU Member States to comply with these obligations and implement them strictly. Full implementation of these existing human rights obligations would help to respond to the numerous cases documented by civil society organisations and human rights defenders. We believe that any possible further steps regarding the international legal framework for business and human rights at UN level must be inclusive, firmly rooted in the UN guiding principles, and address all types of companies whether international or domestic, as I have already said.

In the world of today, it is only within a multilateral framework that we can ensure that all the victims of human rights abuses resulting from companies' actions receive the same level of protection. The European Union has a strong track record in agreeing with and implementing the UN Guiding Principles. We need to acknowledge progress also by a number of European companies to implement these Principles, and expect others to follow. However, we should continue to explore options for filling the gaps in their implementation, for increasing respect of human rights by private operators and ensuring access to remedies both multilaterally and bilaterally. We should also see how we can best promote a global level playing field in line with international standards in this area.

Let me add that in the current challenging global context multilateral cooperation is more important than ever and it is essential that the European Union and the UN speak with one voice when it comes to upholding democratic values and the universality of human rights. This is the challenge.

President. – Commissioner, thank you very much also for responding to concrete elements that have been raised by colleagues.

Juliane Bogner-Strauss, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, as already mentioned by the Commissioner, the European Union is not opposed to discussing a potentially legally binding international instrument on business and human rights. I think I am also repeating what you have already said when I say that any possible further steps regarding the international legal framework for business and human rights at UN level must be inclusive, firmly rooted in the UN guiding principles, and address – as you have already mentioned – all types of companies, transnational as well as domestic.

Let me also reassure you that the EU will continue to cooperate with all stakeholders globally on initiatives to ensure implementation of the UN guiding principles on business and human rights, including through national action plans, and to promote accountability for human rights violations and the need for an effective remedy for all victims of human rights violations and abuses.

With regard to your question on the formal mandate for negotiations, the Council will take a formal decision on the opening of negotiations if, and when, it receives a relevant recommendation in accordance with Article 218.

To sum up, thank you for your fruitful statements. This has been a very useful debate, which demonstrates the high degree of convergence between the views of Parliament and of the Council on the importance of ensuring an effective level of protection for victims of human rights abuses resulting from companies' actions, and of improving their access to effective remedies. This much-needed progress must, in the first instance, be achieved through clear commitments from all states to implement a duty to protect human rights and to abide by their existing international obligations. Thank you again for your fruitful statements and for your attention.

President. – I have received one motion for a resolution tabled in accordance with Rule 123(2)).

The debate is closed.

The vote will take place on Thursday, 4 October 2018.

Written statements (Rule 162)

Andi Cristea (S&D), *în scris*. – Uniunea Europeană se întemeiază pe valorile respectării demnității umane, ale libertății, democrației, egalității, statului de drept și ale respectării drepturilor omului. Corporațiile, fiind unul dintre principalii actori ai mondializării economice și schimburilor comerciale internaționale, au obligația să respecte toate legile aplicabile și tratatele internaționale în vigoare, inclusiv drepturile omului.

Din păcate, nu există o abordare globală a răspunderii întreprinderilor pentru încălcările drepturilor omului, iar victimele încălcărilor drepturilor omului în care sunt implicate întreprinderi multinaționale se confruntă adesea cu numeroase obstacole în ceea ce privește accesul la căile de atac, inclusiv la căile de atac judiciare. Implicarea UE și a statelor membre, în colaborare cu partenerii, este majoră pentru transpunerea în practică a principiilor directe ale ONU privind activitățile întreprinderilor și drepturile omului.

Atât UE, cât și statele sale membre trebuie să contribuie activ și constructiv la elaborarea cât mai rapidă a unui instrument internațional obligatoriu din punct de vedere juridic care să reglementeze activitățile corporațiilor transnaționale și ale altor întreprinderi cu caracter transnațional, pentru a preveni și remedia încălcările drepturilor omului și a asigura căile de atac necesare.

Karol Karski (ECR), *na piśmie*. – W związku z postępującą globalizacją i umiędzynarodowieniem działalności gospodarczej oraz łańcuchów dostaw rola przedsiębiorstw w przestrzeganiu praw człowieka jest kluczowa oraz musi być bardziej zauważalna i uregulowana przez prawo.

Normy międzynarodowe mają nadrzędne znaczenie w zapobieganiu łamaniu praw człowieka w państwach trzecich, jednak pomimo tak wielu dyskusji i negocjacji w tej kwestii w dalszym ciągu nie wypracowano wspólnego podejścia do sposobu ich przestrzegania przez korporacje transnarodowe.

Chciałbym wyrazić poparcie dla prac międzyrządowej grupy roboczej ONZ mających na celu opracowanie wiążącego instrumentu regulującego przestrzeganie praw człowieka w ramach działalności przedsiębiorstw międzynarodowych. Poczynione do tej pory wysiłki to duży progres w kierunku ochrony i propagowania rzeczonych praw.

Ponadto uważam, że negocjacje w sprawie przyszłego traktatu muszą być prowadzone w sposób jak najbardziej przejrzysty oraz obejmować jasne cele i mierzalne wskaźniki dotyczące uczestnictwa Unii Europejskiej w kolejnych rundach negocjacyjnych. Apeluję o doprecyzowanie roli Parlamentu Europejskiego, aby wkład Unii w prace międzyrządowej grupy roboczej był jak najbardziej rzeczywisty i konstruktywny.

13. EU-steun aan UNRWA na de intrekking van de financiële steun van de VS aan UNRWA (debat)

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 EU support to UNRWA, following the US withdrawal of financial support to UNRWA (2018/2852(RSP)).

Johannes Hahn, *Member of the Commission, on behalf of the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy*. – Mr President, this plenary is taking place a few days after the High Representative co-chaired a ministerial meeting in New York on the UN Agency for Palestinian Refugees. At the meeting, which I also attended, the European Union reaffirmed once more its political and financial support.

UNRWA is essential to peace in the Holy Land. It is serving millions of Palestine refugees and preserving the very possibility of a Palestinian state. The ministerial meeting was an opportunity to underline the importance of guaranteeing full financial support to UNRWA, and we managed to mobilise very significant resources that reduce the funding gap enormously. This means that Palestine will continue to be assisted by the UN Agency. The Commission proposed additional support to UNRWA of EUR 40 million. The EU and its Member States collectively provide almost half of UNRWA's budget. We have all invested over EUR 1 billion in funding over the last three years.

We are, and we will continue to be, strong, reliable, and critical supporters of the Agency. Supporting UNRWA is, above all, a humanitarian responsibility, but it is also in our collective interest for the sake of peace in the Middle East. First, millions of people, many of them extremely young, rely on UNRWA for essential services such as education, health services and food assistance. This is true in the West Bank and Gaza, but also in countries such as Jordan, Lebanon and Syria that host a large number of Palestinian refugees. Thanks to these funds, half a million children can go to school every day, millions of patients receive health care, and thousands of people have access to jobs.

Second, UNRWA's activities are particularly important for the people in Gaza who face a complex political and humanitarian situation. At last week's ad hoc Liaison Committee meeting on Palestine in New York, we recalled that our priority must be to avoid another escalation and to restore a political horizon for the people of Gaza, but this will never be possible if we don't also address the humanitarian situation right now and remain committed to assisting the most vulnerable people in Gaza.

Finally, without UNRWA it would be even more difficult to reach a negotiated two-state solution. A just, fair, agreed and realistic solution for Palestine refugees is a final status issue that only the two parties can resolve through negotiations, with the support of the international community.

Today, the Agency is reforming itself to be more effective, efficient and to have a perspective for the future. UNRWA has expanded its donor base and taken internal management measures to increase efficiency and reduce costs. Next year will be an even tougher year for UNRWA. In this context, we need to stress once more the crucial importance for UNRWA to intensify its efforts to put in place cost saving measures and reforms, including refocusing UNRWA's activities on core services for the most vulnerable refugees. We are engaging with UNRWA to explore synergies with other potential service providers to safeguard key services to Palestinian refugees.

Precisely because we believe that UNRWA is essential, we want it to be more effective and efficient than it is today. We will do our utmost to ensure that UNRWA and its staff continue to operate until a just, fair, agreed and realistic solution to the plight of Palestinian refugees is finally reached. Without UNRWA and without the two-state perspective, there would just be chaos and violence for both the Israeli and the Palestinian people. We need a multilateral framework to support negotiations, we need a collective engagement to push for political progress and we need the region and the entire international community to continue to play their role. The European Union will double down on efforts to work with our partners – the US and other regional and international partners – towards our common goal of a negotiated two-state solution.

José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, *en nombre del Grupo PPE*. – Señor presidente, en el mes de febrero discutimos este mismo asunto en el hemiciclo después de la decisión del Gobierno de los Estados Unidos de congelar 65 millones de su contribución al Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados. En esa ocasión, señor presidente, expresamos nuestra preocupación. Preocupación que se compartió con la expresada por el secretario general de las Naciones Unidas, recordando que esta agencia no es una agencia palestina sino una agencia de las Naciones Unidas.

El 31 de agosto el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos decidió retirar definitivamente 368 millones de 1 200 millones. Al día siguiente, el portavoz del Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior de la Unión Europea recordó con satisfacción la apertura ese mismo fin de semana de varias escuelas en las que se educarán más de quinientos mil niños de Palestina, Siria, Líbano y Jordania.

Hoy, la Unión Europea corre con el principal esfuerzo presupuestario en necesidades básicas, ayuda humanitaria y desarrollo social, y nos sentimos verdaderamente orgullosos de ello, por lo que felicitamos a la Comisión.

Por eso, señor presidente, tenemos que lamentar esta decisión de los Estados Unidos, que se une a la larga lista de desencuentros con la Unión Europea, pero en este caso afecta a más de 5 500 000 personas, hombres, mujeres y niños a los que, sencillamente -como ha dicho el alto comisionado-, no podemos abandonar.

Evidentemente, esto no quiere decir que no se tengan que exigir las mayores medidas de control financiero, de control presupuestario y de rendición de cuentas a estos fondos, pero entendemos, señor presidente, que ese desistimiento por parte de los Estados Unidos de no unirse a ese esfuerzo internacional en favor de la población palestina no reduce, claramente, en beneficio de la influencia que este país ha venido ejerciendo en el proceso de la búsqueda de una solución justa y duradera para el conflicto en Palestina.

Y, por lo tanto, señor presidente, esperamos que los Estados Unidos, sobre la base de razones estrictamente humanitarias, reconsideren su decisión.

Elena Valenciano, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señor presidente, en primer lugar, agradezco al comisario y también a la alta representante el esfuerzo que están llevando a cabo para tratar de equilibrar lo que es una gravísima crisis financiera de una organización que se ocupa, como ha dicho el comisario, de los más vulnerables —de los niños, de las niñas, de las personas enfermas, de las personas mayores— y de educar a los jóvenes y a las jóvenes.

La decisión de la Administración Trump va mucho más allá de abandonar a personas frágiles, a personas que necesitan ayuda. La decisión de la Administración Trump reincide justamente en esa idea de hacer crecer el odio —el odio y la desafección—.

Abandonar a las niñas que están yendo a las escuelas, que necesitan, más que nunca y más que nadie, de la educación como instrumento para poder sobrevivir, para poder mejorar, para poder soportar incluso la situación en la que viven, aislarlas del sistema educativo, sería prácticamente como poner minas antipersona.

Es muy grave la decisión, es muy profunda y es muy política. No es solamente financiera. Es una decisión que pretende avanzar en la senda de hacer imposible la solución de los dos Estados, haciendo que la juventud palestina se sienta cada vez más abandonada, cada vez más alejada de los valores de la solidaridad y de la justicia.

Por eso, además de apelar al esfuerzo financiero —que sé que la Comisión está haciendo, que este Parlamento tiene que hacer y también los Estados miembros—, quiero hacer un llamamiento para que los Estados Unidos vuelvan a la senda de la solidaridad y de la construcción de la paz.

Bas Belder, *namens de ECR-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, een strikte vergelijking tussen doelstellingen en werkwijze van de twee VN-organisaties voor vluchtelingen UNHCR en UNRWA legt het grote falen van UNRWA bloot. UNRWA bevordert niet, maar blokkeert een oplossing van het Palestijnse vluchtelingenvraagstuk en dat al bijna 70 jaar lang. Juist het Amerikaanse besluit UNRWA in haar huidige vorm niet langer te willen financieren, biedt de internationale gemeenschap een uitgelezen kans de onontbeerlijke hulp aan Palestijnse vluchtelingen op een verantwoorde wijze drastisch te veranderen. En dat vereist nieuwe rationele criteria voor Palestijnse vluchtelingen – geen automatisme meer – en legt voortaan ook de exclusieve verantwoordelijkheid voor de integratie van Palestijnse vluchtelingen in de Palestijnse gebieden bij de Palestijnse Autoriteit zelf. Vervang in Gaza UNRWA door UNHCR. Kijk eens wat er gebeurd is – ik heb er van de Commissaris geen woord over gehoord – wat er gebeurd is met de staf van UNRWA gisteren, gevlucht naar Israël. Geef, meneer de Voorzitter, UNHCR ook het mandaat over de Palestijnse vluchtelingen in Libanon en Syrië. Om zicht te houden op de Twee-statenoplossing voor het Israëlijs-Palestijns conflict, toch staand EU-beleid, dient Brussel Washington juist te steunen in deze wake up call aan het Palestijnse leiderschap. De Commissaris sprak net het over hervormingen van UNRWA. Insiders vertellen mij hoe hier misbruik wordt gemaakt. Welgestelde Palestijnse families houden hun hand op en UNRWA moet toch geen banenmachine zijn? Kweek eerlijkere werkplaatsen in plaats van [onverstaanbaar].

Hilde Vautmans, *namens de ALDE-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, dit debat gaat eigenlijk niet zozeer over Israël en ook niet zozeer over Palestina. Misschien ook niet zozeer over de Verenigde Staten. Wel gaat het over de beslissingen van één man, president Trump, diens unilaterale beslissingen en de negatieve gevolgen daarvan. Eerst, en we weten dat allemaal, was er de beslissing om de Amerikaanse ambassade naar Jeruzalem te verplaatsen. Vervolgens was er de beslissing om een deel van de financiële hulp aan UNRWA stop te zetten om ten slotte de algehele stopzetting door te voeren. Collega's, als je als staat één derde van een organisatie financiert en je beslist om dat eenzijdig stop te zetten, dan doe je dat niet, collega's en meneer De Belder, om hervormingen te stimuleren. Dat is bullshit. Dan doe je dat omdat je de organisatie wil opdoeken. En bij zijn aantreden – dat herinneren we ons allemaal nog – zei president Trump: "Ik wil werken aan de ultieme deal". Zijn acties daarentegen lijken eerder partijdig. Onlangs sprak hij zijn steun uit voor een twee-statenoplossing, maar hoe? De conclusies die ik uit zijn daden trek is dat hij door één partij te benadelen deze opnieuw aan de onderhandelingstafel wil krijgen. "Leverage", zoals je hem zou kunnen horen zeggen. Nu, als President Trump denkt dat hij op die manier de geschiedenis zal ingaan als de persoon die een twee-statenoplossing doorvoert, dan heeft hij het volledig mis. Want UNRWA, collega's, en de commissaris heeft het gezegd, is fundamenteel voor de toekomstige Palestijnse staat. Ze staat in voor het onderwijs van de kinderen, voor de voedselpakketten, voor de gezondheidszorg van de Palestijnse vluchtelingen. Daarom, Commissaris, ben ik blij dat Europa zijn verantwoordelijkheid neemt. Dat we een stuk van het gat hebben gedicht. Maar er zijn drie zaken die we moeten blijven doen. Eén, engagement blijven tonen ten aanzien van de Palestijnse vluchtelingen. Twee, UNRWA begeleiden bij de noodzakelijke hervormingen. En drie, natuurlijk on speaking terms blijven met de Verenigde Staten van Amerika. Zij moeten helpen die twee-statenoplossing

te verwezenlijken.

Margrete Auken, for Verts/ALE-Gruppen. – Hr. formand! Atter en gang takker min gruppe UNRWA for deres fantastiske arbejde. Det bliver katastrofalt for de palæstinensiske flygtninge, hvis denne hjælp ikke sikres. Men vi er nødt til at se det sammen med situationen i det besatte Palæstina, der nu er nået et nyt lavpunkt. Læs pressen: Palæstina er i brand, vejene flyder med blod. Bare nogle eksempler fra de sidste dage: I fredags blev 7 palæstinensere dræbt i Gaza; i søndags var der flere angreb fra bosættere mod palæstinensere i Østjerusalem; i går blev 93 palæstinensere såret i Gaza, 7 blev dræbt, her iblandt et barn; i går var der den hidtil største demonstration af israelske arabere mod Knessets nyligt vedtagne racistiske nationalstatslov; i dag er der generalstrejke overalt i Palæstina, ligeledes mod nationalstatsloven, men også til støtte for landsbyen Khan al-Amar, som Israel vil smadre trods protester fra hele verden, heriblandt en stærk beslutning fra dette Parlament i sidste måned.

Hvad er EU's svar? Et bekymret mumleri og nogle få ekstra euro. Men vi har endog meget tætte bånd til Israel. Vi kan ikke bare blæse på Israels systematiske krænkelser af såvel international lov, som EU's egne love, og krænkelserne bliver stadig værre. Hr. kommissær: Nu skal EU leve op til sin egen lovgivning og forlange den respekteret af dem, vi samarbejder med. Det skal vi for palæstinenserne skyld, men det skal vi også for EU's egen skyld. Når vi tilsidesætter vores egne love, underminerer vi os selv som retsstat.

Νεοκλής Σουλκιώτης, εξ ονόματος της ομάδας GUE/NGL. – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, η απόφαση των ΗΠΑ να διακόψουν τη χορήγηση χρηματοδότησης στην UNRWA προστίθεται σε μια σειρά εμπρηστικών ενεργειών της κυβέρνησης Trump με αποκορύφωμα την αναγνώριση της Ιερουσαλήμ ως πρωτεύουσας του ισραηλινού κράτους. Βαθύτερη επιδίωξη βέβαια είναι να εκτροχιαστούν οι προσπάθειες για τη λύση των δύο κρατών και να ακυρωθεί το δικαίωμα των Παλαιστινίων προσφύγων να επιστρέψουν σε ένα δικό τους ανεξάρτητο κράτος.

Σχολεία, νοσοκομεία, προσφυγικοί οικισμοί και προγράμματα ιατροφαρμακευτικής περίθαλψης που ανακουφίζουν 5 εκατομμύρια πρόσφυγες είναι πλέον υπό την απειλή της κατάρρευσης, εάν δεν βρεθεί άμεσα η απαιτούμενη χρηματοδότηση για την UNRWA, ενώ στην αποκλεισμένη Γάζα το 80% του πληθυσμού εξαρτάται πλήρως από τη στήριξη της UNRWA.

Καλούμε την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και τα κράτη μέλη να αναλάβουν πρωτοβουλία και να κινητοποιήσουν επιπλέον χρηματοδότηση για την UNRWA, ώστε να μπορέσει να συνεχίσει απρόσκοπτα το έργο της. Την ίδια στιγμή, η Ένωση έχει χρέος να ασκήσει πιέσεις στο Ισραήλ για να τεθεί τέρμα στην πολιτική των εποίκισμών και να τερματιστεί ο απάνθρωπος αποκλεισμός της Γάζας.

(Ο Πρόεδρος διακόπτει τον ομιλητή)

Rosa D'Amato, a nome del gruppo EFDD. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, oggi ci sono oltre 5 milioni di profughi palestinesi registrati nell'area UNRWA o in Medio Oriente.

L'UNRWA fu costituita nel '49 a seguito dell'esodo dei palestinesi cacciati dalle loro terre al fine di provvedere al loro aiuto. Essa ha contribuito anche grazie all'appoggio europeo al sostentamento di quattro generazioni di profughi palestinesi.

Nella governance dell'UNRWA ci sono certamente aspetti migliorabili, ma mi trovo in profondo disaccordo con il taglio dell'amministrazione Trump, che si conferma promotore di una linea politica del tutto controproducente alla pace in Medio Oriente e alla soluzione dei due Stati, come d'altra parte ha dimostrato anche la decisione di spostare l'ambasciata da Tel Aviv a Gerusalemme.

Il taglio di 300 milioni del contributo porterà a disastrose conseguenze pratiche: classi scolastiche di 60 bambini, privazione del sostentamento per migliaia di famiglie, perdita dell'assistenza sanitaria per le comunità beduine. E la nostra Europa, baluardo del rispetto universale dei diritti umani, non può chinare il capo e fare finta di nulla. Ora più che mai, servono azioni diplomatiche decise, forti e coraggiose.

VORSITZ: RAINER WIELAND

Vizepräsident

Marcus Pretzell, im Namen der ENF-Fraktion. – Herr Präsident, meine sehr geehrten Damen und Herren! Israels Sicherheit ist Teil deutscher Staatsräson – so sagte Angela Merkel. Und Herr Trump hat nicht nur die Hauptstadt Jerusalem anerkannt, jetzt hat er auch dem UNRWA die Mittel gestrichen. *Well done, Mister President!* Zum Vergleich: Das UNHCR kümmert sich mit 9 300 Mitarbeitern weltweit um alle Flüchtlinge bis auf die palästinensischen. Um die kümmert sich das UNRWA mit 30 000 Mitarbeitern. Es geht um 5,2 Millionen sogenannte palästinensische Flüchtlinge bei überhaupt nur 750 000 ursprünglich Vertriebenen. Der Rest hat seinen Status erbt.

Das hier ist ein 200-seitiger Bericht von UN Watch, der auf über 200 Seiten ein Dokument von Antisemitismus und Glorifizierung von Judenmördern durch Mitarbeiter des UNRWA ist. Aber das UNRWA propagiert auch ein Recht auf Rückkehr dieser sogenannten Flüchtlinge. Acht Millionen Kaschmiris wurden Flüchtlinge, als Indien gegründet wurde, 12 Millionen Deutsche wurden nach 1945 vertrieben, Millionen Polen. Jetzt stellen wir uns vor, wir hätten allen diesen Flüchtlingen und ihren Nachkommen über Jahrzehnte ein Recht auf Rückkehr eingebimt. Zum Glück haben wir das nicht getan, denn sonst hätten wir das Problem nicht gelöst, sondern wir hätten es perpetuiert. Genau das tut das UNRWA. Es ist eine Schande, dass ausgerechnet die deutsche Bundesregierung zugesagt hat, einen substanziellen Teil des amerikanischen Anteils am UNRWA zu übernehmen. Wir sollten uns den USA anschließen und ebenfalls alle Mittel streichen.

Σωτήριος Ζαριανόπουλος (NI). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, ο διαβολικά καλός, κατά τον κύριο Τσίπρα, Αμερικάνος πρόεδρος Trump, με τη διακοπή χρηματοδότησης του προγράμματος βοήθειας στους Παλαιστίνιους επιδιώκει με βαρβαρότητα να τους εξαναγκάσει να δεχθούν τετελεσμένα στο πλαίσιο προωθούμενων ιμπεριαλιστικών διευθετήσεων στη Μέση Ανατολή και την Κύπρο, με τη μεταφορά της αμερικάνικης πρεσβείας στην Ιερουσαλήμ, με αναγνώριση της Ιερουσαλήμ σαν πρωτεύουσας του Ισραήλ, με νομιμοποίηση της κατοχής, των εποικισμών, της δολοφονικής ισραηλινής πολιτικής απαρχαίντ.

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και οι κυβερνήσεις της και πάλι υποκριτικά ψελλίζουν κάποια λόγια. Δεν απαλλάσσονται από τις τεράστιες ευθύνες τους. Καμία κύρωση. Συνεχίζουν να αναπτύσσουν σχέσεις με το Ισραήλ, να του κάνουν πλάτες, να μην αναγνωρίζουν το παλαιστινιακό κράτος, παρά τις αποφάσεις των κοινοβουλίων τους, να αναγνωρίζουν το Ισραήλ σαν χωροφύλακα του ιμπεριαλισμού στη Μέση Ανατολή που φλέγεται.

Κλασικό παράδειγμα η κυβέρνηση ΣΥΡΙΖΑ-ΑΝΕΛ, που εκτοξεύει τις οικονομικές και στρατιωτικές σχέσεις με το Ισραήλ, με κοινούς ενεργειακούς και στρατιωτικούς σχεδιασμούς κατά των λαών της περιοχής, με στρατιωτικές βάσεις που παραχωρεί στους νατοϊκούς δολοφόνους. Οι σχεδιασμοί τους σκοντάφτουν στην αλύγιστη θέληση των Παλαιστίνιων, που αποτυπώθηκε στο πρόσωπο της Ahd Tamimi, της δεκαεφτάχρονης που φυλακίστηκε οχτώ μήνες, γιατί προστάτευσε τη ζωή της οικογένειάς της, όταν παραβρέθηκε στο φεστιβάλ της KNE, της νεολαίας του Κομμουνιστικού Κόμματος Ελλάδας στην Αθήνα.

Καταδίκη με συγκεκριμένα μέτρα του Ισραήλ, τέρμα στην κατοχή, στους εποικισμούς, λευτεριά στους Παλαιστίνιους πολιτικούς κρατούμενους, παλαιστινιακό κράτος στα σύνορα του '67 με πρωτεύουσα την Ανατολική Ιερουσαλήμ!

Michael Gahler (PPE). – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Entscheidung von Präsident Trump, die amerikanischen Zahlungen für das UNRWA einzustellen, reiht sich ein in eine lange Liste von solchen einseitigen Beschlüssen, wo große Teile der internationalen Gemeinschaft kopfschüttelnd oder fassungslos danebenstehen. Dass diese US-Administration leider kein ehrlicher Makler zwischen Israelis und Palästinensern ist, wissen wir bereits. Aber diese Entscheidung ist meiner Meinung nach auch nicht im Interesse Israels. Oder glaubt irgendjemand, dass es Israel zum Vorteil wäre, wenn die jungen Palästinenser nicht in UN-Schulen, sondern in Hamas-Schulen unterrichtet würden? Der einzige Trost, den ich derzeit erkennen kann, besteht darin, dass offenbar die internationale Gemeinschaft, die anderen Geber sich in der letzten Woche am Donnerstag am Rande der UNO-Generalversammlung zusammengesetzt haben, um die finanzielle Lücke zu schließen. Angeblich ist das aktuelle Defizit dadurch von 446 Millionen auf 64 Millionen reduziert worden.

Natürlich muss man im Einzelnen schauen, welche Aufgaben das UNRWA zu erledigen hat. Natürlich kann auch eine solche Organisation effektiver werden. Aber von jetzt auf gleich eine wesentliche finanzielle Unterstützung zu entziehen, das hilft niemandem. Und deswegen hoffe ich, dass wir in den Debatten mit den Vereinigten Staaten vielleicht spätestens mit der nächsten Administration eine andere Beschlusslage erzielen können.

Knut Fleckenstein (S&D). – Herr Präsident! Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Es ist schon wichtig, dass wir weiterhin das UNRWA unterstützen, weil die Hilfe vor Ort – viele haben es schon im Detail ausgeführt – auch wirklich lebens- und überlebenswichtig ist. Es ist aber auch wichtig für uns selbst und für unsere Mitbürgerinnen und Mitbürger, die wir repräsentieren, dass wir deutlich zeigen: Wir stehen zu unserem Wort, wir stehen zu unserem Engagement und zu unseren Werten, auch wenn andere es plötzlich anders sehen. Wenn wir schon bei den Bemühungen um eine Verhandlungslösung im Nahen Osten nicht erfolgreich sind, dann sollten und werden wir uns wenigstens auf dem Feld der humanitären Hilfe nicht überbieten lassen. Und deshalb unser Dank an die Kommission und auch an die Mitgliedsstaaten, die in die Tasche gegriffen haben, um das plötzliche Loch, das die Vereinigten Staaten gerissen haben, auszugleichen.

Wir sollten unsere Partner in den USA bitten, ihre Entscheidung zu überdenken. Denn internationale Zusammenarbeit oder Zusammenarbeit in internationalen Gremien funktioniert ja nicht nur dann, wenn die Einen das Sagen haben und die Anderen dann gefälligst tun, was der große amerikanische Bruder will. Nein, es passiert eben auch mal, dass sich andere Mehrheiten in solchen internationalen Organisationen bilden. Und das muss man ertragen, das muss jeder mal ertragen.

Zweitens: Je mehr Geld Deutschland – weil ich aus Deutschland komme – oder die Kommission hineingeben muss, umso länger wird es dauern, bis dieses 2%-Ziel erreicht ist, weil Friedens

(Der Präsident unterbricht den Redner.)

Anders Primdahl Vistisen (ECR). – Hr. formand! Definitionen på sindssyge er at gøre det samme igen og igen og forvente et forskelligt resultat, og det er vel det, man kan sige, at Europas tilgang til Israel-Palæstina-spørgsmålet har været hele vejen igennem. Vi bliver ved med at sidde fast i den samme rille, og det er et eller andet sted bekymrende at høre den store opbakning, der er til en organisation som UNRWA her i salen – en organisation, der gang og igen er blevet taget for svindel, for korruption og for antisemitiske budskaber i forhold til deres ansatte medarbejdere; en FN-organisation, der nærmest har karakter af en stat i staten, hvor der er så eksorbitant mange på lønningslisten, at det nærmest udgør en helt fraktion i det palæstinensiske selvstyre.

Det kan man så sammenholde med at, det eneste sted i verden, hvor flygtningestatussen kan gå i arv, åbenbart er Palæstina. Derudover gør den store politiske interesse, der er for dette relativt begrænsede geografiske område i Mellemøsten, jo også, at alle debatter vedrørende Israel og Palæstina kommer til og handle om de samme temaer, de samme gamle konflikter, i stedet for at se på fakta omkring organisationen. Denne organisation har ikke gjort sig fortjent til fortsat vestlig støtte. Derfor synes jeg, det er godt, at præsident Trump har besluttet, at amerikanerne ikke længere ønsker at støtte UNRWA. Jeg håber, at den danske regering også vil stoppe sin støtte. Og man kunne også håbe, at det en dag ville komme til så meget fornuft, at EU stopper vores.

Javier Nart (ALDE). – Señor presidente, la suspensión de la financiación de los Estados Unidos al OOPS es un indecente chantaje de Trump en favor de la extrema derecha israelí.

Todos los informes de las Naciones Unidas son constantes respecto a las condiciones extremas en Palestina, pero el OOPS no sustituye las obligaciones de Israel en la Palestina ocupada conforme al Cuarto Convenio de Ginebra, que le responsabiliza de atender todas las necesidades de los palestinos. Gaza será inevitable en 2020, donde Israel, además, prohíbe el acceso a todos los miembros de este Parlamento.

La cláusula democrática del artículo 2 del Acuerdo de Asociación Unión Europea-Israel obliga a Israel a respetar los principios democráticos y los derechos humanos, siendo parte esencial del acuerdo. Así que, no basta con apoyar al OOPS. O aplicamos la cláusula democrática o la eliminamos de todos nuestros acuerdos.

Porque la Unión Europea pagará el chantaje de Trump para evitar un desastre humanitario, pero no estamos ante un desastre humanitario. Estamos ante un problema político.

(El orador acepta responder a una pregunta formulada con arreglo al procedimiento de la «tarjeta azul» (artículo 162, apartado 8, del Reglamento interno)

Arne Gericke (ECR), *Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“*. – Vielen Dank, lieber Kollege. Es ist immer schön, wie wir auf Trump eindreschen, weil er Mittel streicht. Warum haben wir nicht gehandelt, als in Syrien ein Flüchtlingslager mit Palästinensern so weit herabgewirtschaftet worden ist, dass dort Hunderte von Kindern verhungert sind? Da waren wir in der Bringpflicht und hätten die UN mit Mitteln ausstatten müssen. Ich denke, wir müssen immer Gleiches mit Gleichem vergleichen. Inwiefern würden Sie da auch in gleicher Weise...

(Der Präsident unterbricht den Redner.)

Javier Nart (ALDE), *respuesta de «tarjeta azul»*. – Señor Gericke, no hay nada desigual en determinar que un país debe cumplir la legalidad internacional y la legalidad internacional es el Cuarto Convenio de Ginebra.

Lo que dice de Siria lo comparto, pero un crimen en Siria no exime de un crimen en Israel.

Jordi Solé (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, two weeks ago, together with other MEPs, I was in Lebanon and we had the opportunity to visit one of the Palestinian refugee camps, the one in Beirut in Shatila. I can assure you, it is a terrible site. Thousands of people living in very poor conditions packed into just 0.4 square kilometres. We had the opportunity to talk to mothers and fathers of the school children in the only school to be found in the neighbourhood. We also talked to the doctors running the healthcare centre. They all implored us to keep UNRWA alive. Without UNRWA support these people, who are the last of the last in Lebanon, would be totally abandoned and left homeless. Let's not follow the argument of the Trump administration; UNRWA has no ideology other than human dignity and human rights and takes no sides in the conflict between Israel and Palestine. UNRWA just honours international commitments taken 70 years ago, and the European Union and its Members States cannot let UNRWA fall.

Σοφία Σακοράφα (GUE/NGL). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, κύριοι συνάδελφοι, 70 χρόνια τώρα η UNRWA δίνει ανάσα ζωής σε Παλαιστίνιους πρόσφυγες. Πριν 10 μέρες επισκέφθηκα την Παλαιστίνη και είδα σχολεία, νοσοκομεία και κοινωνικές υπηρεσίες να κλείνουν το ένα μετά το άλλο, τις προσφυγικές δομές υποστελεχωμένες, τις τραγικές συνέπειες από τη μείωση της ανθρωπιστικής βοήθειας. Αυτά είναι τα άμεσα αποτελέσματα της εγκληματικής απόφασης των ΗΠΑ, που υποστηρίζουν τα εγκλήματα του Ισραήλ και τον εκτοπισμό εκατομμυρίων Παλαιστινίων, στερώντας τους και την ελάχιστη βοήθεια.

Κύριοι συνάδελφοι, η χρηματοδότηση της εκπαίδευσης είναι ίσως η ελάχιστη προσφορά της διεθνούς κοινότητας απέναντι στο καθεστώς μαζικού διωγμού που βιώνουν οι Παλαιστίνιοι πρόσφυγες· ελάχιστο αντίβαρο στην ακραία βία, τον πόνο και την αδικία που προκαλεί η κατοχή· ελάχιστο αντίβαρο, κύριοι συνάδελφοι, ώστε η επιβίωση να μην αποτελεί το μοναδικό τους όνειρο, για να μην είναι το μέλλον τους όμηρος της πολιτικής του Ισραήλ.

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, κύριε Επίτροπε, έχει ιστορικό χρέος να αναπληρώσει το οικονομικό κενό της αποχώρησης των ΗΠΑ. Πολιτική βούληση χρειάζεται, όχι μόνο καμπάνιες εύρεσης δωρητών.

André Elissen (ENF). – Voorzitter, we spreken vandaag over de hoogte van de Europese bijdrage aan de Palestijnen. Nu de Verenigde Staten terecht besloten hebben de hulp op een laag pitje te zetten, moeten de zogenaamde vluchtelingen op zoek naar een nieuwe suikeroom en de Europese Unie is maar wat graag bereid om die rol te blijven vervullen. UNRWA beschikt over een budget van meer dan 1 miljard euro per jaar. Er zijn genoeg verhalen bekend over het inhuren van islamitische terroristen, het wegsluizen van Europese gelden naar de zakken van corrupte Palestijnse leiders en uitingen van extreme Jodenhaat. En wat doet de Europese Commissie? Die vindt het allemaal prima en blijft vele honderden miljoenen euro's per jaar uitdelen. Onverkoopbaar en onacceptabel. Helaas maakt ook mijn eigen land, Nederland, jaarlijks trouw vele tientallen miljoenen euro's over. Geld dat we veel beter in ons eigen land kunnen besteden. Voorzitter, het is duidelijk. Elke euro naar de Palestijnen is wat ons betreft een euro te veel. Stop met het financieren van haat richting Israël, stop met het in stand houden van een zogenaamd vluchtelingenprobleem en stop elke vorm van ondersteuning aan de Palestijnen.

Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE). – Señor presidente, Oriente Próximo en general y, en especial, la cuestión palestina requieren diálogo y acuerdos, no actos unilaterales. La situación creada por la supresión de la ayuda de los Estados Unidos al OOPS exige inevitablemente un aumento de la contribución de la Unión Europea y de sus Estados miembros. No tenemos otra solución. Celebro la posición que nos ha expresado el comisario. Los servicios de alimentación, salud, educación básica e infraestructuras no pueden ser desatendidos.

El Mediterráneo sur es nuestra vecindad. Lo que allí sucede repercute inmediatamente en Europa. Lo hemos visto con el conflicto sirio. Lo vemos, también, con la situación en Libia. La desestabilización en el Mediterráneo nos afecta directamente.

Además de los Estados miembros, espero que otros países, por ejemplo los países árabes con recursos, también aumenten su contribución al OOPS, que adolece de un déficit crónico, ahora agravado. Me preocupa que este tipo de decisiones de Washington pueda utilizarse para aumentar la radicalización entre los refugiados palestinos. También me preocupa que con estas y otras decisiones similares los Estados Unidos continúen en una línea de automarginación de una región en la que hasta hace poco eran el actor clave. Al final, Rusia e Irán podrían aumentar su papel en una zona en la que la influencia de los Estados Unidos no cesa de disminuir.

La Unión Europea, además de incrementar su contribución al OOPS, tiene que procurar intensificar el diálogo con Washington y hacerle ver los riesgos de estos actos unilaterales en una región tan volátil y al mismo tiempo tan importante para Europa y para Occidente.

Eider Gardiazabal Rubial (S&D). – Señor presidente, en la Comisión de Presupuestos por estas fechas siempre hablamos de la financiación del OOPS, o más bien de la infrafinanciación de la agencia, porque todos los años recibimos sus informes financieros y vemos las penurias económicas a las que tienen que hacer frente.

El problema de los números es que son muy fríos y difícilmente se les ponen ojos y cara, y, para eso, es mejor ir sobre el terreno. Así que en este mandato hemos viajado a Palestina, al Líbano y a Jordania para verlo allí mismo, y allí sí que puedes ver sus ojos y sus caras.

Y ahí te das cuenta de que la negociación presupuestaria, que tanto nos costó sacar adelante, tenía un fin indiscutible: que los refugiados y, especialmente, los niños y niñas que son víctimas de guerras y de disputas políticas sin sentido tengan sus necesidades más básicas cubiertas: un techo, comida, educación y atención sanitaria.

Y eso, algo tan humanitario como eso, es lo que acaba de negar Trump. Y la verdad es que no se puede ser más miserable.

Y si Trump no tiene corazón, Europa debe demostrar que sí lo tiene y no solo con palabras, sino con sus presupuestos, y hacerlo sin fisuras, sin rebajas y sin miserias.

Branislav Škripek (ECR). – Mr President, I believe all of us can agree that we cannot fund an entity without scrutinising it thoroughly. We have obtained well-founded reports that UNRWA has been funding school textbooks full of incitement and full of hate, and even EU money is funding these school textbooks. They should meet the UN standards of education and promote peace. Regretfully, we have seen alarming changes in the Palestinian curricula, which are turning in the wrong direction.

Moreover, in your answer to the written question of the group of MEPs, Commissioner Hahn, you admitted that for the current result-oriented framework there are no specific targets linked to the curriculum reform process. Humanitarian efforts have become harmful to any kind of peace in the area. We need to make sure the UNRWA meets basic conditions in order that further EU funding can be justified. The US cut has made the EU the only major donor of the UNRWA. This fact will make the EU more accountable for the outcomes.

Jacques Colombier (ENF). – Monsieur le Président, la décision des États-Unis de se retirer du financement de l'UNRWA est un fait nouveau et un fait politique. Les réfugiés palestiniens ont des droits dans le cadre des conventions internationales: il s'agit de les garantir, mais pas à n'importe quel prix.

Leur sort ne s'améliorera vraiment que le jour où s'imposera, entre Israéliens et Palestiniens, une solution définitive à deux États. Dans ce cadre, ces réfugiés pourraient même bénéficier d'un droit au retour.

Mais nous ne devons pas faire preuve de naïveté. L'Union européenne en bailleur de fonds perpétuel, c'est loin d'être notre point de vue; cette question doit demeurer, à notre sens, du ressort essentiel des Nations unies. N'oublions pas que ces camps sont infestés par la propagande et les groupes islamistes, notamment au Liban, où l'armée a procédé récemment à des arrestations.

Aussi, la plus grande vigilance s'impose. Avant d'ouvrir les vannes du financement, j'invite les dirigeants européens à s'interroger très sérieusement sur les destinations d'éventuels fonds supplémentaires et à financer, bien entendu, d'autres priorités.

Michaela Šojdrová (PPE). – Pane předsedající, izraelsko-palestinský konflikt považuji za jeden z nejtěživějších sporů novodobé historie. Zde v Evropském parlamentu před několika lety prohlásil izraelský prezident, že evropské smíření je inspirací pro Izrael a Palestinu.

Já věřím, že i tam bude jednou mír a že i tam nastane usmíření. K tomu úkolu potřebují tyto země pomoc dalších aktérů a jedním z nich je také agentura UNRWA, která má v řešení tohoto konfliktu nezastupitelné místo, zejména pokud jde o humanitární pomoc.

Spojené státy se rozhodly ukončit financování z důvodu neefektivity a já žádám Evropskou komisi, aby v případě navýšení příspěvku velmi důsledně, důrazně kontrolovala, na jaké účely je používán. Souhlasím s kolegou Škripkem, že je nepřijatelné, aby tyto prostředky byly využívány na jednostrannou propagandu.

Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, il portavoce dell'UNRWA ha dichiarato che la scelta dell'amministrazione americana avrà un impatto devastante sulla vita di cinquecentomila minori che ricevono un'istruzione dall'agenzia, tre milioni e mezzo di malati che si recano alle sue strutture mediche e un milione e settecentomila persone in condizioni di insicurezza alimentare e decine di migliaia di donne, bambini e disabili rifugiati.

Questa agenzia negli ultimi settant'anni ha fornito un aiuto indispensabile a più di 5 milioni di rifugiati palestinesi. La decisione di Trump rappresenta una grave inversione di marcia rispetto al paradigma di Oslo, sostenuto anche dall'Unione europea. L'agenzia non è solo indispensabile per i rifugiati palestinesi, ma rappresenta anche il destino della soluzione dei due Stati. Sostenere e contribuire al suo finanziamento significa lavorare per la stabilità del Medio Oriente, regione determinante anche per il futuro dell'Europa.

Enrique Guerrero Salom (S&D). – Señor presidente, como ponente para ayuda humanitaria de este Parlamento he visitado campos de refugiados en Líbano, en Jordania y también en Palestina. Campos de refugiados en la tierra ocupada por otro país.

En todos ellos he visto la meritoria labor que desarrolla el OOPS, que está atendiendo una crisis que se prolonga ya más de siete décadas y que no tiene visos de solución en el inmediato futuro. Alguien ha señalado que estamos ante una crisis política y también humanitaria, pero es peor. Estamos ante la utilización de una crisis humanitaria para obtener réditos políticos.

Eso es lo que han hecho los Estados Unidos: cortar el apoyo a personas en situación de necesidad para imponer su política en Oriente Próximo, y eso es insoportable desde una perspectiva humanitaria.

Der Präsident. – Für das nun folgende Verfahren der spontanen Wortmeldungen habe ich doppelt so viele Wortmeldungen wie wir Zeit vorgesehen haben. Ich werde deshalb von jeder Fraktion einen Kollegen zu Wort kommen lassen und dabei berücksichtigen, wer schon einmal im Verfahren der spontanen Wortmeldungen gesprochen hat.

José Inácio Faria (PPE). – Senhor Presidente, o corte de trezentos milhões de dólares no financiamento dos Estados Unidos à agência da ONU de assistência aos refugiados da Palestina é lamentável e representa um golpe financeiro que põe em causa os cuidados de saúde primários, os serviços educativos e a ajuda de emergência aos mais de 4 milhões de refugiados palestinos que vivem na Faixa de Gaza, na Cisjordânia, na Jordânia, na Síria e no Líbano.

Os argumentos invocados por Washington sobre o peso do fardo financeiro das contribuições americanas para esta agência da ONU em 1.1 mil milhões de dólares, em 2017, pretendem camuflar o que constituiu uma politização da ajuda humanitária e são chocantes também pela dualidade de critérios de um país que, neste mesmo ano, alocou quase 4 mil milhões de dólares para a ajuda militar a Israel.

Por tudo isto, quero felicitar a Alta Representante Mogherini, quer pelo anúncio do reforço da contribuição financeira da União para esta agência quer pelo contínuo apoio político à solução assente na coexistência de dois Estados, para sanar o conflito israelo-palestiniano essencial à segurança no Médio Oriente e à paz no mundo.

Arne Lietz (S&D). – Herr Präsident! Ich begrüße den Vorschlag der Kommission außerordentlich, nun 40 Millionen Euro mehr an EU-Hilfen an das UNWRA zu gewährleisten. Vor allem die Unterstützung der Bildung von Kindern und Jugendlichen unter den palästinensischen Flüchtlingen ist wichtig, um Normalität, Stabilität und Frieden in der Region sicherzustellen. Dieses postulierte auch das israelische Militär. Bereits im Februar verhandelte ich eine Entschließung des Europäischen Parlaments, in dem es sich überparteilich gegen die UNWRA-Kürzungen der USA und für eine verstärkte finanzielle Unterstützung des UN-Flüchtlingshilfswerks durch die EU aussprach. Humanitäre Hilfe darf nicht für politische Forderungen missbraucht werden.

Ich fordere weiterhin, dass die EU nicht nachlässt, zusammen mit anderen Mitgliedstaaten andere Nationen dieser Welt anzusprechen, um diese Finanzlücke zu schließen. Deutschland hat bereits zugesagt, seine Beiträge in diesem Jahr von 81 auf 100 Millionen Euro zu erhöhen. Ich begrüße es, dass Deutschland hier politisch, aber auch finanziell klar hinter dem UNWRA steht.

Νότης Μαριάς (ECR). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, η Υπηρεσία Αρωγής και Έργων του ΟΗΕ για τους Παλαιστίνιους στη Μέση Ανατολή επιτελεί ένα σημαντικό έργο τα τελευταία 70 χρόνια. Δραστηριοποιείται στον Λίβανο, στη Συρία, στη Δυτική Όχθη, στη Λωρίδα της Γάζας και ασφαλώς έχει προσφέρει σημαντικές υπηρεσίες. Στηρίζει ευάλωτα πρόσωπα, στηρίζει την παιδεία, τη μόρφωση και είναι σίγουρο ότι η μείωση της χρηματοδότησής της και τα προβλήματα στη λειτουργία της θα επηρεάσουν, όπως ακούστηκε, τουλάχιστον 500.000 μαθητές και 400.000 αρρώστους.

Αυτό βέβαια δεν σημαίνει ότι δεν πρέπει να υπάρξει έλεγχος, διαφάνεια, λογοδοσία στη λειτουργία της UNRWA, αλλά αυτά δεν μπορεί να είναι και η αιτιολογία για να σταματήσει η λειτουργία της. Θεωρώ ότι ορθώς η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση στηρίζει τη λειτουργία της UNRWA. Και καλό θα είναι και οι αραβικές χώρες, οι οποίες χρηματοδοτούν με δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ ποδοσφαιρικές ομάδες στο αγγλικό και γαλλικό πρωτάθλημα, να βάλουν το χέρι στην τσέπη και να ενισχύσουν την UNRWA.

Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE). – Señor presidente, quiero felicitar expresamente a la vicepresidenta Mogherini por el papel que ha desempeñado la Unión Europea en el proceso que ha llevado a ampliar la base de donantes y las aportaciones que mantienen la imprescindible actividad del Organismo de Obras Públicas y Socorro de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados de Palestina en el Cercano Oriente.

Los nuevos fondos conseguidos son la mejor respuesta a la irresponsable conducta del presidente Trump. Las decisiones unilaterales que ha adoptado en la zona, con las que justifica decisiones como el bloqueo de la mayor parte de los fondos con los que los Estados Unidos contribuían a financiar este organismo, son un arma de destrucción masiva de los delicados equilibrios y valores que tratan de construir paz y estabilidad, de las herramientas que permiten cumplir con obligaciones que la legislación asigna a la comunidad internacional para auxiliar a los refugiados palestinos.

Celebro que la Unión Europea haya respondido a este despropósito, al cortoplacismo miope, inconsciente y populista que caracteriza al presidente americano, con rapidez, eficacia y liderazgo.

Europa, *the best*. Trump —que no América ni los Estados Unidos—, *the worst*.

Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE). – Senhor Presidente, a agência da ONU de assistência aos refugiados palestinianos sofre a mais dramática crise da história. É uma situação dramática e cruel. Os cortes nas escolas, nos hospitais e na assistência alimentar de emergência têm implicações simbólicas políticas e materiais muito sérias. Significa que não vão ter acesso a serviços básicos, mas politicamente, como disse o Comissário, também significa fazer avançar a ideia de que estas pessoas se deveriam assimilar e esquecer o direito a regressar, significa retirar a cinco milhões o estatuto de refugiados, é uma decisão política. Em Gaza é muito pior. Ali 8 % dos habitantes dependem da ajuda humanitária. Falta água, eletricidade, serviços. Já era difícil viver em Gaza com a ocupação. Se se cortam os fundos ainda é pior.

Denunciamos a incapacidade da comunidade internacional e a cumplicidade com Trump e que a Europa não seja mais cúmplice porque isto não ajuda para a paz.

Javier Couso Permuy (GUE/NGL). – Señor presidente, la decisión del presidente Trump de no financiar al OOPS no es solo una medida cruel para con los que fueron expulsados de sus legítimas tierras sino que supone un torpedo político contra el concierto internacional. Es pasar del indisimulado apoyo a la ocupación ilegal de Palestina a asumir abiertamente el proyecto racista del sionismo más extremista, ese que busca la desaparición de los palestinos.

La Unión Europea debe apoyar económicamente al OOPS para que no colapse, pero lo necesario es que terminen los motivos por los que se creó esta agencia. Hace falta firmeza con Israel, la potencia ocupante e irrespetuosa con el Derecho internacional. Esa firmeza que la Unión Europea emplea con otros países pequeños.

Hay que reconocer a Palestina como Estado y hay que pedir y exigir su viabilidad con las resoluciones de las Naciones Unidas, un Estado con las fronteras del 67, con Jerusalén Este como capital, y el regreso de los refugiados.

Fabio Massimo Castaldo (EFDD). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, oggi un milione di rifugiati palestinesi nella Striscia di Gaza rischia di restare senza cibo né acqua. Tre milioni e mezzo quelli che probabilmente si vedono negata l'assistenza sanitaria primaria. Questa è la vergogna che accade, colleghi, a poche ore di volo da noi, nonostante la clausola sui diritti umani, inserita nel nostro accordo con Israele, potenza occupante. E da quando gli Stati Uniti hanno tagliato i fondi dell'UNRWA, ben 364 milioni diventati 64 nel gennaio 2018 e totalmente sospesi dall'agosto scorso, la tragedia è ancora più grave.

Come Unione, abbiamo contribuito a tamponare la falla con 40 milioni, ma l'agenzia è ancora in deficit di altri 64 milioni e rischia di non poter terminare le attività previste per quest'anno. Non possiamo cedere a questo ricatto. Serve un ulteriore sforzo collettivo da parte dei donatori internazionali, ma serve dare soprattutto un'ancora di salvezza per quei rifugiati palestinesi che non vogliono rinunciare ai loro sogni, che non vogliono rinunciare al loro futuro.

Ελευθέριος Συναδινός (NI). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, αποτελεί αναφαίρετο δικαίωμα των κρατών να επιλέγουν ελεύθερα, βάσει των δικών τους εσωτερικών δημοκρατικών διαδικασιών, πώς θα δαπανήσουν τους πόρους τους και πώς θα διαμορφώσουν τις εξωτερικές τους σχέσεις. Και αυτές οι τελικές αποφάσεις χρήζουν σεβασμού και αποδοχής από όλες τις πλευρές.

Υπερβαίνοντας την εντολή της και λειτουργώντας αυτόκριτα ως διεθνής διαιτητής, η Ένωση προβάλλει τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα, τη δημοκρατία και το κράτος δικαίου επιλεκτικά, ως μοχλό πίεσης, εξυπηρετώντας γεωστρατηγικά συμφέροντα συγκεκριμένων χωρών, δίχως διορατικότητα ή μακροπρόθεσμο σχεδιασμό.

Οι ενέργειές της, με τον μη σεβασμό της αρχής της μη ανάμειξης στα εσωτερικά ζητήματα και τις κυρίαρχες αποφάσεις τρίτων ανεξάρτητων κρατών, αποδεικνύουν για μια ακόμη φορά την αδυναμία αντίληψης και εκδήτουν την απουσία της από τις διεθνείς γεωστρατηγικές ισορροπίες. Αντιθέτως, συνεχίζει να εφελκύεται από τις εξελίξεις, αμελώντας περαιτέρω τον κύριο λόγο ύπαρξής της ο οποίος είναι η σταθερή βελτίωση των όρων διαβίωσης των πολιτών της. Εκτός των άλλων, ποιος ζήτησε από την Ένωση να αντικαταστήσει τον ΟΗΕ;

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Johannes Hahn, *Member of the Commission, on behalf of the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy*. – Mr President, this has been a very fruitful exchange and I would like to thank honourable Members for their interventions. From this debate I conclude that we all share a common interest in using the EU's diplomatic power and EU instruments to their full potential in support of ensuring the sustainability of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) core services to vulnerable Palestinian refugees.

We will continue to look at how best to use all the instruments available to us in humanitarian relief, stabilisation and development assistance, and political dialogue but please allow me to make some clarifications due to one or other comments or statements by honourable Members.

First, UNRWA is not something which founded itself, nor is it an NGO. It was founded based on a UN General Assembly Decision from 8 December 1949 as a reaction to the Palestinian refugee disaster in the late 1940s. Its mandate is renewed every three years. So the whole construction is based on a UN General Assembly Decision, meaning a multilateral agreement.

There is, by the way, a clear mandate, a clear task and in that respect UNRWA is different from the tasks of UNHCR. UNRWA deals with providing necessary support, in particular of education and health treatment, and other things but in particular these two areas, for refugees, definitely in a medium-and long-term perspective as this has been continuing now for many decades, whereas UNHCR is dedicated to supporting, to helping the short-term challenge of certain refugee situations all around the world.

This was, by the way, clearly presented by the current UN Secretary-General, Mr Guterres, last week in New York, at this event I already mentioned in my introduction, and Mr Guterres is very well placed to speak about this because before he became Secretary General of the UN, he was for 10 years High Commissioner for Refugees and chairing UNHCR.

Having said all this, I think we should say what is happening. The US is breaching international agreements – international agreements – and, by the way, bilateral contracts between UNRWA and the US about the funding of UNRWA. Only in December last year, the administration signed a contract with UNRWA about further financing and only a few weeks later they decided to cut or to stop immediately payments to UNRWA. This is a decision which again does not respect multilateral agreements and contracts.

Finally, as was also said by some colleagues, some Members of this Parliament, on the textbook issue, here once again a clarification. Our support to UNRWA is the payment of salaries and pensions for teachers in the West Bank. We are already working to tackle the deficiencies in the Palestinian Authority (PA) education system with an EU-PA dialogue linked to EU financial cooperation. The EU insists that Palestinian textbooks meet UNESCO standards for peace and tolerance in school education. This was in the EU-UNRWA strategic dialogue.

The EU consistently requests clarification on UNRWA handling of non-neutrality buyers and non-violence issues in textbooks. In the recent review of support to the two-state solution, I proposed linking disbursement of funding to the implementation of agreed reforms, which could also be extended to curricula.

May I close by signalling once again my appreciation of Parliament's role in keeping this important file on the international agenda.

Der Präsident. – Vielen Dank, Herr Kommissar Hahn.

Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Aussprache ist zwar eigentlich geschlossen. Es gehört sich vielleicht nicht, aber ich will das jetzt doch einmal sagen: Es ist sehr dankenswert, dass der Herr Kommissar auf einzelne Wortmeldungen eingegangen ist. Aber ich empfinde es als absolut ungehörig – das mag im Einzelfall mal sein, dass von 30 Rednern, die jetzt hier in der Debatte angemeldet waren, am Schluss, wenn der Kommissar antwortet, weniger als zehn noch da sind. Weniger als zehn! Es sind alle Fraktionen betroffen. Da gibt es keine besonders edlen und keine weniger edlen. Wie gesagt, einzelne Fälle sind da. Aber es ist eine Missachtung derer, die draußen über Webstream zuhören. Es ist eine Missachtung derer, die aus Interesse oben auf der Tribüne sitzen, und es ist eine Unhöflichkeit gegenüber dem Kommissar, der antwortet.

Herr Kommissar Hahn, wenn Sie das mitnehmen: Ich persönlich als Parlamentarier hätte überhaupt kein Problem damit, wenn künftig Kommissare, die sich die Mühe machen, auf die Debatte einzugehen, am Schluss sagen: Ich will auf einzelne Fragen eingehen, aber ich werde nicht auf die Kollegen a, b, c, d, e eingehen, die eine Frage an mich gerichtet haben, aber die nicht mehr da sind.

Ich denke, wir sollten da durchaus ein bisschen Kultur herausbilden. Denn bestimmte Sachen haben nicht nur mit Respekt und Achtung zu tun, sondern schlicht und ergreifend mit Kinderstube.

Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 162 GO)

Mario Borghesio (ENF), *per iscritto*. – L'UNRWA è un'agenzia delle Nazioni Unite incaricata di fornire assistenza e protezione a circa 5 milioni di rifugiati palestinesi. Nel 2016 e 2017 l'UE e i suoi Stati membri hanno complessivamente erogato 424 milioni di euro e 391 milioni di euro a favore all'UNRWA e ciò rende in assoluto l'Unione europea la principale fonte di aiuti per l'Agenzia. A marzo 2018, l'Agenzia ha raccolto nuovi contributi per circa 100 milioni di dollari. Soltanto l'UE, attraverso l'Alto rappresentante UE, Mogherini, ha annunciato un contributo di 82 milioni di euro per il bilancio operativo del 2018. Il Presidente Trump ha deciso di interrompere l'erogazione di oltre 300 milioni di dollari con cui finanziava l'UNRWA; le motivazioni dei tagli ai finanziamenti riguardano la sproporzione dei costi, un modello commerciale non sostenibile e politiche fiscali inadeguate. Quanti sono i profughi palestinesi assistiti? I criteri per lo status di rifugiato palestinese devono essere rivisti. Fra quei 5 milioni di assistiti dall'UNRWA, solo una parte possono essere considerati rifugiati. L'Agenzia non ha mai condannato l'ideologia delle organizzazioni islamiste. Non c'è motivo per cui l'ANP non debba prendersi cura di quei palestinesi che dovrebbero essere cittadini dello Stato di Palestina che Ramallah aspira di essere o diventare.

Soledad Cabezón Ruiz (S&D), *por escrito*. – La Agencia de Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados Palestinos, da servicios de primera necesidad a más de cinco millones de refugiados palestinos en Oriente Medio, y especialmente en Gaza. Tras el anuncio de la Administración Trump de recortar sus fondos, la UNWRA se encuentra en una crisis financiera sin precedentes. La decisión de los EE. UU. en septiembre pasado supone una reducción de 360 millones de USD para su presupuesto. Salvar la UNRWA debe ser una prioridad para aliviar las vidas de cientos de miles de familias de refugiados palestinos. En 2019, los donantes, especialmente la UE, tendrán adelantar y aumentar fondos para mantener las escuelas, clínicas y la ayuda alimentaria en Gaza. La mayoría de los Estados miembros de la UE ya se están comprometiendo a ello. Además de las limitaciones a la UNWRA, se debe de poner de manifiesto la grave situación humanitaria y específicamente sanitaria en la franja de Gaza. Los diputados europeos seguimos sin poder acceder a Gaza pues las autoridades israelíes impiden el paso de las delegaciones oficiales que van desde este Parlamento a interesarse por la situación y por el destino de nuestra ayuda humanitaria y de la cooperación de la UE.

Eugen Freund (S&D), *schriftlich*. – Ich habe mich bei meinen Besuchen in der Region selbst davon überzeugen können, dass die UNRWA hervorragende Arbeit in den Palästinensergebieten leistet. Die Organisation ist lebensnotwendig für die elementare Infrastruktur der Palästinenser im Gaza-Streifen und in der Westbank – Schulen, Krankenhäuser, Versorgung mit Lebensmitteln! Dazu kommt die finanzielle Unterstützung für 400 000 palästinensische Flüchtlinge in Syrien. Es ist deshalb notwendig, dass die Europäische Union sich weiterhin für die UNRWA und ihre angemessene Finanzierung einsetzt. Die Ankündigung, EU-Mittel aufzustocken, ist zu begrüßen: wenn die USA ausfallen, muss Europa umso stärker, umso entschiedener seine Unterstützung zusichern. Wie wir inzwischen wissen, kann sich die EU – vor allem aber auch können sich die betroffenen Menschen vor Ort – nicht auf die Rolle der USA als neutraler Vermittler im Friedensprozess verlassen. Diese Rolle muss die Europäische Union bereit sein zu übernehmen. Gelingen kann dies allerdings nur mit einer echten, gemeinsamen europäischen Außenpolitik.

Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D), *por escrito*. – La Agencia de Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados Palestinos, da servicios de primera necesidad a más de cinco millones de refugiados palestinos en Oriente Medio, y especialmente en Gaza. Tras el anuncio de la Administración Trump de recortar sus fondos, la UNWRA se encuentra en una crisis financiera sin precedentes. La decisión de los EE. UU. en septiembre pasado supone una reducción de 360 millones de USD para su presupuesto. Salvar la UNRWA debe ser una prioridad para aliviar las vidas de cientos de miles de familias de refugiados palestinos. En 2019, los donantes, especialmente la UE, tendrán adelantar y aumentar fondos para mantener las escuelas, clínicas y la ayuda alimentaria en Gaza. La mayoría de los Estados miembros de la UE ya se están comprometiendo a ello. Además de las limitaciones a la UNWRA, se debe de poner de manifiesto la grave situación humanitaria y específicamente sanitaria en la franja de Gaza. Los diputados europeos seguimos sin poder acceder a Gaza pues las autoridades israelíes impiden el paso de las delegaciones oficiales que van desde este Parlamento a interesarse por la situación y por

el destino de nuestra ayuda humanitaria y de la cooperación de la UE.

Javi López (S&D), por escrito. – La Agencia de Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados Palestinos, da servicios de primera necesidad a más de cinco millones de refugiados palestinos en Oriente Medio, y especialmente en Gaza. Tras el anuncio de la Administración Trump de recortar sus fondos, la UNWRA se encuentra en una crisis financiera sin precedentes. La decisión de los EE. UU. en septiembre pasado supone una reducción de 360 millones de USD para su presupuesto. Salvar la UNRWA debe ser una prioridad para aliviar las vidas de cientos de miles de familias de refugiados palestinos. En 2019, los donantes, especialmente la UE, tendrán adelantar y aumentar fondos para mantener las escuelas, clínicas y la ayuda alimentaria en Gaza. La mayoría de los Estados miembros de la UE ya se están comprometiendo a ello. Además de las limitaciones a la UNWRA, se debe de poner de manifiesto la grave situación humanitaria y específicamente sanitaria en la franja de Gaza. Los diputados europeos seguimos sin poder acceder a Gaza pues las autoridades israelíes impiden el paso de las delegaciones oficiales que van desde este Parlamento a interesarse por la situación y por el destino de nuestra ayuda humanitaria y de la cooperación de la UE.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D), por escrito. – La Agencia de Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados Palestinos, da servicios de primera necesidad a más de cinco millones de refugiados palestinos en Oriente Medio, y especialmente en Gaza. Tras el anuncio de la Administración Trump de recortar sus fondos, la UNWRA se encuentra en una crisis financiera sin precedentes. La decisión de los EE. UU. en septiembre pasado supone una reducción de 360 millones de USD para su presupuesto. Salvar la UNRWA debe ser una prioridad para aliviar las vidas de cientos de miles de familias de refugiados palestinos. En 2019, los donantes, especialmente la UE, tendrán adelantar y aumentar fondos para mantener las escuelas, clínicas y la ayuda alimentaria en Gaza. La mayoría de los Estados miembros de la UE ya se están comprometiendo a ello. Además de las limitaciones a la UNWRA, se debe de poner de manifiesto la grave situación humanitaria y específicamente sanitaria en la franja de Gaza. Los diputados europeos seguimos sin poder acceder a Gaza pues las autoridades israelíes impiden el paso de las delegaciones oficiales que van desde este Parlamento a interesarse por la situación y por el destino de nuestra ayuda humanitaria y de la cooperación de la UE.

Miguel Viegas (GUE/NGL), por escrito. – O corte de financiamento à UNRWA por parte dos Estados Unidos insere-se numa ampla manobra de apoio explícito deste país à política criminosa de Israel contra a população palestina e contra a legalidade internacional. Esta ofensiva dos EUA e Israel visa inviabilizar a solução dos dois Estados para a questão palestina, solução que há décadas é proclamada em resoluções da ONU. Visa impor pela força um único Estado, de natureza confessional e racista, em praticamente todo o território histórico da Palestina.

Perante esta situação, é inaceitável que a União Europeia, que se diz tão respeitadora dos direitos humanos, não ponha em causa o acordo de associação com Israel, que prevê a importação de produtos fabricados em territórios palestinos ocupados ilegalmente. É também inaceitável que a UE financie através do programa Horizonte 2020 programas de investigação conjuntos com empresas israelitas, cujos resultados são usados posteriormente na guerra e na tortura contra o povo palestino.

A luta do povo palestino pela criação de um Estado viável e soberano da Palestina é justa. A sua concretização implica que as grandes potências e a UE cessem o seu apoio explícito ou implícito à política de genocídio de Israel.

14. De situatie in Jemen (debat)

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 Lage im Jemen (2018/2853(RSP)).

Christos Stylianides, *Member of the Commission, on behalf of the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy*. – Mr President, the war in Yemen has been raging for more than three years now. It has taken a tremendous toll on this country, where millions are suffering the consequences of the conflict. We see images of Yemenis eating tree leaves and parents forced to watch their babies starve to death. This is completely unacceptable. The figures are appalling: almost 18 million are literally starving. The UN recently warned that they may be unable to prevent a massive famine – unless the security situation improves.

The escalation of hostilities along the coast has worsened an already disastrous situation: civilians and civilian infrastructure continue to be targeted, in clear violation of international humanitarian law. More than half a million people have been displaced from Hodeidah, where several hundred thousand more remain trapped. Public salaries in the northern part of the country, controlled by the Houthis, have not been paid in years. Instead of going to school, children are being recruited to fight on the frontlines.

With the collapse of basic services, Yemenis have been deprived of health facilities and drinking water. This has led to the worst cholera epidemic ever recorded in the country. The war has also disrupted imports of basic commodities, driving prices up and pushing more and more Yemenis into poverty and destitution. Smuggling and war profiteering are thriving on the back of a suffering population. Lawlessness has allowed terrorist groups like al-Qaeda or Daesh to gain a foothold in the country.

The war has also had an impact in the region. Saudi Arabia has become a regular target of missiles coming from Houthi-controlled areas. Maritime traffic between the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean has been affected, as several ships have been targeted by rockets. But perhaps more importantly, the war has increased regional tensions. Indeed, Yemen remains a catalyst for instability and regional turmoil.

There is no easy fix for Yemen. A political settlement will require concessions from all sides, continued banking and diplomatic pressure from the international community. That is why we believe it is more crucial than ever at this time to lend as much support as possible to the United Nations and their Special Envoy, Martin Griffiths.

Let me thank him for his attempt to resume consultations in Geneva among the parties. It is unfortunate that the Houthi did not attend. As Griffiths put it, resumption of talks are always a delicate, fragile moment. Our support, from the EU and our Member States, is now truly essential. We will therefore continue to call on the parties to remain engaged in the UN-led process in view of achieving a comprehensive political settlement to this really unacceptable war.

We will not just 'declare' our political commitment. We are looking into ways to provide concrete support to the UN Special Envoy team in areas identified by Mr Griffiths. The idea is to add value to his ongoing work and complement his efforts where needed.

Furthermore, the European Union is already contributing EUR 173 million of development assistance to several projects in Yemen, ranging from rural resilience, health and nutrition, food security and support to displaced persons. These projects are meant to lay the groundwork for a stable Yemen by supporting crisis-affected communities and helping maintain the basic functions of local authorities.

Likewise, the EU has allocated EUR 233 million in humanitarian aid alone through our partner organisations since the beginning of this conflict in 2015. Our humanitarian aid has been directed to the areas most in need and we have continued our advocacy efforts in international fora, even last week during the UN General Assembly.

In this regard, we believe that the mandate of the Group of Eminent Experts set up by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights should be renewed. Its last report points to violations of international humanitarian law committed by all sides. Accountability is crucial, not only to a real resolution of the conflict, but also to an effective and inclusive reconciliation process in Yemen.

The people of Yemen have suffered for too long. Building a more cooperative regional dynamic is in everyone's interest – and it is becoming more and more urgent. This is my view, dear colleagues, and thank you for your attention.

Ramona Nicole Mănescu, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – The consequences of the ongoing conflict on Yemen have passed the critical level. Casualties amongst civilians, destruction of civil infrastructure, which includes schools, medical facilities, water systems and transport routes, and the horrific humanitarian situation can no longer be accepted.

We supported the efforts made by the Special Envoy, Mr Martin Griffiths, and we consider it essential for him to have access to all relevant parties in Yemen. The EU's intention is to help the Yemeni population, and this is why we need to support the efforts in identifying a political solution as soon as possible using dialogue and negotiations. We need to understand that all parties in the conflict must comply with their obligations under international law. All parties must attend the negotiation meeting; they need to end the recruitment of children; they need to seize the current escalation and effectively involve the United Nations. We can no longer accept the Iran-backed Houthi rebels' systematic refusal to engage in dialogue. You must strongly call on Iran to cease any military support and push Houthi rebels to an effective dialogue.

We must also strongly condemn the launch of ballistic missiles by the Houthi rebels against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the use of sea mines. The European People's Party is deeply concerned by the reports of the denial of freedom of religion and aggression towards the Bahá'í faith by the Houthi rebels. We cannot endlessly repair the damage without understanding and addressing the causes, and we can no longer ignore the obligation to ensure effective, impartial and independent investigations into all alleged violations of human rights and humanitarian law. As the Commissioner has already said, the EU will continue to provide humanitarian aid and put pressure on all parties for a political solution.

Victor Boştinaru, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, Mr Commissioner, it was difficult to imagine in our debate in the first part of this year that the already dramatic humanitarian situation in Yemen could further deteriorate. Sadly, we are here today to remind the international community that Yemenis are dying every day under indiscriminate bombing and shelling, and our so-called economic partners on both sides are contributing to this violence. The brutal and bloody long-term conflict in Yemen is about to get even worse, as the violent and indiscriminate attacks and blockade on civilians continue.

As a consequence, today 75% of civilians are already completely dependent on humanitarian aid, and more than 17 million people are facing food insecurity. The Saudi-led blockade on all Houthi controlled territories since November 2017 prevents all other imports from entering the territory. The humanitarian aid is proving to be insufficient, and the Houthi rebels have themselves blocked the delivery of humanitarian aid.

Considering the dire humanitarian situation on the ground and the grave risk of further regional destabilisation, the S&D Group calls on all relevant actors to put pressure on the coalition to halt any further assaults and to allow humanitarian aid to reach the people in need in order to stop any further starvation and death. We condemn the violent attacks on all sides, condemn the belligerence and call on the proxies, including Saudi Arabia and Iran, to immediately stop all armed forces and militias under their control, as well as to prevent any indiscriminate attacks against the civilian population. Finally we call for an investigation into war crimes.

Ryszard Czarnecki, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Dyskutując o sytuacji w Jemenie warto pamiętać o paru podstawowych faktach. Po pierwsze, obecny konflikt zaczął się 3 lata temu od obalenia legalnie wybranego prezydenta przez szyickich Hutich wspieranych przez Iran. Po drugie, oczywiście przestępstwa wojenne popełniają obie strony, trzeba tu być uczciwym i obiektywnym, ale warto pamiętać, że była parę miesięcy temu w lutym rezolucja Rady Bezpieczeństwa ONZ, która potępiała udział Iranu i łamanie przez Iran embarga na dostawy broni i została ona zawetowana przez Federację Rosyjską. Wreszcie po trzecie, konflikt w Jemenie jest pożywką dla takich grup terrorystycznych jak Al-Kaida, a Hezbollah szkoli rebeliantów w Jemenie. Wreszcie, mówiąc w imieniu EKRu, my w projekcie naszej rezolucji wzywamy do negocjacji i pokojowego zakończenia konfliktu.

Marietje Schaake, *on behalf of the ALDE Group*. – Mr President, why is it that in the face of the worst conflicts, whether it is the conflict in Syria or Yemen as we're discussing today, EU Member State governments fail to reach a common EU position. I would ask the Commissioner to also convey this question to the Austrian Presidency, because we need to solve the fragmentation – and therefore the lack of maximum EU efforts – as bloodshed on an unprecedented scale goes on and on.

Twenty-two million people need humanitarian assistance, and 8.4 million people are on the brink of starvation. It is 2018. Children are being bombed, recruited as soldiers, or facing all kinds of epidemics that can also kill them. Babies too weak to cry are dying, and this is all because of a man-made problem. It is a crying shame.

We should focus, of course, on reining in Iran as it helps the Houthi rebels. But just as we do not allow the sale of weapons to these militants, an embargo should finally be adopted vis-à-vis Saudi Arabia. When the Dutch Government, along with the Canadian Government, sought an independent investigation into what was happening in Yemen, Saudi Arabia pushed back. But the fact that France and the United Kingdom helped water down the work of allies is unacceptable.

The Saudis led, and Europeans followed. Frankly, it is an image I never wish to see. Instead, all focus should be on ending the bloodshed and the violence, so we support the UN Group of Eminent Experts, as well as the Special Envoy, Mr Griffiths. I believe that a referral to the ICC, or to other mechanisms for accountability, is very much needed for peace.

Bodil Valero, *för Verts/ALE-gruppen*. – Herr talman! FN menar att konflikten i Jemen är världens just nu värsta humanitära katastrof. Under det tre år långa inbördeskriget har tiotusentals människor dött, många har flytt och 22 miljoner är i behov av humanitärt stöd. Såväl regeringstrupperna som rebellerna har anklagats för krigsbrott av människorättsorganisationer.

Enligt EU:s gemensamma vapenexportregler får vi inte exportera till länder i krig. Ändå gör så gott som alla vapentillverkande EU-länder det, mer eller mindre, och i de länder som först beslutat att stoppa vapenexporten har man strax därefter återupptagit den. Den spanska regeringschefen uttryckte till och med i en tv-sändning att Spanien inte har något ansvar för vad som sker med de vapen som levereras när de lämnat Spanien. Han har fel.

I många EU länder driver civilsamhället på för att stoppa vapenexporten. Det har lett till en striktare vapenexportlagstiftning i mitt hemland men inte till stopp för exporten. Även Sverige fortsätter att exportera.

Parlamentet har många gånger uttalat sig för ett embargo. Det behövs nu.

Ofta används arbetstillfällena och europeiska bolags fortlevnad som ursäkt, helt i strid med det gemensamma regelverket. Hur kan europeiska arbetstillfällena vara viktigare än att få slut på den jemenitiska befolkningens lidande? Europa är i högsta grad delaktigt i detta krig.

Ángela Vallina, *en nombre del Grupo GUE/NGL*. – Señor presidente, señor comisario, lamento de verdad la hipocresía de esta Unión. Por un lado, pide a los Estados miembros que aumenten la ayuda humanitaria, pero usted sabe muy bien que los refugiados los provocan las guerras, y, sin embargo, ustedes miran hacia otro lado y muchos Estados, como España —el mío—, siguen haciendo negocios con la venta de armas. Matar para seguir matando.

El informe del grupo de expertos de las Naciones Unidas confirma lo que ya temíamos: la coalición liderada por Arabia Saudí es responsable de los bombardeos indiscriminados sobre civiles e infraestructuras, hospitales, autobuses escolares, etc. Su bloqueo, *de facto*, retrasa deliberadamente la entrada de mercancías y medicamentos. Matar, además de con bombas, con hambre, con cólera a la población civil.

Escuchen a este Parlamento: inicien el procedimiento para aplicar un embargo sobre la venta de armas a los países implicados —a todos— en este conflicto.

Nuestro ministro de Asuntos Exteriores ha declarado que el próximo envío de armas de España a Arabia Saudí será de cuatrocientas bombas láser de precisión y que estas no provocan daños colaterales. No seamos cínicos: no hay bombas indoloras. Abramos los ojos de una vez.

Fabio Massimo Castaldo, *a nome del gruppo EFDD*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, parlando in quest'Aula del disastro umanitario in Yemen si fa spesso riferimento all'ipocrisia che sottende il sanguinoso conflitto. Oggi voglio darvene due esempi emblematici: venerdì scorso il Consiglio diritti umani dell'ONU ha votato in favore dell'estensione del mandato di un gruppo di eminenti esperti incaricati di investigare sulle violazioni di diritti umani in Yemen.

Questo gruppo di esperti aveva adottato una relazione accusando le parti nel conflitto, già il 28 agosto tra loro, Arabia Saudita ed Emirati Arabi, di possibili crimini di guerra. Non è sorprendente che Riad e Abu Dhabi abbiano espresso voto contrario, lo è molto di più che sia Arabia Saudita che Emirati Arabi siedano eletti nel Consiglio, il più importante organismo mondiale per il rispetto dei diritti umani.

Ancora più assurda è la situazione in casa nostra, come tutti sapete, l'Unione europea si è dotata di una posizione comune vincolante per l'esportazione di armi. Le vendite a Riad violerebbero quanto meno due degli otto criteri della posizione, ma se si viola non ci sono sanzioni e questo non sembra importare a nessuno. Recenti sono i casi e le polemiche in Spagna e in Germania, emblematico il reportage uscito venerdì in cui è documentata una storia di corruzione e vendita di carri armati Leclerc da parte della Francia verso gli Emirati. Quegli stessi carri armati sono oggi attivamente utilizzati nel conflitto per scopi difensivi, tuona il ministro della Difesa, evviva l'ipocrisia!

Altri paesi sono coinvolti, incluso il mio, spero ancora per poco, ma d'altra parte, nessuno Stato membro vuole rinunciare ai propri ricchi contratti, ben conscio che i suoi mancati export sarebbero semplicemente rimpiazzati con buona pace della posizione, anzi dell'ipocrisia comune. All'ombra di questa ipocrisia, più di 15 000 morti e 17 milioni di persone che fanno la fame, tra loro, più di 5 milioni di bambini e una nuova offensiva nella zona di Hodeida con oltre mezzo milione di persone in fuga.

Colleghi, ogni volta che muore un bambino muore tutta l'umanità e nello Yemen questo succede ogni dieci minuti. Non è più sufficiente continuare a ripetere le solite frasi trite e ritrite e non basta nemmeno il nostro ingente aiuto umanitario. Serve un segnale forte e ribadisco che l'Alto rappresentante deve avviare immediatamente un'iniziativa per imporre un embargo sulle armi nei confronti dell'Arabia Saudita.

Marie-Christine Arnautu, *au nom du groupe ENF*. – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, la sale guerre qui sévit au Yémen est l'une des facettes tragiques d'un Proche-Orient en proie à une dynamique du chaos largement attisée par les puissances occidentales.

Il ne nous appartient pas de prendre parti dans ce conflit qui oppose les tribus yéménites pour des raisons politiques, historiques ou religieuses, mais on ne peut pas non plus faire abstraction des choix diplomatiques des gouvernements occidentaux, notamment français, suivant aveuglément leur allié saoudien par crainte de voir de juteux contrats d'armement s'envoler.

Nos gouvernements savent se montrer de pointilleux défenseurs des droits de l'homme pour condamner la Syrie et ses alliés russe et iranien qui luttent sans états d'âme contre les mouvements islamistes. En revanche, ils gardent un silence gêné sur les centaines de milliers de bombes déversées au Yémen et sur l'embargo humanitaire imposé par la coalition arabe formée par l'Arabie saoudite. Sur les décombres du Proche-Orient prospèrent les djihadistes que nos gouvernements font ensuite mine de combattre.

Pour sortir de cette situation, mettons fin à cette hypocrisie aussi insupportable que dangereuse.

Γεώργιος Επιτήδειος (NI). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, η κατάρα της Υεμένης –ας μου επιτραπεί αυτή η έκφραση– οφείλεται στο γεγονός ότι η χώρα αυτή έχει τεράστια στρατηγική σημασία και θέση. Βρίσκεται στο νότιο άκρο της Αραβικής Χερσονήσου, ελέγχει τα στενά του Bab-el-Mandeb, που είναι ένας διάυλος μέσω του οποίου διεξάγεται εμπόριο, αλλά και μεταφορά πετρελαίου από την Ερυθρά Θάλασσα μέσω του Κόλπου του Αδεν προς την Ευρώπη και την Ασία. Γι' αυτό ακριβώς τον λόγο είναι «λογικό» πολλές χώρες να θέλουν να ελέγξουν αυτή την περιοχή.

Μετά το 2009, η Σαουδική Αραβία επανεμφανίζεται το 2015 ως επικεφαλής ενός αραβικού συνασπισμού για να υποστηρίξει τον σουνίτη πρόεδρο Hadi εναντίον των σιιτών ανταρτών Χούτι, οι οποίοι υποστηρίζονται διακριτικά και με αποστολή όπλων από το Ιράν. Αυτή η προσπάθεια κυριαρχίας στην περιοχή δίνει τη δυνατότητα στους εμπολέμους να μάχονται. Οι Χούτι αυτή τη στιγμή έχουν ισορροπήσει την κατάσταση και έτσι μάχονται όλοι εναντίον όλων και μάχονται και με αντιπροσώπους.

Αυτή η κατάσταση όμως έχει επιπτώσεις στους μόνους χαμένους που είναι οι άμαχοι: 10.000 νεκροί, 40.000 τραυματίες, 2 εκατομμύρια έχουν εγκαταλείψει τα σπίτια τους, 7 εκατομμύρια διατρέχουν τον κίνδυνο να προσβληθούν από λιμό και άλλο 1 εκατομμύριο έχει προσβληθεί από χολέρα. Δεν μπορεί να λήξει αυτή η κατάσταση –και εδώ υπάρχει υποκρισία– διότι όλες οι μεγάλες δυνάμεις της Ευρώπης και της ...

(Ο Πρόεδρος διακόπτει τον ομιλητή)

David McAllister (PPE). – Herr Präsident, meine sehr geehrten Damen und Herren! UNO-Generalsekretär António Guterres hat im April dieses Jahres die Situation im Jemen wie folgt beschrieben: „Der Jemen ist die weltweit schlimmste humanitäre Krise. Mehr als 22 Millionen Menschen, also drei Viertel der Bevölkerung, sind auf humanitäre Hilfe und Schutz angewiesen.“ In der Tat, die vom Menschenrechtsrat der Vereinten Nationen eingesetzte Expertengruppe hat festgestellt, dass das humanitäre Völkerrecht im Jemen von allen Seiten verletzt wird. Wie die Vorrednerinnen und Vorredner bereits ausgeführt haben, teile auch ich die Auffassung: In diesem Konflikt, der über die Jahre immer mehr zu einem Stellvertreterkrieg regionaler Mächte geworden ist, kann es keine Gewinner geben.

Wie geht es nun weiter? Aus meiner Sicht drei kurze Anmerkungen. Erstens: Es ist bedauerlich, dass die Huthi-Delegation bei dem Versuch, die Friedensgespräche in Genf wieder aufzunehmen, nicht erschienen ist. Die Bemühungen des Sonderbeauftragten Martin Griffith, die Konfliktparteien noch im Oktober zu Gesprächen zusammenzubringen, gilt es auch hier zu unterstützen. Dieser Konflikt kann, wie gesagt, nur politisch gelöst werden.

Zweitens: Das erste Ziel auf dem Weg zur Befriedung des Landes sollten vertrauensbildende Maßnahmen zwischen den Konfliktparteien sein. Hierbei geht es insbesondere um den innerjemenitischen Dialog ohne Einbeziehung anderer regionaler Mächte.

Und drittens: Unabhängige Untersuchungen über Menschenrechtsverletzungen sind notwendig, und sie sind auch im nationalen Interesse. Denn schwerste Verletzungen der Menschenwürde, wie sie im Jemen leider tagtäglich geschehen, dürfen nicht ohne Folgen bleiben.

Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, basta guardare la cartina geografica per rendersi conto dell'importanza strategica dello Yemen e per capire come questa sporca guerra sia manovrata da interessi lontani, da quei territori che contrappongono gli Stati Uniti e il loro alleato saudita all'Iran e che arricchiscono i produttori di armi sparsi per il mondo.

Sono proprio questi interessi a condannare la popolazione a vivere ben al di sotto degli standard accettabili di vita. In uno stato di oltre 24 milioni di abitanti, infatti, il 75% degli yemeniti dipende dall'aiuto umanitario, fame ed epidemie sono utilizzate come armi di assedio, azioni che si possono identificare come crimini di guerra.

Io penso che dobbiamo squarciare il velo di indifferenza che nasconde tutto ciò. Bisogna essere netti nel giudizio politico verso i paesi vicini, sia nei confronti della coalizione, sia nei confronti dell'Iran e denunciare ad alta voce le responsabilità dei diversi paesi europei nei confronti di questo conflitto.

È qui che si svela l'ipocrisia europea ed è qui, io credo, che abbiamo una responsabilità in più, come Parlamento europeo per indicare una via di marcia per risolvere politicamente questo conflitto.

Sajjad Karim (ECR). – Mr President, Commissioner, I could not support your words more today. We really are, as a parliament, facing the grave danger that our text will leave us open to misrepresentation. Our intentions and actions must be to support international efforts for peace. The world's worst humanitarian crisis, according to the United Nations – Yemen is a theatre of conflict where almost every immediate neighbour has found itself drawn in due to remote interests sowing discord and destabilising not just Yemen itself, but the entire neighbourhood.

Saudi Arabia finds itself targeted with missiles, Houthis utilise public facilities to have cover; all the time remotely supported and directed. The propaganda machine seeks to distort and detract, so that the world is misinformed. Within that vacuum grows extremism. The ultimate agenda of which is to cause chaos. That should not be our agenda, and neither should we allow anybody to misrepresent our position.

Patricia Lalonde (ALDE). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, la seule solution pour mettre un terme au conflit est d'appuyer un règlement inclusif négocié et politique. Il est regrettable que le dernier cycle des consultations à Genève n'ait pas pu aboutir. Nous appuyons les efforts de M. Griffiths et appelons l'Union européenne à jouer un rôle de facilitateur. Nous avons raté une occasion ici au Parlement au mois de mai, avant l'assaut de Hodeïda et l'aggravation de la situation.

Il faut absolument mettre fin au blocus, qui a fait plus de morts que les combats. Une attention particulière doit être accordée aux causes indirectes de décès de civils, qui sont référencés et documentés. Selon l'UNICEF, plus de 247 000 enfants souffrant de malnutrition sont morts depuis 2016, et 200 000 autres vont mourir à cause du blocus. Le Yémen compte plus de trois millions de déplacés internes, plus ceux de Hodeïda. Malheureusement, le financement du programme de résilience dans les zones rurales a été retardé, faute de crédits suffisants. Nous parlons quand même de la pire crise humanitaire!

Il faut saluer la position honorable de l'Union européenne au Conseil des droits de l'homme et la résolution L21, qui vient d'être votée pour proroger le mandat du groupe d'experts. Nous devons aider ce groupe et contrer les campagnes d'intimidation qui sont lancées par la coalition contre ses membres, et en particulier contre Kamel al... *(le Président retire la parole à l'oratrice).*

Yannick Jadot (Verts/ALE). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, nous savons tout de l'horreur au Yémen: des crimes de guerre, des millions de personnes en risque de famine, des milliers de civils tués, des bus scolaires bombardés.

Évidemment, nous soutenons le processus onusien de paix, l'aide humanitaire et les couloirs humanitaires mais, Monsieur le Commissaire, pour que l'Union européenne soit crédible, pour que l'Union européenne soit un acteur de paix, il ne faut pas que ses États membres soient des acteurs de guerre! Quand l'Allemagne, l'Espagne, la Grande-Bretagne et la France sont des belligérants indirects de ce conflit, qu'elles fournissent des armes pour faciliter ces atrocités, nous perdons toute crédibilité – et ces États membres le font en violation à la fois du droit européen et du droit international.

Monsieur le Commissaire, nous devons, comme le dit le Parlement européen, défendre un embargo, aller devant les États membres, aller devant le Conseil, exiger publiquement un embargo sur les ventes d'armes et demander que l'Europe arrête de participer à ces atrocités!

Ignazio Corrao (EFDD). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, continua in Yemen la guerra per procura dove nessuno vince e gli unici a perdere sono i civili, morendo a migliaia.

I civili yemeniti, infatti, sono i veri protagonisti di questa guerra, in un paese che ormai altro non è che un enorme campo di battaglia. Forse per alcuni è un gioco, forse per altri basta liquidare i danni collaterali e la morte di 6 600 civili e la distruzione di un paese intero per giustificare una catastrofe umanitaria di tale portata.

Nessuna delle parti in conflitto ha ottenuto o è vicina ad ottenere una vittoria militare, ma continuano a piovere bombe sulla testa della popolazione. Questa guerra ricorda il Vietnam per la sua totale inutilità, dove gli unici risultati alla fine saranno solo i morti da contare e le macerie di un paese da ricostruire. Una guerra in cui c'è un solo vincitore ed è l'industria bellica, anche la nostra purtroppo.

Alla luce della tragedia umanitaria in corso, esorto l'Unione ad esercitare pressione affinché la coalizione a guida saudita sospenda i bombardamenti e rimuova immediatamente l'embargo. Tale blocco, infatti, sta impedendo l'accesso alle forniture umanitarie e di altri beni assolutamente indispensabili per la popolazione, che è l'unica che sta pagando il prezzo di questa guerra.

James Carver (NI). – Mr President, ‘the state is not in control of its natural resources. The state is simply handcuffed and cannot do anything’. This statement was made by Ahmed Ghaleb, former head of the Yemeni tax authority two days ago. It sums up the disastrous situation in this benighted country.

Let’s be clear: this is a proxy war between Iran and the Saudi-Emirati alliance, with only the Yemeni people suffering from indiscriminate attacks. So many decisions on Yemen, yet few taken by Yemenis themselves. So little interest shown by the international community in local political groups, apart from the discredited Hadi regime, has seen the splintering of normally homogenous groups. The Southern Movement, which was a broad church, has been marginalised and split into so many groups that what could have been a stabilising force has become a group of warring factions. On Sunday, seven people were killed through intra-Houthi fighting. We must engage honestly with local political leaders, respecting their concerns. Peace can only be built up from the base of local society in Yemen and we should not prejudge political outcomes before genuine discussion.

Finally, the Yemeni rial is at an all-time low. Demonstrations are planned throughout the country as ordinary people rise up against this further disaster. The crash of the rial can be blamed firmly on the international community and particularly the Gulf alliance. If there is civil unrest, we can anticipate further loss of life, and the people to suffer will be the ordinary people of Yemen. Hence, all solutions should be on the table.

Cristian Dan Preda (PPE). – Monsieur le Président, je crois que quelques chiffres parlent très clairement: 22 millions de Yéménites ont besoin d’aide humanitaire et de protection, et 18 millions sont en situation d’insécurité alimentaire. Ils manquent de tout: nourriture, médicaments et éducation. De plus, cette situation d’impasse observée après l’échec des négociations de Genève, auxquelles les Houthis ont tout simplement refusé de prendre part, ne fait qu’augmenter le nombre de morts, de blessés et de déplacés. Dans ce contexte, l’Union européenne continue à apporter une aide au développement au Yémen en donnant la priorité aux interventions destinées à stabiliser le pays et je félicite le commissaire Stylianides pour son engagement et pour son action.

Cependant, il y a un autre plan important sur lequel on pourrait jouer un rôle essentiel: c’est le plan diplomatique. Je crois vraiment que l’Union européenne est particulièrement bien placée pour orienter les choses. Il faut donc continuer à appeler à un retour à la table des négociations et encourager toutes les parties à s’engager véritablement dans un dialogue politique sous l’égide, bien sûr, de l’Organisation des Nations unies.

En effet, aujourd’hui, il est d’une importance capitale que cet engagement se traduise par une désescalade dans les différentes zones de conflit, y compris Hodeïda, et par un accès sûr, rapide et sans entrave permettant l’acheminement des fournitures commerciales et humanitaires.

Enrique Guerrero Salom (S&D). – Señor presidente, en el mundo hay decenas de millones de personas que huyen del hambre y de la guerra. Y hay algunos países en los cuales las mismas personas huyen de las dos cosas, del hambre y de la guerra. Es el caso de Yemen, un país pobre entre los pobres, uno de los más pobres del mundo. Tres de cada cuatro yemeníes están en riesgo de desnutrición. La población que en estos momentos en Yemen corre el riesgo cierto de morir de hambre es equivalente a la población de Bélgica. Es equivalente a la población conjunta de Hungría, Letonia y Lituania.

Las prioridades que tenemos que atender son, en primer lugar, reducir el hambre y la desnutrición. En segundo lugar, evitar los continuos brotes de cólera. En tercer lugar, proteger a los civiles. Pero hay que hacer un esfuerzo diplomático inmediato para permitir el acceso de la ayuda humanitaria. Siete millones y medio de yemeníes no están disponibles para la llegada de esa ayuda.

Actualmente hay más de ciento cincuenta organizaciones no gubernamentales que están trabajando para ayudar a esta población en riesgo, pero no serán los actores humanitarios los que acaben con la guerra. Tendrá que ser una acción diplomática decidida que empuje a las dos partes a llegar al acuerdo que están promoviendo las Naciones Unidas.

Charles Tannock (ECR). – Mr President, this tragic war has been ‘escalating virtually on all fronts. The level of confidence is at its lowest and [the] human and humanitarian cost is ever rising’. These are the words of the UN Special Envoy for Yemen, Martin Griffiths, to the Security Council last month. They sum up the continuing disaster unfolding in Yemen in a war that has tragically claimed the lives of at least 10 000 people since fighting broke out in 2015. Furthermore it is estimated that a staggering 22 million – 75% of the population – are in urgent need of humanitarian aid often encompassing the most basic of needs such as access to food, water and medicine.

The Saudi-led offensive, particularly since its push this summer into Hodeidah region, has worsened the humanitarian crisis. According to estimates from the charity Save the Children, cases of cholera have increased by 170% since June, which in a country that has seen its public health facilities – largely as a result of bombing of hospitals – decimated, poses the real threat of a worse and more deadly epidemic. It is clear that talks must now resume urgently, not only to find a lasting resolution to the conflict but also ensure ways of alleviating the humanitarian disaster situation. In this regard, it is of paramount importance that the Houthis engage in the UN-led process in Geneva.

I will also re-echo my previous concerns regarding the conduct of the Saudi-led coalition in its air campaign offensive and also the use by Houthis of human shields, claiming so many lives of civilians. The incident that saw 40 children killed in a bus attack in Saada last month is in the...

(The President cut off the speaker)

Margot Parker (EFDD). – Mr President, the protracted civil war in Yemen has gone on for far too long. Internal conflict, exacerbated by regional powers, has had an unbearably high human cost. Only in August, 40 children were killed by a Saudi air strike using a bomb supplied by the United States. The UK Government continues to approve munitions knowing that they are being used in such crimes. It is brutality of the highest order that Saudi Arabia and Iran are using the people of Yemen as a field for their indirect proxy war. Both sides must stop their operations and use their influence to bring their proxies and allies around the negotiation table. As for the UK and US, we must seriously examine our role in such grave abuses of crimes of war. Our role cannot be ignored any longer.

PREȘEDINȚIA: IOAN MIRCEA PAȘCU

Vicepreședinte

Udo Voigt (NI). – Herr Präsident! Die Menschenrechtsorganisation *Human Rights Watch* hat dem alliierten Militärbündnis der Saudis im Jemen mit der Bombardierung eines Schulbusses und der Tötung von 38 Kindern ein weiteres Kriegsverbrechen unterstellt und öffentlich angeklagt, dass die Allianz die grausame Serie fortsetzt, Zivilisten bei Hochzeiten, Zivilisten bei Beerdigungen, Zivilisten in Krankenhäusern und Zivilisten in Schulen zu töten. Perfider geht es kaum!

Eine der größten humanitären Katastrophen findet derzeit im Jemen statt. Wir alle hier wissen, wer die Täter sind, wir wissen, wer die Waffen liefert und, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, wir tun nichts. Unterstützt vom Westen, etwa durch die Waffen aus den USA, Frankreich, Spanien, Großbritannien oder Deutschland finanzieren Saudi-Arabien und die Vereinigten Arabischen Emirate Milizen im Jemen, die Verbindungen zum IS und zu Al-Kaida haben.

In diesem Krieg geht es um die Vernichtung der ethnischen Gruppe der Huthi. Dieser Völkermord muss gestoppt werden! Die USA und die kriegführenden EU-Mitglieder – zum Beispiel Großbritannien, Frankreich, Deutschland – müssen die Waffenlieferungen einstellen, und die dort kämpfenden Truppen müssen aufhören, die Gräueltaten und den Völkermord zu unterstützen. Fremde Truppen raus aus dem Jemen! Dann wird es dort auch Frieden geben.

José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE). – Señor presidente, señor comisario, señorías, la dramática situación que se vive en Yemen ya la hemos debatido en este hemicycle en otras ocasiones.

El artículo primero del proyecto de Resolución que vamos a aprobar mañana expresa nuestra preocupación por la devastadora situación que se vive en este país, que nos ha presentado el comisario y que ha sido descrita por otros diputados: 22 millones de personas en situación de emergencia humanitaria —5 millones de niños— y 77 000 niños que mueren al año. Esta situación es realmente insostenible.

Por eso, señor presidente, aparte de expresar nuestra preocupación y de buscar culpables, lo que deberíamos hacer es buscar soluciones.

En primer lugar, hemos de atender la emergencia humanitaria. Por eso es importante reconocer los esfuerzos de las Naciones Unidas y de sus mesas de negociaciones para el país. En segundo lugar, señor comisario, agradecer el esfuerzo que está realizando la Unión Europea, y particularmente el comisario, que nos acompaña hoy en este debate. Y, en tercer lugar, agradecer también la ayuda de muchos socios regionales que han puesto importantes contribuciones a disposición de las Naciones Unidas para tratar de paliar esta situación.

Por otro lado, señor presidente, es importantísimo detener y poner fin a la violencia, garantizar que prevalezca el Derecho internacional humanitario y, al mismo tiempo, tratar de proteger a la población civil.

Y, por último —yo creo que el comisario lo ha explicado de una forma meridianamente clara—, hemos de apoyar los esfuerzos del enviado especial del secretario general de las Naciones Unidas para tratar de que las dos partes se sienten en la mesa de negociaciones, conseguir que los rebeldes hutíes formen parte de este proceso de Ginebra y, al mismo tiempo, señor presidente, prestar nuestro concurso como Unión Europea para tratar de alcanzar un Yemen que sea estable, que viva en paz y que se aleje todo lo posible del extremismo.

Neena Gill (S&D). – Mr President, it is high time that we debated Yemen given the neglect of this crisis politically and financially by the European Union and the Member States. This is extremely concerning given that it is one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. Two million people displaced, continued famine and cholera outbreaks exacerbate an already dire situation.

I believe Europe has been compromised because of the arms sales to Saudi Arabia, including by the UK's Tory government, and it risks being complicit in possible war crimes in Yemen. I believe we really have to stand up in a meaningful way and stop selling arms to Saudi Arabia.

Along with other colleagues, I deeply regret that the Geneva consultations had to be abandoned last Saturday, so I have some questions for the Commissioner. Three points. Firstly, we need a ceasefire to stop the killings and move from hostilities to negotiation. What has the EEAS done to find a political solution to the conflict? Secondly, what are the outcomes of the political consultations on regional issues with Iran on Yemen? And thirdly, any peace deal focusing on the north, and not the east and the south, will not succeed in the long term in finding a political solution. How will you ensure Yemen's future territorial integrity?

Michaela Šojdrová (PPE). – Pane předsedající, pane komisaři, jak už zde bylo řečeno, pokračuje třetím rokem nelítostná občanská válka v Jemenu, která je vlastně konfliktem mezi Saudskou Arábií podporovanou Západem a mezi Íránem na druhé straně. Vedle Sýrie je to nejkrvavější konflikt současného světa s tragickými humanitárními důsledky. Je tak nějak stranou hlavního světového dění, možná proto, že světové velmoci zde hrají své hry včetně USA, Velké Británie a Francie. Bohužel zde opravdu nevidíme žádnou skutečně efektivní politickou aktivitu ze strany OSN ani ze strany Evropské unie. Jediné, co můžeme a také musíme v tuto chvíli dělat, je záchrana lidských životů a já děkuji panu komisaři, že zde o tom hovořil. Hasíme požár, který druzí zapalují. EU se proměňuje vlastně v největší humanitární organizaci. To je samozřejmě dobře, že pomáháme, ale chybí zde prevence a jen zachraňovat nestačí.

Intervenții la cerere

Julie Ward (S&D). – Mr President, the humanitarian situation in Yemen continues to deteriorate and has now become one of the worst in the world. Recently, the UN Special Envoy for Yemen stated his concern about the possibility of an imminent famine. This extremely worrying situation must be urgently addressed by the European Union and the Member States.

France and my country, the UK, have consistently been called out in this Chamber for their arms sales to the Saudi-led coalition. Their complicity in this war is unacceptable. They must be held accountable for their contribution to the US extra-judicial killings programme through the sharing of intelligence.

The EU must continue to link up efforts with the United Nations and support a political solution achieved through multilateral diplomacy, with all parties involved sitting around the table. In the meantime, the EU must also put all its efforts into finding temporary humanitarian solutions for the people who are suffering on the ground from a war they did not choose.

Hilde Vautmans (ALDE). – Voorzitter, iedereen heeft het al gezegd: Jemen, vier jaar lang het toneel van een vreselijk conflict en de beelden die ons bereiken liegen er niet om. Uitgemergelde baby's, te zwak om te huilen. Officieel al 8,4 miljoen mensen die bedreigd worden door de hongersnood. Het is eigenlijk een echte humanitaire ramp, een echte "lost generation" die daar opgroeit, een verloren generatie. Jongere kinderen die eigenlijk gerekruteerd worden om kindsoldaten zijn, die vatbaar zijn voor misbruik. Eigenlijk is er in Jemen een echte voedingsbodem voor rekrutering door terroristische organisaties. Commissaris Hahn, we moeten onze stem verheffen, iedereen vraagt het hier, luid en duidelijk, eensgezind als Europa. Laten we de rekrutering van kindsoldaten stoppen. Waar blijft het wapenembargo tegen Saudi-Arabië? Waar blijft de Europese strategie voor Jemen? Waar blijft de Europese druk tegen de aanhoudende blokkade? Laat ons er samen werk van maken.

Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE). – Señor presidente, ¿cómo podemos ser tan hipócritas? Son las contradicciones del capitalismo, que primero habla de la tragedia, que ve fotos para compartir en Facebook de niños muertos y que después es capaz de exportar armas a Arabia Saudí. Como las que vendió España durante el Gobierno de Rajoy —el tercer exportador de la Unión Europea, con novecientos millones de euros— a la coalición internacional liderada por los saudíes. Incluso se hizo una foto el propio rey.

Hay un incumplimiento claro del Tratado sobre el Comercio de Armas. Se bombardea indiscriminadamente a civiles, y eso está prohibido.

También el señor ministro del actual Gobierno hizo una declaración en la que decía que las armas de precisión no causan efectos colaterales. Las armas siempre causan efectos colaterales. Siempre. Cuatrocientas bombas vendidas, en este pasado mes de septiembre, de precisión láser. Se bombardea indiscriminadamente a civiles. Es nuestra vergüenza: un desastre humanitario de hambre, de epidemias y de guerras.

Por eso, señor comisario, hagan un estudio y paren esta guerra. Hagan un estudio de la exportación de armas. Y paren. Y embarguen las armas que están matando a personas.

Τάκης Χατζηγεωργίου (GUE/NGL). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, αγαπητέ μου Επίτροπε, νομίζω ότι η διεκτραγώδηση της κατάστασης από τους Ευρωβουλευτές δεν χρειαζόταν για τα δικά σου αυτιά, γιατί είμαι σίγουρος ότι, ακόμη κι αν προστεθούν όλες οι πληροφορίες που πήρες από εδώ, οι πραγματικές πληροφορίες που έχεις εσύ είναι δυστυχώς περισσότερες.

Νομίζω όμως ότι υπάρχει κάτι που πρέπει να γίνει και έχει λεχθεί πολλάκις από τους συναδέλφους: Μπορούμε να πούμε καθαρά σε κράτη μέλη να παύσουν να στέλνουν όπλα στη Σαουδική Αραβία; Μπορούμε να πούμε καθαρά σε κράτη μέλη ότι αυτό το πράγμα πρέπει να σταματήσει; Εάν δεν μπορούμε να το κάνουμε αυτό, τότε εγώ αισθάνομαι μια ματαιότητα από την επανάληψη και τη διεκτραγώδηση εκ νέου όλων των κακών που επισυμβαίνουν στην Υεμένη.

11 εκατομμύρια παιδιά πεινούν...τι άλλο να πει κανείς; Βομβαρδίζονται σχολεία, γάμοι, χιλιάδες πρόσφυγες, η ζωή έχει μετατραπεί σε κόλαση. Η κατάσταση είναι σοκαριστική, κατά την έκφραση εκπροσώπου των Ηνωμένων Εθνών. Άρα εάν θέλετε να κάνετε κάτι, είναι να πείτε καθαρές κουβέντες προς τα κράτη μέλη που συμβάλλουν σε αυτό το κακό.

Λάμπρος Φουντούλης (NI). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, η Υεμένη αντιμετωπίζει σήμερα τη χειρότερη ανθρωπιστική κρίση στον κόσμο, όπως δήλωσε ο Γενικός Γραμματέας του ΟΗΕ Αντόνιο Γουτερres, προσθέτοντας ότι η κατάσταση στην Υεμένη είναι καταστροφική.

Δυστυχώς, κράτη μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης συνεχίζουν να εγκρίνουν μεταφορές όπλων προς τη Σαουδική Αραβία, αγνοώντας τη βούληση του Συμβουλίου και της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής να επιβληθεί εμπάργκο στην πώληση όπλων από χώρες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης εναντίον της Σαουδικής Αραβίας.

Οι ευάλωτες ομάδες, οι γυναίκες και τα παιδιά πλήττονται ιδιαίτερα από τις συνεχιζόμενες εχθροπραξίες και την ανθρωπιστική κρίση και ο αριθμός των θυμάτων μεταξύ των αμάχων εξακολουθεί να αυξάνεται. Σύμφωνα με τον ΟΗΕ, 8,4 εκατομμύρια άνθρωποι βρίσκονται στα πρόθυρα της πείνας στην Υεμένη, ο πληθυσμός της οποίας εξαρτάται ως επί το πλείστον από τρόφιμα που με δυσκολία εισάγονται. Οι ανάγκες αυξήθηκαν κι άλλο και 13 εκατομμύρια άνθρωποι σήμερα λιμοκτονούν.

Εάν δεν επιστρέψουν οι εμπόλεμες πλευρές στο τραπέζι των διαπραγματεύσεων για να τερματιστεί ο πόλεμος σε αυτή την πιο φτωχή χώρα της Αραβικής Χερσονήσου, όπου οι υποστηριζόμενες από τη Σαουδική Αραβία κυβερνητικές δυνάμεις πολεμούν τους υποστηριζόμενους από το Ιράν αντάρτες Χούτι, όσα χρήματα και να δώσει ο ΟΗΕ και Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, η κατάσταση δεν πρόκειται να βελτιωθεί.

Νότης Μαριάς (ECR). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, στην Υεμένη η Σαουδική Αραβία και το Ιράν ξεκαθαρίζουν τις διαφορές τους. Μόνο που τις ξεκαθαρίζουν εις βάρος ενός λαού, σε μια περιοχή όπου πραγματικά πάνω από 23 εκατομμύρια άνθρωποι βρίσκονται σε ανθρωπιστική κρίση. Έχουμε χιλιάδες αιώλους οι οποίοι έχουν σκοτωθεί. Και αυτό είναι το πρώτο δεδομένο που πρέπει να λάβουμε υπόψη.

Το δεύτερο είναι ότι γίνεται τεράστια εξαγωγή όπλων από πολεμικές βιομηχανίες των κρατών μελών της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης προς τη Σαουδική Αραβία. Εάν λοιπόν θέλουμε να σταματήσει αυτό το ξεκαθάρισμα λογαριασμών του Ιράν με τη Σαουδική Αραβία που γίνεται στην Υεμένη, πρέπει να απαιτήσουμε να σταματήσει η πώληση όπλων σε οποιονδήποτε συμμετέχοντα σε αυτό τον πόλεμο και κυρίως να σταματήσει η εξαγωγή όπλων προς τη Σαουδική Αραβία από τα κράτη μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Τελεία και παύλα. Αυτή πρέπει να είναι η απόφασή μας.

João Pimenta Lopes (GUE/NGL). – Senhor Presidente, são os crimes do capitalismo que impõem a barbárie. É a coligação militar liderada pela Arábia Saudita e apoiada pelos Estados Unidos, pelo Reino Unido e por França que tem bombardeado alvos civis, com a morte de centenas de pessoas e dezenas de crianças, como nos ataques de agosto passado.

São as armas produzidas naqueles países e noutros da União Europeia que mataram cerca de 16 mil pessoas, dois terços das quais civis, e feriram mais de 55 mil. Os iemenitas enfrentam a pior crise humanitária do mundo, 8,4 milhões severamente afetados pela fome, situação que se agrava com as restrições da Arábia Saudita à importação de alimentos e combustível.

São estes países que silenciam os crimes de guerra e a repressão dentro da própria Arábia Saudita, maquiilhando aquele tenebroso regime de uma pretensa modernização. É tempo de os povos se mobilizarem pela paz, pelo fim de um gigantesco crime contra o povo iemenita e contra o cinismo do imperialismo, da União Europeia e das suas potências militares.

(Încheierea intervențiilor la cerere)

Christos Stylianides, Member of the Commission, on behalf of the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. – Mr President, as I underlined in my opening remarks, in Yemen, we face not a regular humanitarian crisis, but a real humanitarian catastrophe. As I have always said, unfortunately, in humanitarian problems and in humanitarian crises, we do not have humanitarian solutions – we have only political solutions. This is why, as the European Union, we focus on some initiatives, diplomatic initiatives, including behind the scenes, to promote a ceasefire across Yemen, and of course, above all, our strategy remains peace in this very painful situation in Yemen. We have made a lot of diplomatic efforts and taken a lot of initiatives, but up till now the situation remains as you describe.

I heard many suggestions from you regarding the situation, but you know that in such a situation, you have to be pragmatic. We have to see the situation on the ground and our role as the European Union, as a regional and global actor, in order to be and to stay result oriented. Frankly, what I see in Yemen, what I can handle every day, is a very painful experience, as my compatriot Takis Hadjigeorgiou said, but at the same time, I would like to remind you that in some critical decisions, including inside our institutions, especially within the European Council, we need unanimity. So you can imagine that it is not easy to find common European positions in many of our efforts, initiatives or decisions. We have to continue to provide humanitarian and development assistance. I already gave you specific figures about our contribution in this difficult situation. We remain the biggest humanitarian and development donor in Yemen, but we have to accept the hard reality: our efforts and our initiatives to change the situation on the ground, unfortunately, have limits.

Președintele. – Am primit șapte propuneri de rezoluție, depuse în conformitate cu articolul 123 alineatul (2) din Regulamentul de procedură.

Dezbaterile s-au încheiat.

Votul va avea loc joi, 4 octombrie 2018.

Declarații scrise (articolul 162)

Dominique Bilde (ENF), *par écrit*. – C'est l'une des plus grandes tragédies humanitaires mondiales qui se trame au Yémen, puisqu'entre mars 2015 et le début de l'année 2018, 9 245 personnes y avaient perdu la vie et 52 800 y avaient été blessées. Parmi les morts, dont le décès est largement imputable aux bombardements de la coalition saoudienne, au moins 5 558 étaient des civils au 14 décembre 2017. Les trois quarts de la population restent suspendus à l'aide humanitaire, dont huit millions de personnes dans une situation plus grave encore: «c'est-à-dire qu'elles ne savent pas quand elles prendront leur prochain repas», selon Mark Lowcock, le secrétaire général adjoint aux affaires humanitaires de l'ONU.

À ces circonstances dramatiques s'ajoutent des conditions sanitaires déplorables. Ainsi, 2 248 personnes ont été emportées par le choléra entre avril 2017 et janvier 2018.

Mais le plus sidérant est sans doute l'indifférence de la communauté internationale, alors même que l'aide humanitaire ne peut désormais plus être délivrée qu'au compte-gouttes face aux blocages. Il est donc urgent d'en garantir la livraison à ses bénéficiaires, au risque de porter une responsabilité historique dans l'alourdissement du bilan humain.

Krzysztof Hetman (PPE), *na piśmie*. – Wojna w Jemenie trwa od 2015 roku i niestety, wiele wskazuje na to, że szybkie zakończenie konfliktu będzie niezwykle trudne. Wojna pochłonęła już dziesiątki tysięcy ofiar śmiertelnych. Niestety, w znacznej mierze są to cywile, w tym także dzieci. Ostatnie doniesienia organizacji Save the Children są szczególnie niepokojące. Głoduje lub poważnie niedojada nawet pięć milionów dzieci, dziesiątek tysięcy najprawdopodobniej nie da się uratować i po prostu umrą one z głodu jeszcze w tym roku. To jedna z większych katastrof humanitarnych, z jaką mamy do czynienia dziś na świecie. Dlatego też jestem zdania, że działania polityczne mające na celu wznowienie procesu pokojowego, które zostały ostatnio podjęte przez ONZ, muszą iść w parze ze wzmożoną pomocą humanitarną. Mam nadzieję, że uda się skłonić rebeliantów do przystąpienia do rozmów, ale równie ważne jest, aby bez zbędnej zwłoki docierać z bieżącą pomocą do ludności cywilnej i zapewnić im niezbędną do przeżycia wsparcie.

Jaromír Kohlíček (GUE/NGL), *písemně*. – Jemen vznikl v roce 1990, po dlouholetém krvavém konfliktu, sloučením tradičních horských středisek z okolí hlavního města San'a v severní části a Jemenskou lidově demokratickou republikou, bývalou britskou kolonií Aden. Nejen dvě rozdílné části země, ale i rozdílný výklad muslimského náboženství: sunnitě a šiité, dlouhodobě tuto zemi rozdělují. Politická nestabilita vyvrcholila před řadou měsíců dobytím hlavního města militantní šiitskou organizací al-Húthí a útekem prezidenta do Adenu. Sunnitské síly dostaly masivní vojenskou podporu armády Saudské Arábie a tato v těžkém bombardování řady míst ovládaných povstalci pomalu, ale jistě stále postupuje. Světová veřejnost se znepokojením sleduje zejména těžké boje v přístavu Al-Hudajdá, kudy do severní části země proudila humanitární pomoc. Celá věc má samozřejmě širší pozadí. Šiité mají podporu Íránu, sunnitě Saudské Arábie kryté širší koalicí arabských zemí. Poněkud mimo pozornost světové veřejnosti, která akcentuje zejména problém nedostatku potravin a lékařské péče, zůstává hlavní důvod, proč se soupeři o Jemen již léta ucházejí, je jím totiž Bab-al-Mandab, průliv v úžině, který spojuje Rudé moře s Indickým oceánem. Ať již konflikt dopadne jakkoliv, miliony obyvatel této země budou opět chudší a hospodářsky závislejší na pomoci ze zahraničí. To, co však Jemen nyní nutně potřebuje, je okamžitá pomoc vedoucí k zastavení bojů.

Urmas Paet (ALDE), *kirjalikult*. – Kodusõda Jeemenis kestab juba neljandat aastat ning lisaks inimohvritele on riigis kohutav humanitaar- ja julgeolekuolukord. Lisaks sellele kestab ka poliitiline kriis. Sõjategevus ja vägivald ning tsiviilisikute ründamine Jeemenis tuleb viivitamatult lõpetada. Igasugune tsiviilisikute ründamine on vastuolus rahvusvahelise õigusega ning selliste rünnakute toimepanijad tuleb vastutusele võtta. On oluline toetada ÜRO eriesindajat, kes püüab tuua kõik osapooled läbirääkimislaua taha, sest konfliktid võimaliku lahenduseni saab jõuda vaid nii. Kohe on vaja tagada humanitaarabi jõudmine kriisiipiirkondadesse.

Marijana Petir (PPE), *napisan.* – Republika Jemen je jedna od najsiromašnijih arapskih država na svijetu, a rat koji ne jenjava, nažalost, i dalje jača nestabilnost ne samo u Republici Jemen nego i u susjednim državama Bliskoga Istoka. Uzastopni zračni napadi u gradu Hodeidah ponovno su odnijeli desetke života, a mnogi su bili ozlijeđeni. Snažno osuđujem napade na civile. Europska unija očekuje od svih strana da osiguraju zaštitu civilnog stanovništva i da zaustave iskorištavanje nevine djece, kao nositelje buduće generacije, te smatram da je potreba brza reakcija cijele međunarodne zajednice radi njihove zaštite.

Pozivam na brzo rješavanje problema blokade humanitarne pomoći za žrtve rata. Izravne posljedice oružanog sukoba velikog su razmjera i ukoliko se nešto ne poduzme, izravna su prijetnja kompletom stanovništvu. Jemenci su prošle godine prolazili kroz najgoru koleru u modernoj povijesti, s više od milijun slučajeva (od kojih su polovica bila djeca). Smatram da je potrebno brzo djelovanje Europske unije kao predvodnice mira i dijaloga.

15. Emissienormen voor nieuwe personenauto's en nieuwe lichte bedrijfsvoertuigen (debat)

Președintele. – Următorul punct de pe ordinea de zi este dezbateră privind raportul lui Miriam Dalli, în numele Comisiei pentru mediu, sănătate publică și siguranță alimentară, referitor la propunerea de regulament al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului de stabilire a standardelor de performanță privind emisiile pentru autoturismele noi și pentru vehiculele utilitare ușoare noi, ca parte a abordării integrate a Uniunii de reducere a emisiilor de CO₂ generate de vehiculele utilitare ușoare, și de modificare a Regulamentului (CE) nr. 715/2007 (reformare) (COM(2017)0676 – C8-0395/2017 – 2017/0293(COD)) (A8-0287/2018).

Miriam Dalli, *Rapporteur.* – Mr President, thank you, Commissioner Cañete, and all the shadow rapporteurs for the way we work together. I am proud to be standing here to defend the Committee on the Environment's position on legislation that respects our climate targets, the environment, public health, industry and competitiveness. I am proud because together we realised that the way forward is to ensure the environmental integrity of the industry as a whole. We agreed that real driving emissions are a necessity, and that any emission values that the European Commission bases itself on have to be measured values and not simply values declared by the car manufacturers.

We agreed that we have to move from measuring emissions at the tail pipe to analysing the whole life cycle of a vehicle. That, together with the well-to-wheels approach, can really promote cleaner technology and cleaner fuels. We agreed that investment in recharging infrastructure is to be promoted, and battery and battery cell manufacturing close to vehicle manufacturing sites should be supported.

I am for more ambition than what the European Commission is proposing. I am for more ambition, because we have studies that clearly show that we need to take decisive action. More ambition will stimulate innovation and investment in the European Union. It will create jobs in the years to come, particularly if the European Union embarks on a long-term strategy that seriously attracts battery production investments to the European Union. This is confirmed by the European Commission itself.

I did not want to speak about numbers, but I want to set the record straight. Let's take a 40% CO₂ reduction: we would be creating 69 000 jobs in the EU if we imported batteries from outside the European Union. If we had to produce batteries within the EU, we would be creating 92 000 jobs. With a 40% CO₂ reduction, there would be 12 000 fewer jobs in the automotive sector over a period of 12 years until 2030. However, at the same time, in its blueprint for cooperation on skills and the automotive sector, the Commission is saying that there will be 900 000 employees, who will retire or leave the sector between 2017 and 2025. Because workers are a priority, we are proposing a gradual transition complemented by targeted programmes to ensure that no one is impacted negatively.

An ambitious proposal is all about car manufacturers having the right incentive to invest and create quality jobs right here in the European Union. I ask two questions: why are car manufacturers investing seven times as much outside the European Union as they do within the European Union when it comes to cleaner cars? Why are car manufacturers, telling their workers' councils that they cannot invest in battery production in the EU because of high salary costs, but then Chinese companies open battery production sites in the EU paying EU salaries.

As far as I'm concerned, the answer is simple: there aren't the right incentives for the industry to invest in cleaner cars. And we have a choice: we have a choice between attracting investment to the European Union or letting other continents take the lead, with all the disruptive effects that this will have on our industry, on our companies and our small producers, our environment and our cities. This is the time to act. This is the time to show that, for us, it is not a question of industry versus the environment, but an issue of making sure that we address both the environment and industry together. We have the opportunity to act tomorrow in our vote in this plenary.

Miguel Arias Cañete, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, it is a pleasure to be here today for the debate on the Commission proposal setting CO₂ emissions standards for cars and vans for the period up to 2020. This is a key proposal to implement the 2030 climate and energy framework, to continue delivering on our commitments under the Paris Agreement and to contribute to the transition to a low carbon economy.

This is not just essential for the climate, but also for Europe's economic prosperity and global competitiveness. With the adoption of the legislative proposals on the 2030 climate and energy framework, thanks to the excellent work of all our institutions, the European Union is turning its global commitments into reality and is determined to continue as a world leader in the fight against climate change.

Under the Effort Sharing Regulation the Member States now have binding emission reduction targets up to 2030 in the sectors not included in the European Union Emissions Trading System – that is transport, buildings, agriculture and waste. Now it is time to make sure that at European level we have the right regulatory framework in place to contribute to meeting these targets. With almost a quarter of the European Union's total greenhouse gas emissions coming from transport, this sector has a vital role to play in this transition. While Europe has reduced its emissions by some 23% since 1990, road transport emissions have grown by about 20% and today, transport accounts for more than 20% of Europe's total emissions and this continues to grow.

The Commission's legislative proposal setting the new CO₂ standards for cars and vans for post-2020 is therefore an essential instrument to address this. Your vote tomorrow is instrumental to allow the adoption of the proposal during the current legislative term and we need to give a clear and stable regulatory signal to industry as soon as possible because this will stimulate the right investments in the transition towards zero emission mobility.

I want to thank the rapporteur, Ms Dalli, for her hard work on this proposal, putting together the position of this Parliament, as well as for our constructive discussions and cooperation. I would also like to thank the shadow rapporteurs for their work.

I want to underline that the Commission proposal, underpinned by a thorough impact assessment, is both ambitious and realistic. It strikes the right balance between the three main policy objectives that cannot be considered in isolation: firstly, achieving environmental benefits, secondly, bringing savings for consumers and finally, safeguarding employment and competitiveness in the European Union.

The Commission proposal allows for a smooth, gradual and realistic transition to zero emission vehicles. The pace of the transition is essential, as the automotive sector is crucial for Europe's prosperity, providing jobs for 12 million people in manufacturing, sales, maintenance and transport and accounting for 4% of gross domestic product.

We need to give sufficient time to achieve this reformation, to undertake the necessary investments and to reskill and upskill the workers in the current automotive supply chain. Our target will have positive impacts on the overall economy. At the same time, the number of jobs will remain stable in the automotive sector.

Our proposal will also bring significant environmental benefits. The proposal is projected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from road transport by around 22% between 2005 and 2030, contributing to our necessary efforts to implement the Paris Agreement. We have already agreed, or proposed, additional policies which will further reduce emissions from this sector, including the recently agreed Renewable Energy Directive, as well as the proposal on CO₂ standards for heavy duty vehicles, the revised Eurovignette and the Clean Vehicles and Combined Transport Directives.

From the side of consumers, the 30% target will bring significant economic benefits. Consumers will save money – up to EUR 400 for the average new car bought in 2025 and more than EUR 1 400 in 2030.

Let me conclude by saying once again that the Commission remains fully supportive of the efforts of Parliament and the Council to conclude positive discussions on this proposal still this year. I look forward to continuing to work with you on the proposal and bringing it to a positive successful conclusion. This is what our citizens, our consumers, our companies and our workers expect from all of us.

Karima Delli, *rapporteure pour avis de la Commission des transports et du tourisme*. – Monsieur le Président, mes chers collègues, le transport représente plus de 20 % des émissions de CO₂ en Europe, et 70 % de ces émissions proviennent du transport routier. Résultat: la pollution de l'air provoque chaque année le décès prématuré de 500 000 personnes en Europe. Si on ne change pas, on va dans le mur.

Pour respecter les objectifs de la COP 21, il faudrait une baisse de 70 % des émissions d'ici 2030. Là, on propose une baisse de 45 % d'ici 2030. C'est mieux que la proposition de la Commission, mais c'est loin d'être assez. Et vous, qu'est-ce que vous nous dites? Que c'est trop ambitieux. Mais c'est trop ambitieux pour qui? Pour les gouvernements, pour le lobby automobile? Je vous le dis, nous, Parlement européen, nous ne pouvons pas compromettre le climat, ni la santé de nos concitoyens, ni les 12 millions d'emplois du secteur automobile en Europe qui sont déjà menacés par la concurrence internationale.

La mobilité propre, ce n'est pas une menace, mais bien une opportunité pour la santé et la reconversion du secteur automobile.

Jens Gieseke, *im Namen der PPE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident! Lassen Sie mich gleich zu Beginn eines klarstellen: Es geht hier heute nicht um die Frage Klimaschutz ja oder nein. Alle Vorschläge, über die wir morgen abstimmen werden, werden dazu beitragen, unsere Klimaziele zu erreichen. Die Frage ist jedoch: Was passiert, wenn wir wieder einmal versuchen, über das Ziel hinauszuschießen? Mit anderen Worten: Was bedeuten die überzogenen Forderungen einiger Kollegen für Verbraucher, Volkswirtschaft und Arbeitsplätze? Die Antwort ist ganz klar: Sie wären verheerend. Daran wird auch die Aufweichung des 45%-Ziels aus dem Unterausschuss auf das 40%-Ziel mit verbindlicher Elektroquote nicht viel ändern.

Allein das Bestrafungssystem für Fahrzeuge mit Null- und Niedrigemissionen wird uns teuer zu stehen kommen. Die Kommission hat berechnet, was der Vorschlag des Unterausschusses bedeuten würde. Die Volkswirtschaft hätte bei einem Verkauf eines Fahrzeugs einen Verlust von 1 450 Euro, jeder Verbraucher müsste 1 000 Euro draufzahlen, und 60 000 Menschen würden ihren Arbeitsplatz verlieren. Gerne wird hier dann immer wieder gesagt, dass vielleicht auch neue Jobs entstehen und dass man die Leute einfach in eine Umschulung stecken könnte. Ich habe mich hierzu mit den Vertretern der Gewerkschaften und der Industrie getroffen, und für die steht ganz klar fest: Tausende Jobs werden verlorengehen. Das müssen wir verhindern. Nur im Europäischen Parlament ist diese Nachricht noch immer nicht richtig angekommen.

Ich bin fest davon überzeugt: Wir können ambitionierte Ziele definieren, das Klima schützen und gleichzeitig die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit unserer Industrie stärken und damit Arbeitsplätze in Europa sichern. Wir brauchen keine Ideologie, keine Quote und keine Verbote, sondern Offenheit, Innovation und Technologieneutralität. Das wäre gut für das Klima, das wäre gut für den Verbraucher, und für die Beschäftigten wäre das auch gut.

Die EVP-Fraktion hat im Laufe der Verhandlungen große Zugeständnisse gemacht. Lassen Sie uns morgen für das 35%-Ziel stimmen und das Strafsystem zur E-Autoquote zurückweisen.

Kathleen Van Brempt, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, this is an absolutely crucial file and that's why, Mr Commissioner, we need more ambition than the Commission proposal offers – to make sure that we can get our climate goals, but also to make sure that we can reduce the cost for consumers and improve the air quality in our Member States. Some, like Mr Gieseke, argue that increased ambition will lead to a loss of jobs. Well, it's not the case. The Commission's own impact assessment states that with a 40% reduction, total EU employment will increase by 69 000 to 92 000 jobs. In any case, colleagues, regardless of electrification, if you look at what will go on in the sector on everything that is to do with automation and digitalisation, fundamental changes need to occur in the sector.

That's why I am so proud that, under the leadership of Ms Dalli, there are many issues on just transition within the proposal of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) that we should all support. What workers should be really be afraid of is that we lose out in the automotive sector; we lose our leadership on technology. Ms Dalli mentioned it already. Why are European car manufacturers making so much effort in China to make electric cars and not do so within Europe? What do we want? To be left with all technology that is killing our people because of the effect on climate and air quality? That's why we need to have ambition.

It's encouraging to see that not just in the progressive forces in this Parliament, but also in the Council, there's an increasing amount of membership that wants to improve the targets in this regulation. That's why I'm really saddened that Ms Merkel, whom I respect a lot and who used to be a climate Chancellor, will now miss her national climate targets by 2020 and 2030 by putting the brakes on this ambitious legislation. So please, let's vote tomorrow on the ENVI proposal.

Mark Demesmaecker, *namens de ECR-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, de Vlaamse N-VA-delegatie stemt morgen voor ambitieuze normen. Wij steunen minstens 40 % minder CO₂ en 40 % nieuwe groene wagens tegen 2030. Dit is inderdaad essentieel in de strijd tegen de klimaatverandering, maar ook voor de luchtkwaliteit in onze steden en onze gemeenten. En toen u vorig jaar uw voorstel hier lanceerde heb ik mijn ontgoocheling hier in de plenaire zitting ook niet onder stoelen of banken gestoken en ik blijf bij mijn standpunt: zwakke CO₂-normen ondermijnen de klimaatdoelstellingen. Mijn eigen lidstaat moet tegen 2030 35 % minder CO₂ uitstoten. Zonder de nodige technologie om CO₂ aan de bron te vermindere zal dat dus niet lukken en we steunen ook voluit de vraag naar een technologie-neutrale vergroening van de nieuwe vloot. Dit vormt een belangrijke schakel in het aantrekken van investeringen, in het stimuleren van innovatie en van het verbeteren van luchtkwaliteit. Onze burgers hebben recht op schone lucht. Indien het de Europese Unie menens is om de concurrentie met China aan te gaan, dan moeten onze producenten voldoende emissie-arme en emissie-vrije wagens aanbieden. Daarin moeten we voluit investeren, niet in sjoemelsoftware om de normen te omzeilen. Ik hoop dat we na dieseltgate onze les hebben geleerd.

Nils Torvalds, *on behalf of the ALDE Group*. – Mr President, after the COP21 meeting in Paris, we decided that we were going to stand for these principles, and therefore we created a framework which consisted of emissions trading, effort sharing and LUCF. That is the framework. When you speak about effort sharing, we know that effort sharing is also already included in a social manner; that Finland has 39%, Sweden has 40%, Denmark about 40%, and Bulgaria 0%. We took into account the different possibilities of the different countries. That, I think, is fair.

What we are now doing is trying to take a further step, and this step, if you look at the figures, is very important. If we fail in transport, then transport will kick back on effort sharing, on agriculture and on the budgets of the Member States if they are not able to reach the goals. That is what we are actually now deciding on; we are deciding on the way in which we will go forward.

Therefore, if you look at the figures, transport is the only part of CO₂ that is rising. All the other curves are going down, but transport is rising. We have to take measures, and the only way you can take measures is to have clear-cut and ambitious goals; that's the 40%. We also have to fix all the other things, and remember that when we speak about efforts sharing, it is running until 2030. To be able to look at effort sharing, we need something in between. That is 2025, which is in this year, so there is just one way to go, and that is forward.

Rebecca Harms, *im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident! Herr Kommissar Cañete, Sie haben behauptet, die Europäische Kommission würde ernsthaft und ehrgeizig an der Umsetzung des Pariser Klimaabkommens arbeiten. Ich muss Ihnen sagen, ich kann das nicht erkennen. Sie haben erst in der letzten Woche erklärt, dass Sie nicht wie beabsichtigt das Klima-Gesamtziel der Europäischen Union an das Pariser Abkommen anpassen – also drei Jahre nach Paris. Die EU-Kommission hat es nicht geschafft, ihre eigenen Klimaziele anzupassen und fährt ohne angepasstes Ziel nach Kattowitz.

Es ist also überhaupt nicht erstaunlich, dass Sie auch in diesem wichtigen Bereich der Gesetzgebung, über den wir heute diskutieren, nicht ehrgeizig umsetzen. Ihre eigenen Gutachter haben ihnen gesagt, dass ein CO₂-Reduktionsziel für die Automobilindustrie bis 2030 mindestens 60 % sein muss. Sie haben 30 % bis 2030 vorgelegt. So weit haben die Empfehlungen der Wissenschaft und die Vorschläge der Kommission in der Zeit, in der ich hier Klimapolitik mitberate, nie auseinanderklafft.

Ich muss mich auch bedanken bei der Berichterstatterin Frau Dalli, die mit dem Kompromiss, den wir im Umweltausschuss gefunden haben, wirklich etwas Gutes erreicht hat. Aber dieser Kompromiss muss jetzt mindestens verteidigt werden, damit wir uns sehen lassen können, wenn wir aus diesem Haus heraus in der internationalen Debatte etwas Gutes vertreten wollen.

Die Autoindustrie steht zusammen mit einigen Regierungen auf der Bremse. Das ist nicht überraschend, das hat System, das haben wir oft erlebt. Aber die Gewerkschaften, Herr Kollege Gieseke, die diskutieren schon etwas anders. Von den Gewerkschaften haben wir gehört, dass sie genau wissen, dass unsere Industrie auf den internationalen Märkten abgehängt sein wird, wenn wir uns nicht ehrgeizig und konsequent auf Innovationen, Klimaschutz und umweltfreundliche Autos einlassen.

Das Arbeitsplatzargument hat die ganze Zeit eine ganz große Rolle gespielt. Und ich will Ihnen sagen: Ich habe selten in einer Debatte einen so manipulativen Umgang mit Zahlen wie diesen Arbeitsplatzverlustzahlen erlebt wie in den letzten Wochen. Es ist unverschämt, mit Zahlen über Arbeitsplatzverluste zu operieren, die eintreten, wenn wir Reduktionsziele wie 80 % bis 2030 diskutieren würden. Nie hat jemand in dieser Dimension diskutiert, und trotzdem argumentiert der Kollege Gieseke in dieser Art und Weise. Arbeitsplatzverluste, die in absehbarer Zeit die Industrie in der Europäischen Union betreffen werden, entstehen durch Digitalisierung und Produktivitätssteigerung, so wie immer. Und da gibt es überhaupt keine Einmischung von Ihnen, Herr Gieseke. Panikmache wegen Klimaschutz, das ist das, was Sie machen, und das führt am Ende dazu, dass die europäischen Märkte von chinesischen Herstellern übernommen werden.

(Die Rednerin ist damit einverstanden, eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“ gemäß Artikel 162 Absatz 8 der Geschäftsordnung zu beantworten.)

Peter Liese (PPE), *Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“*. – Herr Präsident, verehrte Kollegin Harms! Sie haben den Kommissar kritisiert, weil er nicht schon jetzt vorgeschlagen hat, das Ziel von 40 % zu erhöhen. Ich war bei der Klimakonferenz in Bonn im letzten Jahr und habe alle Partner, mit denen wir gesprochen haben, systematisch gefragt: Gibt es überhaupt eine Debatte in den anderen Ländern – die USA wollen wir mal ganz weglassen, aber etwa in Japan, Russland, Südamerika, Brasilien? Es gibt nirgendwo eine Debatte. Und glauben Sie nicht auch, dass wir, bevor wir hier den Kommissar kritisieren, der da immerhin schon mal einen Weg beschrieben hat, uns mehr bemühen sollten, andere Länder einzubeziehen, dass sie diese Debatte überhaupt erst mal führen?

Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE), *Antwort nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“*. – EU-Kommissar Cañete ist es auch gewesen, der das Abkommen von Paris als einen großen Erfolg gefeiert hat. Wenn man drei Jahre später die wichtigste Gesetzgebung, die wir noch auf dem Tisch haben, zu verantworten hat und diese Gesetzgebung sich gar nicht an dem orientiert, wozu man sich in Paris verpflichtet hat, dann ist das meines Erachtens wirklich schlecht. Dazu kommt, dass wir, wenn wir über die Autoindustrie reden, über Technologien zum Klimaschutz reden, die verfügbar sind. Das ist der Bereich, wo wir die Technik haben, wo wir auch für Innovationen eintreten müssen und nicht Innovationen systematisch ausbremsen dürfen.

Merja Kyllönen, *GUE/NGL-ryhmän puolesta*. – Arvoisa puhemies, hyvät kollegat, täysi tuki ENVI-valiokunnan kannalle. Tässäkin lainsäädännössä on muistettava taakanjako: liikenteen on kannettava oma osansa tai muuten asumiseen ja maatalouteen syntyy liian suuri painolasti. Me emme voi antaa yhtään vapauksia autoteollisuudelle, elleimme ilmastopoliitikassa halua pissata omiin tai lastemme tai lastenlastemme muihin.

Avoimuus autoteollisuudelle johti dieselskandaaliin, joten on annettava piiskaa autoteollisuudelle nyt niin, että uudet prosessit menevät aidosti eteenpäin. Jos me haluamme säästää rahaa satoja miljoonia euroja eurooppalaisessa terveydenhuollossa, meidän täytyy viedä eteenpäin tätä lainsäädäntöä. Niitä säästettyjä rahoja voimme käyttää myös ilmasto-, ympäristö- ja terveydenhuollon alojen uusiin innovaatioihin, jotka myös luovat uutta työtä, jota täällä on kovasti kaivattu. Rohkenen väittää, että ilmastoedelläkävijät tulevat luomaan myös kaivattuja uusia työpaikkoja kotimaahan enemmän kuin ne, jotka vastustavat koko ajan.

Eleonora Evi, a nome del gruppo EFDD. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, il voto di domani ha una valenza storica.

Le nostre scelte plasmeranno il futuro del trasporto stradale chiamato a fare la sua parte contro i cambiamenti climatici, per l'attuazione dell'accordo di Parigi. Ma non solo, domani chiariremo quale industria automobilistica vogliamo in Europa, a casa nostra, se rimarremo ancorati al dogma dei combustibili fossili e se importeremo tecnologie e sistemi di propulsione puliti dai paesi terzi, penso appunto alla Cina dove, ironia della sorte, gli stessi costruttori europei stanno investendo molti più miliardi rispetto che in Europa. Oppure, se vogliamo accompagnare il settore *automotive* in quella transizione verso una mobilità a zero emissioni, invocata, già oggi, dai cittadini e dalle imprese europee che denunciano la penuria di modelli puliti sul mercato.

Collegli, io concludo, ricordandovi che per cogliere i benefici sociali generati dai veicoli efficienti, tra cui un'aria più pulita e crescenti opportunità occupazionali nei settori dell'economia verde, è doveroso preservare il bilanciamento trovato in commissione ambiente. Il Movimento 5 Stelle si schiera dal lato dell'ambizione.

Danilo Oscar Lancini, a nome del gruppo ENF. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, è giusto puntare ad un piano ambizioso per una riduzione delle emissioni di CO₂ generate dal settore dei trasporti, ma tale piano deve avere obiettivi realistici e non produrre un aggravio di costi per le imprese e i cittadini europei.

Gli attuali target proposti forzano il mercato verso la sola opzione elettrica. L'auto elettrica non è di per sé una scelta sbagliata, ma il mercato e la tecnologia non sono pronti. Ci vuole un importante adeguamento della rete elettrica, la creazione di molti punti di ricarica, soluzioni alternative più efficienti per la realizzazione e lo smaltimento delle batterie e possibilmente in Europa e non oltre il confine, come sta avvenendo in questo momento.

Nonostante gli importanti incentivi all'acquisto, al momento, le auto elettriche rappresentano solo l'1,5% delle vendite e dal 2014 al 2017 la loro quota di mercato è aumentata solo dello 0,9%. Anche le micro, piccole e medie imprese hanno assolutamente bisogno di più flessibilità per attuare i nuovi target. Non dimentichiamo che i veicoli commerciali leggeri sono usati principalmente da queste realtà che già sono state provate da anni di crisi e non possono sempre permettersi di investire nel veicolo di ultima generazione.

Che senso ha l'auto elettrica in termini ambientali, se parte dell'energia per alimentarla, nella stessa Europa, è ancora prodotta con centrali a carbone? Serve una strategia che salvaguardi il principio di neutralità tecnologica e mantenga la strada aperta ad un giusto mix di tecnologie, che possa contribuire veramente alla riduzione di emissioni di CO₂ e ad un sistema di calcolo che tenga conto non solo della CO₂ emessa del veicolo, ma del bilancio complessivo del ciclo di vita dello stesso.

Λάμπρος Φουντούλης (NI). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, θεωρώ πως όλοι μας συμφωνούμε πως είναι αναγκαία η μείωση των εκπομπών και μάλιστα όσο πιο άμεσα γίνεται. Θα πρέπει να προσέξουμε πάρα πολύ όμως μήπως προσπαθώντας να διορθώσουμε ένα πρόβλημα που εμείς οι ίδιοι δημιουργήσαμε, τελικά καταλήξουμε σε μία ακόμη χειρότερη κατάσταση.

Βλέπω πως υπάρχει μεγάλη στήριξη για τα ηλεκτρικά αυτοκίνητα. Έχουμε πραγματικά αναλογιστεί τι θα σήμαινε να έχουν όντως αντικατασταθεί όλα τα αυτοκίνητα που κυκλοφορούν σήμερα, και ειδικά τα φορτηγά, από ηλεκτρικά μέχρι το 2050; Έχουμε υπολογίσει τις τεράστιες ποσότητες ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας που θα χρειαζόνταν εάν επέλθει αυτή η μεταβολή; Πώς θα παραχθούν αυτές οι ποσότητες ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας; Σίγουρα όχι από την αιολική ή την ηλιακή ενέργεια, καθώς, για να γίνει κάτι τέτοιο, θα έπρεπε να στρώσουμε με πάνελ και γεννήτριες ολόκληρη την έκταση της Ευρώπης.

Πολλές χώρες σήμερα αντιμετωπίζουν ελλείψεις ενέργειας. Συνεπώς, είναι λογικό να υποθέσουμε πως στο μέλλον η κατάσταση θα γίνει ακόμα χειρότερη. Μήπως τελικά τις εκπομπές των αυτοκινήτων θα τις αντικαταστήσουν οι εκπομπές των εργοστασίων που θα παράγουν την ηλεκτρική ενέργεια;

Ανακεφαλαιώνοντας, πρέπει σαφώς να εργαστούμε ακόμη περισσότερο προς την κατεύθυνση της μείωσης των εκπομπών. Όμως αυτό θα πρέπει να γίνει ύστερα από προσεκτικές και αντικειμενικές μελέτες, ώστε να ελαχιστοποιήσουμε τους κινδύνους που μπορεί να προκύψουν. Κυρίως δε, οι μελέτες αυτές πρέπει να είναι ανεξάρτητες και το αποτέλεσμά τους να μην είναι προαποφασισμένο πριν από τη διεξαγωγή τους, μόνο και μόνο για να εξυπηρετηθούν πολιτικές σκοπιμότητες.

Peter Liese (PPE). – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Es geht ums Autofahren, und ich bin dafür, dass wir Gas geben – Gas geben bei Innovationen und Gas geben beim Klimaschutz. Ich bin dagegen, dass wir zu viel Gas geben in dieser Debatte. Denn wenn wir uns mal anschauen, von wo wir herkommen, dann müssen wir jetzt mal ein bisschen Gas wegnehmen. Wir hatten extreme Positionen auf dem Tisch. Frau Harms, Sie haben gesagt, es war nie von 80 % die Rede, aber Ihre Fraktion hat schon 75 % eingebracht. Das ist nicht so weit weg von 80 %, also wirklich nicht. Wir haben die Vorschläge von Miriam Dalli gehabt: 50 %. Wir haben den Ausschussvorschlag von 45 %. Und dann sagt eben schon die unabhängige Analyse der Europäischen Kommission, die ich sehr schätze: Dann werden wir in Europa Arbeitsplatzverluste haben und Verluste für die Volkswirtschaft. Deswegen ist es gut, dass wir uns jetzt noch ein weiteres Stück aufeinander zu bewegen und dass in vielen Fraktionen auch diese 45 % nicht mehr unterstützt werden.

Ich habe noch die dringende Bitte, dass wir uns auch nochmal die Änderungsanträge des Umweltausschusses zum Malus ansehen. Nach Analysen der Kommission macht das nochmal eine Belastung aus, die im Rahmen von etwa zusätzlichen 5 % liegt. Deswegen wäre ich dankbar, wenn da der Ausschussantrag auch nicht durchkommt mit den 40 % Benchmark. Das ist eine zusätzliche Verschärfung, und das ist nicht technologieneutral. Deswegen wäre es gut, wenn wir das morgen auch noch korrigieren.

Die Kommission hat ausgerechnet, dass das der Beitrag der Autoindustrie ist – wenn wir den Kommissionsvorschlag annehmen – zur Erreichung unseres 40%-Ziels. Man kann über andere Zahlen diskutieren, und wir sind ja auch als EVP bereit, höher zu gehen. Aber ich möchte nochmal sagen – und da hat Frau Harms eben nicht darauf geantwortet: Die Debatte, mehr zu machen als man in Paris beschlossen hat, die wird in keinem anderen Teil der Welt geführt. Und deswegen sollten wir unseren Kommissar nicht kritisieren, sondern er reist durch die Welt und stößt diese Debatte in den anderen Ländern überhaupt erstmal an. Dafür sollten wir Miguel Arias Cañete unterstützen und ihn nicht kritisieren. Vielen Dank, Miguel, lieber Kommissar, dass Sie das machen!

(Der Redner ist damit einverstanden, eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“ gemäß Artikel 162 Absatz 8 der Geschäftsordnung zu beantworten.)

Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE), Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“— Zum Thema Gas geben: Die Änderungsanträge, die Ihre Fraktion eingebracht hat, laufen ja darauf hinaus, dass durch Bonus und Malus und Anrechnungssysteme das sowieso schon sehr schwache Reduktionsziel für 2030 für konventionelle Antriebe nochmal abgesenkt werden wird, so dass nach unseren Einschätzungen die konventionellen Antriebe im Jahr 2030 auf der Grundlage Ihrer Vorschläge schlechter und klimaschädlicher sein könnten als heute im Jahr 2018. Nennen sie das Gas geben beim Klimaschutz?

Peter Liese (PPE), Antwort auf eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“. – Also zunächst einmal haben wir ja das Ziel erhöht auf 35 %. Das sollte man dann schon bitte berücksichtigen. Und wir möchten nicht den Vorschlag abschwächen, sondern wir möchten Innovationen unterstützen – genauso, wie ich das gesagt habe. Der Malus ist im Kommissionsvorschlag nicht vorgesehen. Deswegen möchten wir ihn auch nicht im endgültigen Text sehen. Das ist nicht technologieneutral. Die anderen Anträge bezwecken eben auch, dass wir die Übergangstechnologie Plug-in-Hybrid fördern. Nicht jeder kann ab morgen ein Elektroauto fahren, da braucht man einen Übergang, und den möchten wir eben auch mit fördern. Das ist der Sinn.

Răzvan Popa (S&D). – Domnule Președinte, stimați colegi, suntem cu toții de acord că trebuie să ne stabilim țintele astfel încât Uniunea să își atingă obiectivele asumate de reducere a emisiilor de gaze cu efect de seră. În același timp, este important să dăm posibilitatea și să creăm cadrul ca industria europeană să se inoveze și să își păstreze locul de lider mondial în acest domeniu.

Trebuie însă să ținem seama, în primul rând, de aspectul social, în așa fel încât acest proces să nu influențeze în mod negativ ocuparea forței de muncă, iar țintele și obiectivele pe care ni le propunem să fie unele realiste și, în același timp, să reflecte aspectele tehnologice și de dezvoltare reale.

Propunerile de reducere a emisiilor de dioxid de carbon prin impunerea unor ținte producătorilor auto sunt într-adevăr ambițioase, dar întrebarea care se pune este: sunt și realiste? Pentru că trebuie să luăm în considerare și felul în care piața se raportează la modificările pe care le impunem, la puterea de cumpărare a cetățenilor din Uniunea Europeană, dar nu trebuie să ignorăm nici infrastructura.

Consider că propunerea Comisiei de reducere a emisiilor de dioxid de carbon – care este una ambițioasă – poate fi, însă, îmbunătățită astfel încât, pe de o parte, să atingem obiectivele de mediu, iar, pe de altă parte, să vedem care este impactul negativ și să-l reducem asupra industriei auto.

Evžen Tošenovský (ECR). – Pane předsedající, automobilový sektor je bezpochyby hnacím motorem evropského průmyslu. Právě proto se dívám s velkou obavou na předložené cíle, které svými ambicemi velmi brutálně vstupují do automobilového trhu. Zákazníkově rozhodnutí nechávají stranou a výrobcům diktují, kolik čeho musí pod sankcí podat a jak má výrobek vypadat. Stanoví se krásné cíle, ale nepřemýšlí se, jak zajistit, aby pro jejich splnění bylo k dispozici dost elektřiny, kterou tato auta budou potřebovat.

Zároveň v této době chybí zásadní technologická změna v akumulaci dostatečného množství elektrické energie včetně skutečně rychlého dobíjení. Řešením nejsou silová politická gesta, se kterými máme své negativní historické zkušenosti. Rozumnější by byla mohutná razantní podpora výzkumu a vývoje v této oblasti. Zásadní obrat mohou přinést pouze nové technologie a inovace v dopravě. Všechny převratné technické vynálezy, které dnes používáme, se postupně prosazovaly na svobodném trhu. Úspěšnými na trhu se staly až tehdy, kdy na ně byli připraveni nejen zákazníci, ale i celá společnost. Chce-li Evropská unie tohle všechno přeskóčit, znamená to, že se vydáváme špatnou cestou politicky řízeného trhu, a to proti svobodné soutěži v otevřeném konkurenčním prostředí.

Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE). – Mr President, in essence, this debate is about a question: what kind of car will the future consumer prefer? Will it be the high CO₂— and NO_x-emitting combustion engine vehicle with quite high maintenance costs and very high fuel costs, or a zero-emission car with almost no maintenance costs and very low fuel costs, if any? I think we all know the answer: the good old combustion-engine car that served us so well for 130 years is ready for its well-deserved retirement. That also means that if in Europe we want to build tomorrow's car, we have to develop it much more quickly than we are doing now. Market forces as we have seen are not sufficient, so the legislator should help. Therefore, highly ambitious CO₂ targets are essential for the survival of the European car industry, and that we get climate and clean air for free with that is a wonderful side effect.

Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, fascinating debate. Maybe just that everyone is aware, as we speak here in the plenary, in Korea people are discussing a report that will be published next week on 1.5 degrees. It will be very clear that our entire economy needs to go to zero emissions by 2050. The Commissioner agrees with that, I even see him nodding.

So that means that all the sectors need to deliver because not every sector can go to zero emissions. To my EPP friends I would say that one of these is agriculture. Once we are going to discuss agriculture I know pretty well the agriculture sector will say, not us. Okay, then we need to do it where it can be done. And the transport sector, within the transport sector, CO₂ standards on cars is the most cost-efficient measure we can take now.

So we should do that, and even the Commission did some studies on it. One of them was a study which showed that if you go to higher targets, with these being 6% emission reduction annually, then you have the highest societal savings. By the way, the Commission forgot to publish this one right away – later on corrected it, but forgot to publish it. That can happen of course – pure coincidence. Then last week's non-paper – even that paper showed that with the reduction target that the Committee on the Environment (ENVI) is proposing, 151 000 more jobs will be created. Even that politicised paper of the Commission showed more jobs when you go for higher ambition. So do we want the investments to go into the EU or out of the EU? That's the decision. Hopefully we will support the ENVI proposal.

Stefan Eck (GUE/NGL). – Herr Präsident! Meine Damen und Herren! Morgen sollten wir für eine 45-prozentige Reduzierung der CO₂-Emissionen von PKW bis 2030 und für eine verbindliche Elektroquote mit Strafsystem votieren. Es geht doch darum, die fortschreitende Klimaerwärmung zu stoppen, die die ganze Menschheit existenziell bedroht. Wenn wir nichts gegen die globale Erwärmung unternehmen, wird es schon sehr bald Millionen Menschenleben kosten. Den deutschen Parlamentariern der EVP sage ich: Gehen Sie nicht länger am Gängelband der Autokanzlerin Merkel und glauben Sie nicht länger den Lügenmärchen der Automobilindustrie! Die deutsche Regierung blockierte doch lange genug schärfere CO₂-Regeln, und zwar ganz gezielt im Interesse der deutschen Automobilindustrie. Haben Sie nichts aus der Diesel-Affäre und den Lippenbekenntnissen von Kanzlerin Merkel gelernt?

Viele Bürger sind zu Recht empört, dass dieses Haus zu oft im Sinne der Konzerne handelt. Und dann wundern Sie sich darüber, dass die Menschen dort draußen von einer gekauften Politelite in Brüssel sprechen? Wirklich, es ist an der Zeit, dass die EU konsequenten Klimaschutz betreibt und nicht länger Handlanger der Industrie ist.

Julia Reid (EFDD). – Mr President, I recognise and fully support all initiatives that aim at improving air quality and life for European citizens. However, I strongly oppose the content of Ms Dalli's report as, in order to combat climate change, it imposes extreme reductions in emissions standards for new cars and new commercial vehicles in Europe.

I would like to remind colleagues that EU measures to reduce CO₂ emissions, even if fully implemented, would have a trivial effect on the Earth's climate, and even if they are implemented, it is unlikely that other major emitters such as China and India will follow suit. Several global studies have shown that the costs of implementing policies to mitigate climate change significantly exceed any possible benefit.

For this, and several other scientific reasons, my colleagues and I refute anthropogenic climate change, and disagree with the current EU energy and climate policy.

Georg Mayer (ENF). – Herr Präsident! Es amüsiert mich schon auch bis zu einem gewissen Grad, wenn eine Grüne hier im Haus im Zusammenhang mit CO₂-Emissionen und Klimaschutz von Panikmache spricht. Die Panikmache, denke ich, liegt da wohl eher auf Ihrer Seite.

Aber kommen wir zurück zur Realpolitik. Diese Zielvorgaben hier sind mir realpolitisch unrealistisch. Bis zu einem gewissen Grad lassen wir uns auch treiben. Wir lassen uns treiben von einigen Grünen, wir lassen uns aber auch treiben von der Konkurrenz außerhalb Europas, die unseren Pkw-Markt sehr massiv angeht. Unstrittig ist jedenfalls, dass wir unseren Pkw-Markt und natürlich auch die Emissionen der Kraftwagen an die Herausforderungen des 21. Jahrhunderts anpassen müssen. Dafür müssen wir Rahmenbedingungen schaffen, faire Rahmenbedingungen schaffen. Nur das ist unsere Aufgabe. Alles andere können die Unternehmen selbst besser.

Es ist etwas kurzsichtig, sich hier auf eine Batterieinitiative festzulegen. Denn erstens kommt der Strom zwar aus der Steckdose, er wird dort aber nicht produziert. Das scheint an Ihnen vorüberzugehen. Und zweitens wird es am Ende des Tages dann sehr, sehr viele Batterien geben, die irgendjemand irgendwo auch entsorgen muss. Ich weiß nicht, ob Sie daran schon gedacht haben, ich denke nicht.

Es gibt auch zahlreiche andere alternative Energie- und Antriebsmöglichkeiten. Am Ende – das fürchte ich – wird die Kosten für dieses ganze Brimborium wieder der Verbraucher bezahlen.

In Österreich ist es so, im Speziellen in Graz, meiner Heimat, dass jeder neunte Arbeitsplatz im automativen Sektor ist. Zerstören wir uns diesen nicht, lassen wir uns diesen nicht zerstören, und hören wir nicht auf die Feinde unseres eigenen automotiven Sektors.

Massimiliano Salini (PPE). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, Commissario, penso che questa discussione stia raggiungendo il punto di equilibrio. È partita da un livello non particolarmente equilibrato, io sono stato relatore per quel che riguarda questo file, sia in commissione industria, che in commissione trasporti, e devo dire che, durante le discussioni si sono verificati momenti che definirei teatrali e pittoreschi è poco.

Ho avuto colleghi che rispetto alla proposta della Commissione al 30% ritenuta da noi equilibrata hanno avuto il coraggio di proporre target al 75% dicendo che forse era ancora poco. Oggi siamo arrivati a un punto in cui finalmente a tema c'è il futuro della mobilità pulita in Europa, accompagnato al futuro dell'industria europea. Noi dobbiamo discutere come politici non delle nostre ossessioni, ma di come trasferire dentro questo, che è un imperativo categorico di tipo ambientale, la possibile sfida industriale che ci compete.

Abbiamo un settore *automotive* che ci ha resi grandi nel mondo e che dà lavoro a tantissimi di noi europei, dobbiamo creare le condizioni perché quei posti di lavoro che verranno modificati a causa della inevitabile modifica dell'assetto della mobilità vedano un nuovo sbocco, ad esempio, si è parlato del tema delle batterie, quindi avere un'industria delle batterie europea sarà una sfida importante.

Queste cose si fanno con un approccio adeguato, moderato e competente. Chi ha da proporre sé stesso in queste discussioni, fa del male all'Unione europea. Chi parla di Unione, parla di processi gradualisti accompagnati con intelligenza e competenza. Mi pare che la vostra proposta vada in questa direzione.

Jo Leinen (S&D). – Herr Präsident! Der Transportsektor muss bis zur Mitte des Jahrhunderts klimaneutral werden, um die Ziele des Pariser Abkommens zu erreichen. Um die Autos der Zukunft gibt es einen weltweiten Wettbewerb zwischen Asien, Amerika und Europa, da besteht gar kein Zweifel. Und wer die besten Technologien anbietet, die besten Autos anbietet, der hat die Weltmärkte, der hat die Märkte der Zukunft. Ich will, dass wir auch in den kommenden Jahren und Jahrzehnten in Europa Autos produzieren, und ich will nicht, dass wir diese Autos aus Übersee importieren müssen.

Ich glaube, dass wir mit dieser Gesetzgebung den Verkehr der Zukunft in Europa prägen. Er wird andere Antriebsarten haben, er wird wesentlich umwelt- und klimaschonender werden und er wird auch neue Technologien und neue Arbeitsplätze bereitstellen. Weil hier immer von Elektroautos geredet wird, bin ich sicher, dass wir als Zwischenschritt auch die Hybrid- und die *Plug-in*-Autos mitnehmen und vielleicht in der kürzeren Zeit auch Autogas und Erdgas bedienen, was die Treibhausgasemissionen reduzieren kann.

Wir Sozialdemokraten haben natürlich den Klimaschutz im Auge, aber auch die Arbeitsplätze. Wir haben hochqualifizierte Arbeitsplätze in Europa. Die gilt es auch in neue Produktionen weiterzuentwickeln. Und wir denken auch an die Firmen, die vielleicht einen radikalen Umstieg machen müssen. Deswegen haben wir auch einen *Just Transition Fund* vorgeschlagen, damit wir den Städten und Regionen, aber auch gewissen Firmen helfen können.

(Der Redner ist damit einverstanden, eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der blauen Karte gemäß Artikel 162 Absatz 8 der Geschäftsordnung zu beantworten.)

Bill Etheridge (EFDD), blue-card question. – Thank you for accepting the question. You speak about changes being made to the automotive sector and state control and provision to ensure this happens. In your vision of the future, do you see a situation where the countries outside of the EU that may not apply the same rigorous policies as yourself to the climate – are still using petrol and diesel and so on – will EU manufacturers have a loophole where they can manufacture to export to them or will your state control of this clamp down on those exports?

Jo Leinen (S&D), Antwort auf eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“. – Herr Kollege, ich bin hier im Haus Vorsitzender der China-Delegation. Ich beobachte seit Jahren, was allein dieses große Land tut, das wirklich von Jahr zu Jahr Quoten eingeführt hat und das die Weltmärkte bedienen will. Es wurde hier schon angesprochen: Südkorea und Japan bieten schon seit längerer Zeit Hybridautos an, wo die Europäer immer noch auf dem Diesel sitzengeblieben sind. Also die Gesetzgebung, die wir hier machen, Herr Kollege, gilt für alle Autos, die auf unseren Markt kommen, die hier hergestellt werden, wie natürlich auch für die Importe. Da gibt es keine Bevorzugung der Importe gegenüber den in Europa hergestellten Autos.

Peter van Dalen (ECR). – Voorzitter, ik ben blij dat de rapporteur verdergaande ambities toont dan de Commissie tot nu toe heeft laten zien. Ik denk dat het echt tijd is dat de transportsector verantwoordelijkheid neemt en substantieel werkt aan een CO₂-reductie en dat we daarmee ook voorkomen dat er heen en weer wordt geschoven met ambities tussen bijvoorbeeld de transportsector en de landbouwsector, zo van “wie pakt nou eens eindelijk de echte verantwoordelijkheid?” Dus ik vind dat we echt een stap naar voren moeten zetten om af te komen van fossiele motoren en ik zie ook dat autofabrikanten dat echt willen. Autofabrikanten denken ook na over de nabije toekomst en er is een wens bij autofabrikanten om een stap te gaan maken om te komen tot 0-emissievoertuigen of in ieder geval voertuigen die een aanzienlijk lagere emissie hebben dan waar we nu over spreken. Dus ook autofabrikanten kunnen we denk ik aan onze kant krijgen voor zo'n shift en zo'n verandering. Kortom, Voorzitter, ik steun de inzet van de rapporteur en ik denk dat het goed is voor ons allemaal en ook voor de luchtkwaliteit.

Jozo Radoš (ALDE). – Gospodine predsjedavajući, gospodine povjereniče, mnogo je otvorenih pitanja vezanih uz ovu Uredbu. Na primjer, da prijedloge ciljeva za smanjenje emisija često ne prate odgovarajuće mjere koje bi mogle ostvariti te ciljeve.

Kakva je pozicija ovoga Prijedloga uredbe u cijeloj mreži zakona Europske unije koji se tiču obnovljivih izvora i smanjenja emisija? Hoće li tehnološki uopće biti moguće dostići ove ciljeve u tako kratkom vremenu od pet odnosno deset godina? I na kraju, koliko to košta i kako će utjecati na konkurentnost europskog gospodarstva?

Ja podržavam kompromisne prijedloge moje grupe ALDE od 40 % smanjenja emisije CO₂ i 35 % udjela vozila s niskim i malim emisijama, ali smatram da je prijedlog Komisije odnosno mišljenje Odbora za promet s 30 % smanjenja i 30 % udjela vozila s niskim i nultim emisijama također korak u dobrom smjeru.

Jakop Dalunde (Verts/ALE). – Herr talman! EU ska vara koldioxidneutralt till år 2050 för att vi ska kunna begränsa jordens uppvärmning till maximalt 2 grader. Vägtransporter står i dag för 27 procent av utsläppen. Samtidigt väntas personbilstrafiken öka med 42 procent till år 2050. Det är klart att om vi ska kunna leva upp till Parisavtalet, måste vi kraftfullt få ner utsläppen från de nya bilar som kommer ut på marknaden.

Samtidigt verkar dock konservativa partier tro att kraftfulla klimatåtgärder skadar industrin, men i verkligheten gäller det motsatta. Det är ingen slump att Tesla är baserat i Kalifornien, som inte bara drabbas av klimatproblem i form av torka, utan också har en ambitiös klimatpolitik som i sin tur föder innovation och industriell utveckling. I Sverige ger vi exempelvis ett långsiktigt investeringsstöd till omställningen i energi- och industrisektorn. Det tror vi gynnar industriell utveckling.

Precis som varje industri behöver även bilindustrin tydliga politiska målsättningar om vi ska lyckas, och det är politiken som måste vägleda och ge starka incitament för grön omställning så att vi får ut nya elbilar på marknaden.

Nu är det dags – nu är det upp till bevis – för de konservativa partier som hävdar att EU ska agera på klimatområdet att visa att de menar allvar med att hålla sina löften. Vi kan inte längre släpa efter. Nu är det dags för EU att leda.

Νεοκλής Σουλκιώτης (GUE/NGL). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, πρώτα απ' όλα θα ήθελα να συγχαρώ την εισηγήτρια, τη συνάδελφο Miriam Dalli, για την έκθεση που έχουμε ενώπιόν μας, η οποία θέτει φιλόδοξους στόχους για τη μείωση των εκπομπών CO₂ από τα καινούργια οχήματα. Χαιρετίζουμε λοιπόν αυτές τις προτάσεις, καθώς θα λειτουργήσουν καθοριστικά στον αγώνα μας για την αντιμετώπιση των κλιματικών αλλαγών και για την προστασία του περιβάλλοντος.

Ιδιαίτερα θετική είναι επίσης η πρόταση που προωθείται για αξιοποίηση της τεχνολογίας και μέτρηση των εκπομπών των αυτοκινήτων σε πραγματικές συνθήκες δρόμου, ώστε να αποφευχθούν στο μέλλον σκάνδαλα με τις αυτοκινητοβιομηχανίες, όπως το σκάνδαλο «dieselgate».

Εξίσου σημαντικό είναι να ληφθούν έγκαιρα τα κατάλληλα μέτρα, ώστε να αντιμετωπίσουμε τις επιπτώσεις που θα προκύψουν στην απασχόληση. Στηρίζουμε λοιπόν την πρόταση για προώθηση στοχοθετημένων προγραμμάτων, για επανεκπαίδευση και αναβάθμιση των δεξιοτήτων των εργαζομένων, ώστε να διατηρηθούν ποιοτικές και αξιοπρεπείς θέσεις εργασίας.

Ivo Belet (PPE). – Voorzitter, ik denk dat we het erover eens zijn dat de CO₂-uitstoot in de transportsector drastisch omlaag moet. We hebben het klimaatakkoord van Parijs onderschreven en ik denk dat we nu onze beloften moeten nakomen. Daarom is die reductie van 30 % die door de Commissie is voorgesteld een absoluut minimum. En wij zijn bereid als fractie daar een eind boven uit te gaan, die ambitie aanzienlijk op te trekken. We moeten de opwarming onder controle krijgen. We hebben geen keuze. Maar intussen, beste collega's, moeten we natuurlijk rijden en omzien, zoals dat heet. Met andere woorden erop toezien dat de prijs van auto's niet te snel oploopt want dat zou natuurlijk een averechts effect hebben. En zoals meneer Leinen terecht opmerkte, ervoor zorgen dat de negatieve effecten op de werkgelegenheid ook in ogenschouw worden genomen, dat die worden beperkt. Kortom, anders gezegd, beste collega's, een ambitieuzere reductie zou een zeer goede zaak zijn om het signaal te geven, ook aan andere continenten, dat wij de daad bij het woord willen voegen en ook de leiding willen blijven nemen in dat klimaatprobleem. Ik ga er dan vanuit dat dit haalbaar is, dat dit redelijk is en dat we op korte termijn, het Parlement, de Raad en de Commissie samen, hierover een goed akkoord kunnen sluiten.

Jytte Guteland (S&D). – Herr talman! Det är inte svårt att leva upp till eller sola sig i glansen av klimatavtal om man inte ämnar leva upp till dem. Det är därför nu i lagstiftningsarbetet som det är upp till bevis vilka partier och politiker som verkligen står för ambition.

Person- och skåpbilar står i dag för upp till en femtedel av Europas totala utsläpp av koldioxid. Klimatutsläppen måste minska i alla sektorer i samhället om vi ska nå både EU:s och Parisavtalets målsättningar om klimatet. Därför är detta regelverk en av de viktigaste klimatlagstiftningarna för EU just nu.

Sverige är ett av de länder i världen som är mest beroende i samhällsekonomin av bilindustrin. Vi har faktiskt flest anställda i denna industri per capita. Vi vet hur viktigt det är att skapa rätt förutsättningar för en livskraftig och grönare bilindustri, både i dag och i framtiden. Det är just därför som den svenska hållningen för socialdemokrater, både här och i rådet, har varit hög ambition. Vi driver på för att ge en tydlig signal till marknaden att det lönar sig att satsa på klimatsmarta fordon och gå före i utvecklingen. Allt annat – låga ambitioner – är faktiskt en återvändsgränd för bilindustrin. Man hamnar i bakvattnet i den globala konkurrensen, och där vill jag inte heller se EU:s bilindustri.

Vi har inför morgondagen en bra och möjlig omröstning med ett bra betänkande, som jag vill berömma föredragande Miriam Dalli för. Det är viktigt att rösta för ambition i morgon. Det är upp till bevis.

Dita Charanzová (ALDE). – Pane předsedající, pane komisaři, je nesporné, že Evropská unie má zásadním způsobem přispívat ke snižování celkových emisí a k boji s klimatickými změnami. Nemůžeme ale v tomto boji postupovat neuváženě, s vaničkou vylít i dítě. Naše cíle pro automobilový průmysl, který zaměstnává 13 milionů Evropanů, musí být realistické a proveditelné. Nesmíme dopustit, aby toto tradiční odvětví ztratilo svoji konkurenceschopnost na globálních trzích.

Podpořme inovace, dejme zelenou všem novým technologiím, které využívají bezfosilních paliv, nemějme ale přehnané požadavky a neupínejme své úsilí pouze jedním směrem. Směrem, který by z výrobců aut mohl udělat obětího beránka, byť v zájmu jistě ušlechtilých cílů.

Pilar Ayuso (PPE). – Señor presidente, señor comisario, como no se ven las cosas igual si uno viene de un país que produce automóviles o no, yo voy a hablar de España.

España es el segundo país fabricante de turismo y el primer fabricante de vehículos comerciales a nivel europeo y, hablando de cifras, tiene diecisiete fábricas de automóviles más la industria de proveedores, contribuye a la balanza comercial con el 10 % del PIB y es el de mayor peso en la exportación con más de 34 000 millones de euros.

Además, desde el año 2005 hasta la fecha, ningún otro sector ha realizado progresos medioambientales ni inversiones semejantes para ello como el sector del automóvil.

Los niveles de reducción que está planteando la Comisión Europea ya son muy ambiciosos. Por ese motivo, parece desproporcionado que se estén debatiendo niveles de reducción aún más altos que superan ampliamente el marco estratégico.

Por supuesto que hay que incentivar la venta de vehículos de cero emisiones, pero el alto precio de los vehículos y la falta de infraestructuras de recarga hace que el tanto por ciento de ventas de estos vehículos sea muy bajo: estamos en torno al 1 %, según datos de 2017.

En este sentido, el sistema para incentivar los vehículos de cero y bajas emisiones que propone la Comisión es positivo. Sin embargo, el establecimiento de un sistema de penalización *malus*, como ha aprobado la Comisión de Medio Ambiente, ni es adecuado ni está de acuerdo con el principio de neutralidad tecnológica.

Creo que la reducción del 35 % para 2030, como propone el PPE, junto con una serie de flexibilidades, es una posición ambiciosa y razonable.

Seb Dance (S&D). – Mr President, I would like to pay tribute to my good colleague, Ms Miriam Dalli, for her excellent work on this because it is very, very important that Parliament sends an extremely clear signal to the Commission that we want the highest ambition when it comes to CO₂ emissions from cars.

We have to get real. I listened with interest to the previous speaker saying that ambition has basically reached the point that it needs to. We have to get real about where this transition is going. It is inevitable that zero emissions transport will be the solution to the problems we face, not just on climate but also, of course, on air quality. At the moment our own car manufacturers here in the EU are investing seven times more in China than they are doing in production here when it comes to electric vehicles. If we decide to carry on with business as usual, if we decide to carry on with existing technology, we will effectively destroy our own domestic car industry.

Let me be clear, I am talking from a position where my own car industry is coming under existential threat in the form of Brexit, but of course when it comes to legislation on CO₂ the targets that we are talking about are not unachievable. Under a 40% reduction, we are looking at 10% penetration for electric vehicles across the EU – 10%. Are we really saying that 9 in 10 cars in 2030 will still be petrol and diesel driven and that this would somehow represent a success?

We have to be real. We have to go for the highest ambition because this is good not just for the environment but for consumers and our own industry and jobs.

Gesine Meissner (ALDE). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, meine lieben Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Klimaziele von Paris haben alle Länder unterschrieben, und jetzt müssen im Prinzip alle Länder das auch umsetzen. Wir wissen, dass der CO₂-Ausstoß im Verkehrsbereich ständig gewachsen ist, obwohl wir schon Reduktionsziele hatten. Jetzt tun sich – das merkt man auch in der Debatte – die Länder, die Autos produzieren, schwerer als die Länder, die keine Autos produzieren. Das liegt vielleicht in der Natur der Sache, das wird sich auch im Rat wahrscheinlich wieder zeigen. Es geht um Arbeitsplätze. Richtig. Da ist es so, dass viele sagen, Diesel braucht mehr Arbeitsplätze als E-Mobilität. Natürlich geht es auch darum im Wettbewerb mit China. Wir wollen nicht Arbeitsplätze verlieren, weil die Autos jetzt in China produziert werden. Wir haben eine Infrastruktur für alternative Energien im Aufbau. Viel zu langsam aus meiner Sicht. Wenn wir das nämlich schneller hätten, hätten wir eine Technologieneutralität, wie wir sie wollen, viel stärker und viel eher schon auf der Straße.

Ich bin gegen das Malussystem, ich halte das nicht für eine gute Sache. Im Grunde genommen sollte man sagen, da wir gemerkt haben, dass auch die Ziele, die wir haben, nichts nützen, wenn immer mehr Autos kommen, wäre es am besten, einen strengen Emissionshandel für den ganzen Sektor zu haben. Leider steht das nicht zur Debatte, aber das würde uns vielleicht weiterhelfen.

Andrzej Grzyb (PPE). – Panie Przewodniczący! Myślę, że w tej debacie przewija się jedno słowo, które jest niewypowiedziane, mianowicie „zaufanie”. Zaufanie nas jako parlamentarzystów, ale też klientów, do przemysłu. Myślę, że tutaj ta sprawa „Dieselgate” się ciągle odbija takim niedobrym echem. Należy dbać o środowisko i klimat, i tworzyć zachęty do produkcji i użytkowania samochodów nisko i zeroemisyjnych. Uważam, że również cele środowiskowe da się pogodzić z dbaniem o miejsca pracy i wzrost gospodarczy. Dotyczy to nie tylko producentów, ale całego szeroko rozumianego sektora motoryzacyjnego, którego dużą część stanowią małe i średnie przedsiębiorstwa – i o nich też nie powinniśmy zapominać.

Mamy tutaj dylemat, czy proponowany cel redukcji na poziomie 35-40% pozwoli na utrzymanie takiej synergii? Myślę, że to nie jest najważniejsze. Najważniejsza jest nasza wola, że chcemy to zrobić. Bowiem najbardziej skuteczne rozwiązania to takie, które są powszechnie akceptowane nie tyle przez producentów, co przede wszystkim przez konsumentów, również przez zasobność ich portfeli. Zbyt wysoki wskaźnik redukcyjny może zbyt rygorystycznie podnieść taką cenę, a w konsekwencji może w krajach, gdzie są niższe dochody, spowodować przejściowo nawet wzrost emisji CO₂, bo nie będzie pieniędzy na zakup nowych, relatywnie droższych samochodów. Myślę, że wszyscy zgadzamy się z tym, że najbardziej efektywne energetycznie są samochody elektryczne. Ale z drugiej strony nie mówmy, że inne technologie są gorsze. Wodór, biogaz – myślę, że w szczególności w generacjach kolejnych – drugiej, trzeciej i czwartej – też należy to akceptować.

Christel Schaldemose (S&D). – Hr. formand! I dag har den danske regering foreslået, at vi i Danmark i 2030 fuldstændigt stopper for salget af benzin- og dieslbiler. Se det er ambitiøst! Så når jeg lytter til debatten her i aften, så synes jeg godt nok, at det er ærgerligt, at der er nogen, der mener, at et 45 % reduktionsmål for CO₂-udledninger frem til 2030 er for ambitiøst. Vi bliver nødt til at sikre, at vi efterlever Parisaftalen på klimaområdet, og det kan vi ikke gøre, uden at transportsektoren bidrager. Vi skal være ambitiøse. Og vi skal også være ambitiøse, for hvis ikke vi stiller krav til vores egen bilindustri, så bliver vi overhalet af industrier andre steder fra i verden. Det mest ambitiøse er at stille krav. Det er ambitiøst at kræve en reduktion på 45 %. Jeg støtter fuldt ud Miljøudvalgets linje på dette område.

Annie Schreijer-Pierik (PPE). – Voorzitter, als CDA willen we dat de CO₂-uitstoot door personenauto's en bestelwagens tot 2030 fors afneemt. Alle sectoren moeten bijdragen aan de doelen van het Parijs-akkoord. Ook de heilige koe, de personenwagen, moet bijdragen aan het behalen van deze klimaatdoelen, zoals dit huis ook van de landbouw, de gewone koe, grote offers vraagt. Klimaatinnovatie levert de autobranche sector en andere hoge technologische bedrijven in Europa extra kansen en banen op. Economische groei en verstandige, ambitieuze klimaatdoelstellingen gaan gewoon hand in hand. Meer ambitie, in combinatie met het afdichten van achterdeurtjes in de wetgeving, zal leiden tot versterking van de kracht van onze Europese autobranche sector. Meer ambitie zal meer banen voor de Europese economie opleveren, zowel bij de autobouwers als bij de innovatieve bedrijven op het gebied van elektrische automobilitéit en waterstofproductie. Meer ambitie betekent ook minder afhankelijkheid van de olie-dictaturen en schonere lucht in de steden. Europese fabrikanten investeren al volop in elektrische autoproductie in China. Laten we niet achterblijven. Alle sectoren moeten bijdragen: bouwsector, industrie, landbouw en zeker ook de transportsector, zonder achterdeurtjes. Het zou niet goed zijn als de transportsector in 2030 zelfs nog meer uitstoot als nu gebeurt. Daarom stem ik morgen natuurlijk ook, samen met de hele CDA-fractie, voor mijn amendement van 40 % bij de ENVI-commissie, dat we samen met Peter Liese en Karl-Heinz Florenz hebben ingediend.

Damiano Zoffoli (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, l'Europa è in movimento verso un nuovo modello di sviluppo, un'economia a basse emissioni di carbonio. Questa è la sfida, mentre oggi il settore dei trasporti dipende ancora per il 94% dal petrolio ed è responsabile di oltre il 25% delle emissioni di gas a effetto serra. L'obiettivo di questo regolamento è di avere delle auto in circolazione meno inquinanti e che consumino meno carburante a tutto vantaggio della salute e delle tasche dei cittadini europei, oltre che dell'ambiente.

Ma non basta fissare nuovi e ambiziosi target di riduzione delle emissioni delle auto, è importante assicurarci che le emissioni certificate sulla carta corrispondano a quelle reali. E quindi sono d'accordo con l'articolo del regolamento che propone l'introduzione di una prova delle emissioni in condizioni reali di guida su strada, per evitare nuovi scandali tipo il *dieselgate*. È indispensabile, inoltre, come proposto, un'analisi delle emissioni sull'intero ciclo di vita dei veicoli. Non basta misurare gli inquinanti solo alla marmitta, allo scarico negli anni di esercizio, ma considerare anche le fasi della produzione e dello smaltimento.

Markus Pieper (PPE). – Herr Präsident! Strengere und verbindlichere CO₂-Ziele sind erforderlich. Der Vorschlag der Kommission gibt mit 30 % hier die Richtung für mehr Umweltschutz vor. Wir sollten aber die Kirche im Dorf lassen, sprich die Automobilindustrie in Europa halten.

Dazu zwei Punkte: Erstens: 45 oder gar 50 % bis 2030 sind Utopie. Das wird Arbeitsplätze zigtausendfach in ganz Europa vernichten. Und ein knappes Votum des Europäischen Parlaments mit diesen unrealistischen Zielvorgaben und ohne Folgenabschätzung schwächt uns gegenüber dem Rat. Ein Europäisches Parlament, das so in Verhandlungen geht, ohne dass es die eigenen Möglichkeiten für Folgenabschätzung genutzt hat, wird man im Trilog nicht ernst nehmen. Das haben wir wiederholt gemerkt. Ich frage mich, warum die Roten, die Grünen, die Gelben hier im Parlament das Angebot der Folgenabschätzung des Parlaments nicht wahrnehmen.

Zweiter Punkt: Die Einführung einer Elektroquote durch die Hintertür ist eine gefährliche Selbstbeschränkung. Anstatt den Markt agieren zu lassen, will linke Politik eine technische Richtung vorgeben, und wieder mal ohne Folgenabschätzung. Ausreichend Ladeinfrastruktur – Fragezeichen. Entsorgung – Fragezeichen. Seltene Erden – Fragezeichen. Offensichtlich Fremdworte für viele in der ALDE, in der S&D und bei den Grünen, nach dem Motto: warum Marktwirtschaft, wenn es auch mit dem Kopf durch die Wand geht?

Verantwortliche Umweltpolitik heißt, vom Ende her denken, die Folgen einer Gesetzgebung genau analysieren. Ideologie darf eben kein Kompass der Politik sein. Lasst uns deshalb gemeinsam nochmal an einem Kompromiss arbeiten.

PŘEDSEDNICTVÍ: PAN PAVEL TELIČKA

místopředseda

Massimo Paolucci (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, i nostri obiettivi sono chiari, entro il 2030 meno 45% di emissioni di CO₂, più 40% di auto a zero emissioni o a basso impatto ambientale, per raggiungere gli obiettivi di Parigi, per tutelare la nostra salute, per rendere più competitiva l'industria automobilistica europea.

Per noi socialisti e democratici, in questa fase di transizione di riconversione industriale, è indispensabile che a pagare il conto non siano operai e tecnici. Nel settore automobilistico mondiale sono in atto grandi trasformazioni. L'Europa non può stare ferma, può e deve diventare leader mondiale nella produzione di auto elettriche, di auto ibride a basse emissioni.

Senza coraggio e ambizione, l'Europa perderà la sfida mondiale nel settore automobilistico ed avremo più inquinamento e minore occupazione. Con le proposte votate dalla commissione ambiente, avremo un regolamento che tiene insieme sviluppo, lavoro e qualità ambientale.

György Hölvényi (PPE). – Tisztelt képviselők! Egy olyan országot képviselek, amely mindig is támogatta a kibocsátási követelmények kiszámítható fejlesztését, ugyanakkor stratégiai partnerként tekinti azokat a gazdasági tényezőket is, mint például az autógyárakat. Ebben kell eligazodni.

A Környezetvédelmi Bizottság tagjaként nincs kétsésem afelől, hogy a 0 és az alacsony kibocsátású járművek a jövő, ugyanakkor fontos a nemzetközi és globális folyamatokra is figyelni és nem csak a saját uniós klímacéljainkra. Prioritás a Párizsi Megállapodás végrehajtása, de az Uniónak, amely a globális kibocsátások körülbelül 10%-ért felel, nem egyedül és nem is tudja ezt egyedül megtenni.

A túlzott ambíciónövelés kizárólag az EU részéről nem eredményezi magában sem a 1,5°C elérését. USA-ban a közlekedési ágazat kibocsátása duplája az EU-n belüli kibocsátásnak, míg a világ egyes országaiban ez a szám több száz százalékkal nő.

Az Unió versenyképességének megőrzése érdekében olyan célokat kell kitűznünk, amelyek reálisan elérhetőek az autógyártók számára, de észszerű kereteken belül csökkentik a környezetszennyezést.

Az uniós autóipar számos elvárással néz szembe jelenleg, mint a transzatlanti kereskedelmi akadályok, digitalizáció, dekarbonizáció. Lehetetlen! Akárki tudja, mindenki tudja, aki ért hozzá, hogy lehetetlen 40%-os kibocsátáscsökkentési célokhoz technológiailag alkalmazkodjanak a gyártók. A kibocsátáscsökkentési célt úgy kell meghatároznunk, hogy ösztönözzük az autógyártókat, és ne további terheket rójunk rájuk.

Carlos Zorrinho (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, é preciso cumprir o objetivo da neutralidade carbónica em 2050 e melhorar, desde já, a qualidade de vida dos cidadãos. A forma como as instituições europeias, os governos nacionais e a indústria automóvel conseguirem lidar com o desafio das emissões será um barómetro da sua capacidade para assumir a liderança tecnológica e económica num setor que os nossos competidores nos disputam arduamente.

A indústria europeia tem de ser uma aliada da transição energética, se quiser ser globalmente competitiva. Não é sensato contrapor metas ambientais à competitividade da indústria e à sua capacidade de manter e criar postos de trabalho sustentáveis.

De facto, se a indústria europeia não se adaptar aos novos desafios ambientais, pode sobreviver no curto prazo, mas está condenada. Em contrapartida, se aproveitar o momento para liderar a transição para novos modelos industriais e dar resposta aos novos sistemas de mobilidade, assegurará a sua sobrevivência e competitividade a longo prazo, criando riqueza, emprego e melhores condições ambientais.

Este regulamento dá um contributo neste sentido. Saúdo a relatora pelo seu excelente trabalho e espero que este seja um marco de mudança essencial e positivo para a indústria automóvel europeia.

José Blanco López (S&D). – Señor presidente, la lucha contra el cambio climático no es una opción. Es una obligación. Y, por lo tanto, reducir las emisiones en un sector que produce una cuarta parte en la Unión Europea también es una obligación.

Y tenemos que buscar el justo equilibrio entre la industria que genera actividad económica y empleo —en países como España, muy importantes— y la obligación de esa reducción de emisiones. Ese es el debate que tenemos que producir.

Y tenemos que invitar a la industria a que haga los necesarios cambios tecnológicos para mantener un liderazgo también en la producción y en la industria europeas. ¿Por qué? Porque estamos hablando del futuro. Estamos hablando de nuestra salud. Y, por lo tanto, hacer esos cambios tecnológicos también va a significar mantener a medio y a largo plazo ese futuro y esa actividad.

Por lo tanto, tenemos que cumplir con París y tenemos que perseguir una reducción ambiciosa de las emisiones.

Francesc Gambús (PPE). – Señor presidente, señor comisario, siempre he creído en la necesidad de preservar los puestos de trabajo a la vez que garantizamos la mejora de la calidad del medio ambiente. Porque no hay lucha contra el cambio climático si se lucha contra la industria, a espaldas de la industria o sin la industria. Como no puede haber ya espacio para una industria que no contemple con firmeza que el camino es una economía baja en emisiones, o diría más, una economía desfosilizada. En este sentido, no hay jerarquía entre supervivencia del planeta y creación de puestos de trabajo.

Confiemos en la industria y en la sociedad europea, que está llevando a cabo una nueva revolución industrial transformando la economía europea en una economía baja en emisiones. Esto ya está pasando.

Confiemos en la sociedad europea, que está en la senda del cumplimiento de los objetivos de París bajo el liderazgo de la Comisión Salud.

Y sí, claro, debemos ser ambiciosos, ¡claro que sí!, pero sin poner en peligro ningún lugar de trabajo. Que no los creamos aquí, que los crea la industria.

Termino ya, presidente. Pocos de nosotros, creo yo, somos ingenieros de automoción y, en todo caso, hoy, somos diputados. Nuestra tarea como legisladores no es hacer de ingenieros sino marcar unos objetivos y garantizar una neutralidad tecnológica que dé libertad a los ingenieros para avanzar en la transición tecnológica de la forma más coherente posible.

Si no lo hacemos así, solo estaremos avanzando sobre el papel, y queremos avanzar en la realidad, como lo hace la propuesta de la Comisión.

Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE). – Mr President, we've just had the latest news from the Trump administration in the USA: a forecast that the climate is going to warm up by four degrees, and the result is 'we are not going to do anything'. We are going to have the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report within one week. That will tell us how drastically different the world would be with the warming up of two degrees that we have already caught up with, without even talking about the future.

If you refer to science, CO₂ emissions should be reduced by more than 50% in new cars, maybe 70%. We should make a drastic change to electric cars and new ways of moving. So this is a wake-up call. How seriously we are taking climate change is an issue. It is not adequate that we talk about the Paris Agreement. It is not adequate that the Commission is coming up with new plans and commitments for 2030. It is a question of what we are doing here in Parliament and the Council right now and in different pieces of legislation. This is one of the key pieces of legislation, so I appeal for us to go for at least a 45% reduction in CO₂ emissions from cars.

Christophe Hansen (PPE). – Herr Präsident! Niemand stellt den Handlungsbedarf in puncto Klimawandel in Frage. Ich muss allerdings zugeben, dass der Bericht von Frau Dalli mir ziemlich viel Bauchschmerzen bereitet. Luxemburg zählt zu den zwei Mitgliedstaaten, die bis 2030 die höchsten Reduktionsziele in den Nicht-ETS-Sektoren leisten müssen. Wir reden hier von minus 40 %. Im Baubereich sind Passivhäuser in Luxemburg bereits Standard. Auch im Landwirtschaftsbereich sind wir Vorreiter für Agrarumweltmaßnahmen. Der Transportsektor steht für 64 % der Emissionen im Nicht-ETS-Bereich. Somit komme ich auch nicht daran vorbei, ein ambitionierteres Ziel zu fordern als die 30 %, die von der Kommission vorgegeben waren.

Was kurzfristig sinnvoll ist, muss langfristig nicht richtig sein. Einige in diesem Plenum fordern ein Reduktionsziel von minus 50 % oder noch mehr. Die einzige Möglichkeit, um dieses Ziel zu erreichen, wäre ein Switch auf Elektromobilität. Doch wo kommt dieser Strom her? 25 % des Stroms kommen aus Kohle, 24 % aus Nuklearenergie, und das erklärt sicherlich auch, wieso die Stromgiganten, die auf Atomkraft setzen, uns massiv zu beeinflussen versuchen.

Wir wollen hier auf keinen Fall einen neuen roten Teppich ausrollen, um der Kohlekraft und Atomkraft neue Möglichkeiten zu geben. Wir wollen hier auf jeden Fall eine technologieneutrale Diskussion führen. Wie meine Kollegen Belet, Leinen und Pieper fordere auch ich, dass wir den alternativen Hybridfahrzeugen eine Chance geben.

Es gibt eine Kurzsichtigkeit, die man durch eine Brille korrigieren kann. Lasst uns diesen Fehler ...

(Der Präsident entzieht dem Redner das Wort.)

President. – Colleagues, I need to ask you all to respect your time slots. We are running behind and will have to catch up, and we also have the catch-the-eye procedure, so please respect the time that has been allocated to you.

Claudia Schmidt (PPE). – Herr Präsident! Herzlichen Dank für das Wort, ich werde ein wenig Zeit einsparen. Ich möchte entgegen dem Usus einmal unserem Schattenberichterstatter, Herrn Gieseke danken, dass er dem Bericht der Kollegin Dalli die scharfen Zähne gezogen hat. Meiner Meinung nach war es ja so, dass der Kommissionsvorschlag schon engagiert war und auch fundiert. Die unrealistischen Zahlen, die da in ins Gespräch geworfen wurden, sind – wie ich schon gesagt habe – unrealistisch. Das größte Problem daran ist meiner Meinung nach, dass wir die Bürger nicht mit auf den Weg genommen haben. Wir können draußen nicht erklären, warum wir hier in diesem Plenum über 30 %, 40 %, 50 % bis zu 80 % diskutieren. Ich glaube, wir müssen einen anderen Ansatz wählen.

Meiner Meinung nach ist die Elektromobilität nicht der Stein der Weisen, nicht der einzige Stein der Weisen. Ich glaube, wir müssen ganz intensiv auch über andere Antriebsformen nachdenken, Brennstoffzellen, synthetische Kraftstoffe. Nur als kleines Beispiel: Elektromobilität 0,7 % der verkauften Autos, SUV über 23 %. Also wo liegt der Wille des Bürgers? Ich glaube, da müssen wir hinschauen, damit wir wirklich gemeinsam das so wichtige Klimaziel erreichen können.

Henna Virkkunen (PPE). – Arvoisa puhemies, täällä on käyty viime viikot kovaa kiistaa siitä, kuinka paljon autoteollisuudelta voi vaatia. On ihan selvää, että autoteollisuuden on tehtävä oma osansa päästöjen vähentämiseksi. Euroopan on noustava puhtaasti liikenteen edelläkävijäksi. Mutta silti on muistettava, että ei autoteollisuus voi yksin tätä ratkaista, varsinkin kun puhumme asioista, jotka tulevat voimaan kymmenien vuosien päästä. Meidän pitää pystyä leikkaamaan liikenteen päästöjä paljon nopeammin.

Tällä hetkellä yli neljännes Euroopan päästöistä tulee liikenteestä. Tiedämme, että liikennemäärät ennusteen mukaan tulevat vain kasvamaan ja liikenteen päästöt on ainoa sektori, missä myös päästöt ovat kasvaneet koko Euroopassa vuosikymmenten aikana. Eli haaste on erittäin iso ja siinä tarvitaan paljon muitakin kuin pelkästään autoteollisuuden ratkaisuja. Kaikkein nopein keino leikata päästöjä on käyttää uusiutuvia kestäviä polttoaineita nyt jo olemassa olevissa autoissa, koska autokannan uusiutumiseen menee vuosikymmeniä.

Se, mistä en tässä ehdotuksessa pidä, on se, että tämä niin voimakkaasti ajaa nimenomaan sähköautoja. Sähköistyksellä on erittäin iso rooli tulevaisuudessa ja jo nyt erityisesti kaupungeissa, mutta tällä hetkellä myöskään sähköautojen tuotanto ei ole kestävällä pohjalla. Tiedämme, että akkumetallien louhinnassa ja akkutuotannossa on paljon ympäristöön liittyviä ongelmia, jotka niin ikään on myös ratkaistava. Eli se, että haluamme leikata päästöjä Euroopassa ja maailmassa, on erittäin tärkeää, mutta siinä tarvitaan monia toimia. Tämä on vain yksi osa sitä, mutta totta kai tärkeä.

Catch-the-eye procedure

José Inácio Faria (PPE). – Senhor Presidente, quero agradecer, em primeiro lugar, à relatora, Miriam Dalli, pelo excelente trabalho. Em Paris, comprometemo-nos a cortar, até 2030, 40% do total das emissões de gases de estufa em relação a 1990. Em 2015, todos os setores tinham reduzido as suas emissões, exceto o setor dos transportes, que, ao contrário, as subiu em 20%. Em 2015, só o transporte rodoviário foi responsável por 72% das emissões, sendo 44% provenientes dos veículos ligeiros.

A descarbonização dos transportes é urgente, e não esqueçamos que a autorregulação foi ineficaz e o controlo dos Estados foi insuficiente para um setor onde até se forjaram resultados de emissões. Mais, a persistência no investimento em motores de combustão tornou a economia automóvel europeia menos competitiva num quadro internacional de eletrificação do setor.

A indústria precisa de um sinal claro de que não pode fazer «business as usual». Para cumprir estes objetivos, é preciso mais medidas rigorosas, como a promoção de veículos de emissão zero, em detrimento dos movidos a combustíveis fósseis, a medição de emissões em condições reais e a sensibilização para um consumo responsável, bem como incentivos à mobilidade partilhada nas cidades.

Seán Kelly (PPE). – Mr President, I had the privilege of representing Parliament, along with others, at COP21, and I remember that prior to that we were drafting a resolution, and finally we came to agreement with Peter Liese here, Karl-Heinz Florenz and Jerzy Buzek to add once sentence. We were in favour of increased ambition, provided other countries did the same, and we got the agreement in Paris – a global problem going to be solved globally.

That brings me to the point made by my colleague, Peter. I'm all in favour of pushing the car industry, and indeed every other industry, as far as we can in terms of reducing emissions, but not to push them over the edge. In other words, we do not want job losses, we do not want carbon leakage, but at the same time, we do not want to listen to them either saying they can't do anything. So we have a very important role here to try and find what is the maximum attainable in the interests of the environment and in the interests of jobs.

Werner Kuhn (PPE). – Herr Präsident, meine sehr verehrten Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ich bin sehr dafür, dass wir uns realistische Ziele stecken und festlegen, welche Emissionen bei Pkw und kleinen Nutzfahrzeugen auch erreichbar sind. Wir haben zurzeit in der Europäischen Union 250 Millionen Kfz angemeldet und laufen. Wenn wir uns überlegen, dass sie bei einer Laufleistung von 40 000 Kilometern 100 Gramm CO₂ pro Kilometer ausstoßen, wir das mal hochrechnen, dann sind wir insgesamt bei einer Milliarde Tonnen CO₂. Davon wollen wir in einem Zeitraum von zwölf Jahren 300 oder 350 Millionen Tonnen CO₂ reduzieren.

Es gilt erstmal nur für Neufahrzeuge. Aber die Flotte wird sich innerhalb dieser zwölf Jahre erneuern müssen. Das heißt, wir brauchen neue Verbrennungskraftmaschinen, die dreieinhalb oder vier Liter fossile Brennstoffe verbrauchen. Wir brauchen wirklich auch in der Elektromobilität neue Dimensionen. Das müssen wir erreichen. Ich will am Ende nicht dastehen und sagen: Ja, leider war das alles zu ambitioniert und hat nicht funktioniert. Dann werden wir

(Der Präsident entzieht dem Redner das Wort.)

Nicola Caputo (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, il settore dei trasporti è l'unico che continua a far registrare un aumento delle emissioni di gas a effetto serra. Secondo l'OMS, l'inquinamento atmosferico ogni anno uccide 7 milioni di persone e nel mondo 9 cittadini su 10 respirano aria con livelli altissimi di sostanze inquinanti.

Maglia nera d'Europa è l'Italia, dove lo smog è causa di 91 000 morti l'anno. Il nuovo regolamento volto a ridurre le emissioni di CO₂ dei veicoli leggeri affronta la questione ambientale e industriale, per ridurre l'inquinamento attraverso la transizione verso modalità di trasporto elettriche e per garantire la competitività dell'industria automobilistica europea.

Concordo con la relatrice Dalli, che ringrazio, dobbiamo essere ambiziosi. Abbiamo bisogno di un quadro strategico comune per i veicoli, le infrastrutture, le reti elettriche, la produzione, la fornitura e il riciclaggio di batterie sostenibili in cui gli incentivi economici e gli incentivi all'occupazione vadano di pari passo a livello nazionale, unionale, regionale e locale.

Νότης Μαριάς (ECR). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, νομίζω ότι η συζήτηση που διεξάγεται πάρα πολλή ώρα έχει αναδείξει τα κυριότερα προβλήματα τα οποία παρατηρούμε. Υπάρχουν οι φιλόδοξοι στόχοι, οι στόχοι για το κλίμα για το 2030, με δεσμεύσεις στην πράξη, με προσπάθεια για μείωση των εκπομπών. Υπάρχει φυσικά και μια ευκαιρία να ενισχυθεί η πράσινη οικονομία, να έχουμε προστασία του περιβάλλοντος και ταυτόχρονα επενδύσεις.

Ο τομέας των μεταφορών, όπως ειπώθηκε, ευθύνεται τουλάχιστον για το 20 % των εκπομπών του διοξειδίου του άνθρακα. Πρέπει να ληφθούν σοβαρά μέτρα. Προκρίνεται η λύση των ηλεκτρικών αυτοκινήτων, παρότι βέβαια πρέπει να γίνουν πάρα πολλές επενδύσεις, ιδίως στα θέματα των μπαταριών. Αυτό δεν σημαίνει ασφαλώς ότι έτσι θα ξεπεραστούν όλα τα προβλήματα. Από την άλλη, θα πρέπει να ληφθούν υπόψη και οι δυσκολίες που θα υπάρξουν στην ευρωπαϊκή βιομηχανία και ταυτόχρονα ότι δεν είναι δυνατόν να αντικατασταθούν όλα τα φορτηγά αυτοκίνητα. Θα υπάρχει μεγάλο κόστος και για τους μικροϊδιοκτήτες.

Igor Šoltes (Verts/ALE). – Gospod predsednik, torej Pariški sporazum ne sme biti samo skupek obvez, ki se nikoli ne bo uresničil, in za to smo odgovorni vsi, tudi Evropska unija, tudi največji onesnaževalci.

Onesnažen zrak pobije na milijone ljudi na celem svetu, tudi Evropa tu ni izjema in zato potrebujemo radikalne in ostre ukrepe. In tudi avtomobilska industrija nosi svoj pomemben delež. Pri tem sem prepričan, da z ukrepi, ki bi lahko bili veliko bolj ambiciozni, lahko zmanjšamo CO₂ v zraku, vendar bo to pomenilo tudi prestrukturiranje avtomobilske industrije in iskanje novih alternativ nafte, bencinu, tudi z električnimi vozili in drugimi oblikami energije. In tu seveda ne smemo iskati kompromisov, ker pri zdravju, seveda, ni kompromisov in zato moramo biti pri tem zelo odločni in neomajni.

In predvsem je dejstvo, da tu moramo zaščititi tudi potrošnika in ga ne zavajati, kar dostikrat počnemo.

Davor Škrlec (Verts/ALE). – Gospodine predsedavajući, evo drugi zeleni po redu koji govori o ovoj problematici, ali prvo želim čestitati kolegici Dalli na izvrsnom izvješću i želim iznijeti nekoliko činjenica jer je ovdje diskusija vrlo interesantna, pa mislim da će biti interesantni ovi podaci i vama i gospodinu povjereniku.

Kada govorimo o inovacijama, Europa je bila prva u kojoj je izumljen i proizveden električni automobil, i u kojoj su proizvedene baterije za električne automobile. Kada gledamo današnjicu, vidimo da zapravo zaostajemo za našim globalnim konkurentima i zaostat ćemo još više ukoliko novac koji smo do sada uložili u inovacije kroz *Horizon 2020*, ono što ćemo uložiti kroz *Horizon Europe* i predviđeno je i kroz druge europske fondove.

Koliko milijardi je avtomobilska industrija Europske unije do sada uložila u inovacije što se tiče električnih automobila, a mi to ne vidimo kao rezultat na našim cestama? Ako govorimo o direktivi za alternativna goriva, svega osam država članica provelo je politiku koju je trebalo prema direktivi koju ona propisuje.

João Ferreira (GUE/NGL). – Senhor Presidente, a gestão da inovação e os ritmos da aplicação em larga escala das novas tecnologias devem ter como fatores determinantes a defesa do interesse público, a melhoria da qualidade de vida das populações e a preservação ambiental. Assim é também com as emissões dos automóveis. Defendemos neste, como noutros domínios, uma abordagem normativa, por contraponto às abordagens de mercado, que têm demonstrado não acautelar os interesses que referi.

As políticas públicas devem enquadrar esta abordagem com estratégias de defesa e promoção do emprego, nomeadamente nos setores industriais, combatendo desequilíbrios e assimetrias existentes e a lógica predadora das multinacionais. Mas importa não esquecer algo muito importante: por mais que o queiram iludir os arautos do capitalismo verde, o atual paradigma de utilização do automóvel individual, o insano protagonismo que adquiriu em especial nas cidades, é insustentável e deve ser questionado, reclamando uma nova e reforçada centralidade para os transportes coletivos, uma realidade que nem o mirífico carro elétrico pode alterar.

Γεώργιος Επιτήδειος (NI). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, η κατασκευή νέων επιβατηγών και ελαφρών επαγγελματικών οχημάτων με κινητήρες υψηλών προδιαγραφών, ούτως ώστε να περιορίζονται οι εκπομπές διοξειδίου του άνθρακα και να προστατεύεται το περιβάλλον, είναι δυνατόν να επιτευχθεί. Η μηδενική εκπομπή διοξειδίου του άνθρακα βεβαίως είναι το ιδανικό, πρέπει όμως να περιμένουμε να γίνει αυτό εφικτό.

Μια ενδιάμεση λύση θα είναι η παραγωγή καυσίμων υψηλών προδιαγραφών που θα περιορίζουν τους ατμοσφαιρικούς ρύπους. Το όνειρο πολλών, που είναι το ηλεκτρικό όχημα, αυτή τη στιγμή είναι δέσμιο πολλών περιορισμών, π.χ. της διαθεσιμότητας ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας, συσσωρευτών, θέσεων φορτίσεως και ούτω καθεξής. Πρέπει να επικεντρώσουμε το ενδιαφέρον στο να μη μεταφερθεί το κόστος παραγωγής στον καταναλωτή, να μη χαθούν θέσεις εργασίας και παράλληλα να μην αγοράσουν οι ευρωπαϊκές βιομηχανίες από κινεζικές.

(Konec vystoupení na základě přihlášení se zvednutím ruky)

Miguel Arias Cañete, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, I have listened carefully to the debate today and I have heard a broad range of positions, in particular on the level of ambition, and that is also the situation in the debates that have taken place in the Council.

The transition to zero-emission mobility needs to happen during the next decades. However, this transition should happen at the right pace to allow sufficient time for the re-skilling of workers in the supply chain. And a smooth transition is particularly important for the many small and medium-sized enterprises operating in this sector, which are the backbone of the economy in many regions.

Some Members addressed the issue of the introduction of a malus in the zero and low-emission vehicles incentive mechanism, in particular Mr Liese and Ms Ayuso. The Commission proposal contains a new mechanism incentivising manufacturers to put more zero and low-emission vehicles on the European Union market. It leaves manufacturers the choice as to how they compose their fleet but provides this benefit for those choosing to go for zero and low-emission vehicles. Adding a malus would mean that manufacturers meeting their CO₂ targets could actually be penalised if they do not meet the benchmark, and analyses also show that the economic impacts depend on the combination of the target level and a possible bonus/malus benchmark for zero-emission or low-emission vehicles. With the increased penetration of zero and low-emission vehicles, driven by the high bonus/malus benchmark level, less effort will be needed in improving the efficiency of conventional vehicles to meet the fleet-wide CO₂ targets. And this results in a projected shift towards larger segments for conventional vehicles, leading to an increase in the net economic costs for consumers.

Some Members commented on the non-paper on assessment of higher ambition levels, produced by the Commission, and my friend Bas Eickhout actually said it was a political document. Well, I would point out that the Commission services have not manipulated any calculations and are not misleading the co-legislator: the non-paper clearly and objectively presents the results of recent analytical work and it aims to inform the ongoing decision-making process on the impact of options not considered in the impact assessments. The non-paper's analysis is therefore only factual. It is fully transparent and based on the same methodological approach: as in the impact assessments, we provided all the necessary underlying background. In particular, the non-paper confirms that the only impact on jobs up to 2030 is positive for more ambitious scenarios. However, it also points to the fact that the transition towards zero-emission mobility will lead to differences between sectors. While overall employment increases with the level of ambition, existing jobs in the automotive sector related to the combustion engine risk being lost if the transition is too fast. The non-paper also confirms the key role of plug-in hybrid electric vehicles in this respect, allowing a transition to zero-emission vehicles while limiting automotive job impacts.

In conclusion, I want to thank all of you for the very interesting debate tonight and I am looking forward to tomorrow's vote. I am also confident that the Council and the leadership of the Austrian Presidency will be able to reach an agreement on a general approach at the Environment Council next week and that a final positive political agreement among the co-legislators can be found before the end of the year.

President. – Thank you Commissioner. We are all looking forward to the vote tomorrow.

Madam rapporteur, Ms Dalli, your closing remarks.

Miriam Dalli, *Rapporteur*. – Mr President, there is one statement by a Member from the EPP that will remain imprinted in my mind tonight, saying that we need to take the venom out of the Dalli report. Seriously, is this the level of the debate about such important legislation? What I heard tonight is not necessarily always based on fact. To the MEPs who think that by going low on ambition they are doing the industry a favour, I ask you to look at what is going on around you. See what is happening in Japan, see what is happening in China, see what our cities are doing, and see what our governments are doing. Case in point: the Danish Government is saying that it will ban gasoline and diesel cars by 2030.

This is what is happening at this point in time, and not all EPP Members necessarily agree with this or are happy with this, but to come here tonight and say that having ambition going to 40% will be devastating really shows how much some people are out of touch. I will refer colleagues to what the chief of a major trade union in Germany said: that 40% is achievable. He said that infrastructure needs to move forward, and that is something we agree upon and that we also addressed in the environment position.

We also heard about the push towards one technology over the other. It is not true. If we are speaking about a 40% CO₂ reduction, let's be factual with people. We are talking about a 10% battery electric vehicle market share by 2030. It does not mean that we are going towards battery electric vehicles overnight. It means that there will be a large share of efficient internal combustion engines and a large share of plug-in hybrids, which are labour-intensive and which require more employees across the European Union. So yes, I urge colleagues to be united, at least on a 20% CO₂ reduction by 2025 and a 40% CO₂ reduction by 2030.

President. – The debate is closed.

The vote will take place on Wednesday, 3 October 2018.

Written statements (Rule 162)

Monika Beňová (S&D), *písomne*. – Emisné škandály výrobcov automobilov z uplynulých rokov výrazne oslabili spotrebiteľskú dôveru, ktorú je v súčasnosti náročné získavať späť. Ekologizácia automobilového priemyslu je vzhľadom na jeho význam v európskych štátoch kľúčovým prostriedkom naplňovania existujúcich environmentálnych cieľov. Súvisí to s rozvojom nízkouhlíkovej ekonomiky a ďalším zvyšovaním konkurencieschopnosti európskych automobiliek. Potrebná je aj podpora efektívneho vývoja v prípade technológií akumulátorov a palivových článkov. Ide o súčasť komplexného prístupu, kde je okrem znižovania produkovaných emisií nevyhnutné sa zamerať aj na obmedzovanie využívania ťažkých kovov, a to predovšetkým olova. Vďaka výraznejšiemu zameraniu na využívanie elektromobilov či iných alternatívnych pohonov sa v budúcnosti očakáva postupný odklon od závislosti od dovážanej ropy smerom k elektrickej energii vyrábanej na domácom trhu. To by malo pomôcť v ďalšom ekonomickom raste a zvyšovaní zamestnanosti v odvetví výroby a dodávok elektriny.

Adam Gierek (S&D), *na pišmie*. – Samochody stanowią końcowe ogniwo łańcucha przepływu energii od pierwotnej po użyteczną energię kinetyczną. Dlatego ich szkodliwe oddziaływanie na środowisko winno być mierzone kompleksowym wskaźnikiem efektywności, liczonym jako iloraz efektywności poszczególnych ogniw tego łańcucha. Kompleksowy szacunkowy wskaźnik efektywności pojazdów z silnikami spalinowymi to wytwarzanie paliw w rafineriach (benzyny lub oleju) z ropy naftowej z efektywnością energetyczną równą np. średnio ok. 50%, a następnie wykorzystywanych w pojazdach z efektywnością dla napędu mechanicznego, tj. ok. 20%, co daje końcową efektywność ok. 10%. W przypadku napędu pojazdów z silnikami elektrycznymi możemy w łańcuchu energetycznym wychodzić z ok. 40% efektywności energetycznej wytwarzania prądu oraz z ok. 80% efektywności energetycznej jego użytkowania, co szacunkowo da końcową efektywność pojazdu równą ok. 30%. Jak widać, efektywność energetyczna „elektryków” byłaby tutaj ok. trzykrotnie wyższa od efektywności energetycznej pojazdów spalinowych. Przy założeniu, że 1% wzrostu efektywności to ok. dwuprocentowa obniżka emisji CO₂, widzimy, że całkowite przejście na elektro-mobilność zaowocowałoby spadkiem emisji CO₂ o ok. 40%. Przejście na elektro-mobilność wiąże się jednak z szeregiem trudności do pokonania. Należałoby zdecydowanie zwiększyć moc dyspozycyjną elektrowni i wybudować nowe elektrownie. Nadal istnieć będą problemy akumulowania energii elektrycznej. Sądzę, że w najbliższym czasie hybrydy będą jednak podstawą dla nowych rynkowych rozwiązań.

Csaba Molnár (S&D), *írásban*. – Köztudott tény, hogy az üvegházhatású gázok kibocsátása az Unió közlekedési szektorában továbbra is növekvő tendenciát mutat. Ugyanakkor annak érdekében, hogy az Európai Unió megőrizze az éghajlatváltozásról szóló Párizsi Megállapodásban vállalt kötelezettségeit elengedhetetlen a kibocsátási értékek uniós szintű csökkentése és a tiszta üzemű járművek terjedésének elősegítése. Véleményem szerint ugyanakkor a gazdaság dekarbonizációját úgy kell megvalósítani, hogy az európai gépjárműipar versenyképessége továbbra is biztosított legyen. A kőolajimport függőségétől való elmozdulás továbbá nem csak a villamosenergiára történő áttállást, hanem a hazai foglalkoztatás növekedését is eredményezheti.

Az új személygépkocsikra és az új könnyű haszongépjárművekre vonatkozó, a CO₂-kibocsátásának csökkentésére irányuló javaslat az eddigi célértékeknél szigorúbb kibocsátási követelményeket határoz meg, melynek értelmében 2030-ra 40 százalékkal le kellene csökkenteni az új autók széndioxid-kibocsátását, továbbá az autógyártóknak a zéró és alacsony kibocsátású járművek piaci részesedését az új- és a kisteherautók esetében 2025-re 20 százalékra, 2030-ra pedig 35 százalékra kellene emelniük. Az elhangzottak fényében teljes mértékben támogatom ezt az ambiciózus javaslatot.

Carolina Punset (ALDE), *por escrito*. – Resulta paradójico discutir sobre si la industria debería reducir un 30, 40 o 45% las emisiones de los coches nuevos a partir de 2021, cuando la realidad es que en China hay casi 500 fabricantes de coches eléctricos y 9 de ellos producen cada uno más de los 7 000 vehículos semanales que fabrica Tesla, o cuando el Gobierno de la India tiene en su agenda un 100 % de vehículos eléctricos nuevos en 2030, que le supondrán un ahorro de más de 60 000 millones de dólares estadounidenses en importación de petróleo y 1 200 000 muertes menos por contaminación, y eso sin contar con los ingentes costes sanitarios que conlleva. Por nuestra parte, en Europa discutimos absurdamente sobre porcentajes sin ninguna ambición, mientras la industria es nuevamente sorprendida *in fraganti* manipulando las emisiones, pero esta vez al alza para que, como por arte de magia, las emisiones se redujeran más allá de 2021 tras la imposición de la normativa que hoy debatimos. La industria del automóvil europea tiene una venda en los ojos, o más bien una cortina de humos contaminantes, que no le deja ver que otras economías están apostando por el vehículo eléctrico, con riesgo de hacerlos desaparecer o, mejor dicho, deslocalizar.

Christine Revault d'Allonnes Bonnefoy (S&D), *par écrit*. – Il y a urgence à diminuer nos émissions de gaz à effet de serre, dans tous les domaines, mais plus particulièrement dans les transports, dont les émissions de CO₂ continuent de croître depuis 30 ans. La Terre étouffe, elle a trop chaud: nous ne pouvons pas nous permettre le luxe d'attendre 2030 pour réduire effectivement les émissions de CO₂ des voitures et camionnettes! Il faut porter une ambition forte, qui entre en application dès 2025, avec une incitation à aller vers les véhicules les moins émetteurs, mais aussi décourager ceux qui font le choix de rester cantonnés aux moteurs thermiques, polluants et moins compétitifs. L'Europe a tout à gagner à investir dans l'innovation, pour rester compétitive, et créer de nouveaux emplois, sans quoi elle sera submergée par la concurrence internationale – car les constructeurs asiatiques, par exemple, n'hésitent pas à opérer le virage technologique. Si nous entamons la transition maintenant, nous pourrons le faire progressivement, pour accompagner la mutation des territoires impactés, et garantir le maintien de l'emploi. Dans cinq ans, il sera trop tard, c'est aujourd'hui que nous devons entamer la transition vers la mobilité propre, partout en Europe!

16. Harmonisatie en vereenvoudiging van bepaalde regels in het btw-stelsel – Btw-tarieven (debat)

President. – The next item is the joint debate on:

— the report by Jeppe Kofod, on behalf of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, on harmonising and simplifying certain rules in the VAT system (COM(2017)0569 – C8-0363/2018 – 2017/0251(CNS)) (A8-0280/2018); and

— the report by Tibor Szanyi, on behalf of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, on rates of value added tax (COM(2018)0020 – C8-0023/2018 – 2018/0005 (CNS)) (A8-0279/2018).

Jeppe Kofod, *Rapporteur*. – Mr President, Mr Commissioner, we politicians are often, and sometimes deservedly so, criticised for being all talk and no action. When it comes to the supposedly temporary system for cross-border VAT in Europe, that criticism has surely been warranted. For 25 years, nothing really happened. Think about that: a quarter of a century has gone by with a patchwork of a system for cross-border VAT in Europe, full of loopholes, mismatches between 28 different systems of VAT and outright black holes where even authorities didn't know how to accurately assess VAT dues.

This system of compromises upon compromises and patchwork upon patchwork has been a contributing factor to the growing VAT gap in Europe. The problem has now reached a shocking and completely unacceptable scale, with an annual VAT gap of around EUR 150 billion every single year. Now VAT is of course short for value-added tax, but today I would propose that VAT might also be short for value-added talk, because now apparently the right politicians have started talking to each other and action has indeed followed.

Commissioner Moscovici has spearheaded a much-needed reform of the EU VAT system, and we have had many constructive and productive talks with the Commissioner and his team. In these talks, we have found workable solutions to a range of specific problems with the current VAT model in Europe. Now, with the adoption of these new measures, as proposed by the Commission and amended by Parliament, we can reduce the current VAT gap in Europe by upwards of EUR 41 billion a year, and at the same time ease the administrative burden for trusted companies who pay their fair taxes by an additional EUR 1 billion a year.

Now that is only the start, we have some way to go, but it's an ambitious and highly effective start. First of all, we will establish the legal cornerstone for a new and defined EU VAT system. Secondly, we will be adopting a number of urgently needed quick fixes to the current VAT system. And finally, we will introduce a new safeguard against cross-border VAT fraud in the form of certified taxable person status.

However, before a definitive new VAT system can be put in place, we need to address a number of urgent problems in the current system. These come in the form of four so-called quick fixes and will resolve long-standing issues related to the so-called call-off stock arrangements, where goods from one supplier are stored in the location of the customer but ownership of the goods is not transferred until the exact moment of use. Here regulation and interpretation of rules vary between Member States, which leads to legal uncertainty and to administrative burdens. Now we will ensure simplified administrative requirements that will clarify legal requirements and ease cross-border sales.

We will also introduce simplified procedures for so-called chain transactions, where again a problem of legal uncertainty as to where VAT is ascribed in transactions between two or more companies currently exists. And finally, we will add simplification in relation to the proof of transport between companies and clarify that VAT numbers must be duly recorded.

However, these quick fixes and simplifications cannot stand alone. This is very important. By introducing the status of a certified taxable person, we ensure that trustworthy companies who dutifully pay their fair taxes will be able to benefit from the simplified procedures for cross-border VAT, which will effectively cut down their administrative costs. It will also free up resources for Member States' authorities to more effectively scrutinise companies which have previously failed to pay their taxes. It will also give a clear incentive for businesses not only to obtain the status of a certified taxable person, but also to maintain that status.

As the European Parliament rapporteur, I urge Member States to fully implement the CTP provisions as proposed by the Commission and Parliament. I'm a little disappointed by the decision today by the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (Ecofin) in that regard. Talking frankly, the quick fixes and running – as some have been tempted to do on the Council side – are extremely ill-advised. This is a package and this must be adopted in its entirety. Let's not waste this opportunity by being reckless and throwing the door open to simplification of VAT requirements to all corners. That would undermine the very purpose of these new initiatives and risk opening a new avenue for VAT fraud in Europe, and that would be the responsibility of the Council if they did so.

I would like to commend the Commission, and Commissioner Moscovici and his team, for their dedication and excellent work in paving the way for a definitive VAT system. I would also like to thank the shadows from each political group for their constructive approach, their cooperation on this file and their support in ensuring a very large majority for the adoption of these new measures in the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON). I look forward to our ensuing debate on this topic, and hopefully to the swift adoption of these urgently needed improvements of the VAT system in Europe.

Tibor Szanyi, előadó. – Tisztelt elnök úr! Mindenekelőtt szeretném megköszönni az árnyékjelentéstevőknek az ilyen dossziék tárgyalásánál megszokottól is konstruktívabb együttműködést! Örömmre szolgál, hogy egy pártérdekeken túlnyúló szakmai munka eredményeként a Gazdasági és Monetáris Bizottságban szinte teljes konszenzussal elfogadott jelentésről tárgyalhatunk ma itt.

Bízom benne, hogy a holnapi szavazáson is szintén hasonló egyetértésben tudunk fellépni az áfacsalások elleni küzdelem és a hosszú évtizedek óta húzódó végleges áfarendszer kialakítása érdekében.

Az uniós áfarendszer az egységes belső piac fontos eszköze, és nagyban hozzájárult az Európai Unió belüli kereskedelem előmozdításához. Mivel azonban a tagállamok közötti kereskedelem adóztatásának jelenlegi rendszere már nem volt képes lépést tartani a gazdaság globalizációja és digitalizációjával, ezért az Európai Bizottság javaslatot tett az irányelv módosítására.

Az Európai Parlamenten belül nagy egyetértés van abban, hogy a jelenlegi áfarendszer szétaprózódottsága komoly akadályt jelent az egységes belső piac megfelelő működése előtt. Nagy előrelépés viszont, hogy az új rendszerben megszűnik az egyes tagállamok korábbi privilégiumokon alapuló kivételezettsége, és mindenki azonos szabályok alapján dönthet a saját áfakulcs rendszeréről.

A jelentés által támogatott javaslat tehát nem korlátozza a tagállamok jelenlegi rugalmasságát az áfakulcs megállapításában, éppen ellenkezőleg: harmonizált és kevésbé korlátozó szabályokat vezet be, például azzal, hogy ahelyett, hogy kiegészítené azon áruk és szolgáltatások már így is hosszú jegyzékét, amelyekre kedvezményes adómértéket lehet alkalmazni, egy úgynevezett negatív listát vezet be. Tehát azt mondjuk csak meg, hogy mi nem kerülhet kedvezményes kulcs alá. Az új rendszer tehát nagyobb szabadságot garantál a tagállamoknak, hogy eldöntsék, mely termékeket kívánják kedvezményes kulccsal adóztatni.

Egyúttal viszont a költségvetési források biztosítása és a káros adóverseny elkerülése okán az összes áfakulcsot figyelembe véve egy 12%-os súlyozott átlag elérendő lesz minden tagállamban. Kimondásra kerül végre az a politikai szándék is, hogy az általános áfakulcs mértékének nemcsak alsó, de felső korlátja is kell legyen, nevezetesen 15 illetve 25%. Az általános kulcson túl minden tagországnak lehetősége lesz két kedvezményes kulcs, illetve egy a nulla és 5% közötti kulcs alkalmazásának lehetőségére, a már említett, tagállamok közti további diszkrimináció felszámolása jegyében.

Tudom, hogy néhány képviselőtársam még inkább szimpatizált volna azzal, amennyiben kevesebb kulcs lehetőség mellett tettük volna le a voksot, és talán ez lehet egy következő lépés majd a jövőben, azonban ezúton is szeretném megnyugtatni a kollégákat, hogy a jelentés külön is kéri egy EU-szintű információs portál létrehozását, amely pontos információkkal kell hogy szolgáljon az összes tagállam áfarendszeréről, ezzel is segítve elsősorban a kis- és középvállalkozásokat.

Előadóként kiemelten fontos volt az is számomra, hogy a kedvezményes adómérték alkalmazása a végső fogyasztók javára, illetve a kis- és középvállalkozások támogatására történjen. A Szocialisták és Demokraták frakció számára különösen fontos volt, hogy a kedvezményes adókulcsok alkalmazása esetén a szociális és környezetvédelmi szempontokat figyelembe kelljen venni a tagállamoknak, és hogy ne engedjük a káros vagy luxustermékek kedvezményezetttségét.

Mindemellett itt kell aláhúznom, hogy a végleges áfarendszerrel kapcsolatos javaslat egyik kulcseleme, hogy a tagállamok közötti kereskedelem adóztatására vonatkozó áfarendszer a rendeltetési hely szerinti tagállam adóztatásán fog alapulni.

Köszönöm a figyelmet, és jelentéstevő társaimmal együtt várom az előremutató vitát!

Miguel Arias Cañete, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, less than two weeks ago on 21 September, the Commission published the VAT gap study, which shows the difference between the expected VAT revenue and the amount actually collected. EUR 150 billion per year is lost every year at the level of the European Union.

We must recognise that Member States have been improving VAT collection throughout the European Union, but such a loss for national budgets remains unacceptable, especially when EUR 50 billion of this is lining the pockets of criminals and probably even terrorists.

These figures show that the reform of the current European Union VAT system, combined with better cooperation at European Union level, are needed so that Member States can make full use of VAT revenues in their budgets. In April 2016, the European Commission presented a communication on an action plan on VAT in which it set out the pathway to the creation of a single European Union VAT area. The Commission announced that it would present a number of proposals for the fundamental reform of the EU VAT system over the coming months with the objective of making the VAT system simpler, more fraud-proof and more business friendly.

This programme of reforms included the two proposals you will vote on tomorrow, namely the proposal adopted by the Commission on 4 October 2017, which introduces the cornerstones of the future definitive VAT system, together with four short-term improvements, or quick-fixes, to the current VAT rules in relation to cross-border trade in goods, and a proposal granting more flexibility for Member States to define reduced VAT rates.

Considering the complexity of the past, the major subjects have been addressed step-by-step in 2016, but they all contribute to the same objective: to create a single VAT area that provides for a level playing field for business; to create a single VAT area that is fraud-proof; and to treat Member States equally and grant them more freedom in setting VAT rates.

To start with the first objective, I would remind you that our current VAT system is fragmented and complex to apply for the growing number of businesses operating across borders in the European Union. Such businesses have VAT compliance costs 11% higher than businesses whose main activities are domestic. We have to open the borders of VAT and create a real single VAT area for European Union companies. The proposals adopted in October 2017 presented the cornerstone for a new definitive VAT system, based on the principle of taxation in the Member State of destination, which will result in taxing cross-border sales or goods in the same way as domestic sales.

These proposals also contain four so-called quick fixes, which have been requested by businesses, stakeholders and Member States. The quick fixes aim to address specific problems encountered by business and tax authorities within the current VAT system related to the lack of clear and simple rules, or even the absence of any rules at all. In this respect, the Commission welcomes the support of the European Parliament and the draft report on this proposal in relation to the quick fixes, but also the cornerstone of the definitive VAT system and the concept of certified taxable persons.

In May 2018, the Commission complimented these proposals by adopting a proposal on the detailed technical provisions for implementing the definitive VAT system. The Commission also adopted, in January 2018, measures to simplify VAT procedures for SMEs, which represent 99% of European Union business. We also welcome the support of the Parliament in this resolution, which was adopted on 11 September and we are confident that an agreement can be agreed soon in the Council. We have no time to lose. We estimate that this proposal will result in a compliance cost reduction of up to 11% for SMEs.

The second main objective of our VAT reform is to address the unacceptable problem of VAT cross-border fraud, which is estimated at around EU 50 billion per year. Before an agreement is concluded on the European Union definitive VAT regime, I am happy to say that – with the support of this Parliament – a first Commission proposal to address VAT fraud was already adopted in June 2018, only six months after its adoption by the Commission. It will enhance cooperation between tax administrations and law enforcement authorities and close loopholes in information sharing. It is the proof that, when there is political will, things can change quickly.

The last objective of the broad reform of the European Union VAT system is a full modernisation of the VAT rates policy. The VAT rates proposal is directly linked to the definitive VAT system in which Member States may be accorded greater freedom to apply reduced VAT rates, because it will be based on taxation at destination. The VAT rates proposal is also linked to the definitive VAT system, because it provides a solution to the current unequal VAT treatment of Member States. It will resolve the issue of over 150 temporary reduced VAT rates currently in place, which are due to expire with the entry into force of the definitive VAT system, and which are currently only available to some of the Member States.

In a nutshell, we are suggesting applying the subsidiarity principle to give more flexibility to Member States in a fair manner, in order to apply reduced rates in the sectors of their choice, according to their own national priorities.

On the other hand, our proposal sets a frame aiming to prevent both excessive revenue losses for Member States, and distortion of competition. Furthermore, in the future, reduced rates must clearly be of benefit to citizens, because they are the final consumers paying the VAT. Where common rules lead to a better outcome, we work together with the Member States. Where common rules are unnecessary, and rule-making can be achieved better at Member State level, the Commission steps back.

To conclude, let me say that behind the apparent complexity of some proposals, the reform of the European Union VAT system is a win-win situation for both Member States, revenues and European businesses. More money to spend for public services, and more money to invest for businesses. With the support of Parliament, the adoption of these proposals before the European elections will show citizens the added value of the European Union and the benefits of a real single market for VAT.

Ivana Maletić, u ime Kluba PPE-a. – Gospodine predsjedavajući, pozdravljam povjerenika i sve prisutne kolege i kolegice. Sustav PDV-a, i to se možemo svi složiti, moramo pojednostavniti, modernizirati, prilagoditi novom digitalnom dobu i pomoći, naravno, što kvalitetnijoj i jednostavnijoj prekograničnoj suradnji i trgovini.

Privremeno rješenje za sustav PDV-a u prekograničnom poslovanju doneseno je prije 25 godina i pravi je primjer kako privremena rješenja postaju dugotrajna. Ovim prijedlogom izmjena Direktive uvode se pojednostavljena koja su ujedno i priprema za uspostavu konačnog sustava PDV-a, što su prethodni govornici već istaknuli.

Poduzetnici upravo PDV i komplicirani obračun PDV-a ističu kao glavnu prepreku za prekogranično poslovanje i korištenje prednosti na jedinstvenom tržištu. Posebno navode dodatne troškove koje imaju radi usklađivanja s različitim pravilima u svakoj od država članica i naravno da to moramo promijeniti.

Upravo ovim izmjenama sustav želimo pojednostavniti i prilagoditi više potrebama samih poduzetnika. Definiraju se i ujednačavaju pravila za obračun PDV-a u slučajevima premještanja dobara i za lančane transakcije, a znamo da su upravo ova područja bila najčešća područja prijevara na području PDV-a. Isto tako, uvodi se koncept ovjerenog poreznog obveznika, ali ovdje moram istaknuti da Komisija treba dodatno razjasniti i utvrditi kriterije za utvrđivanje ovog statusa kako bi se ravnomjerno koristio na razini svih država članica i kako bi države međusobno priznavale taj status. Isto tako, važno je uspostaviti *One Stop Shop* za poduzetnike u sklopu kojeg će imati informacije o promjenama sustava i ažuriranju stopa PDV-a u državama članicama.

Za kraj, važno je istaknuti da ove gubitke zbog PDV-a i prijevara ovim izmjenama uspijevamo suzbiti.

Pervenche Berès, au nom du groupe S&D. – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, nous allons voter demain deux textes importants sur la TVA, comme contribution à la mise en place de ce régime définitif de TVA que l'Europe attend depuis tant de temps – depuis tout le temps où elle a vécu sous le régime temporaire, dans lequel s'est glissée une fraude manifeste, dite du «carrousel».

Quels que soient les efforts des États membres, l'écart de TVA – c'est-à-dire la différence entre les recettes de TVA attendues et le montant effectivement collecté par les États – est de 150 milliards d'euros, dont 50 milliards dus à cette fameuse fraude du carrousel.

La réforme du système actuel est donc indispensable. Elle doit s'allier avec une meilleure coordination ou coopération entre les États membres à l'échelle européenne pour faciliter les échanges transfrontaliers et, surtout, pour rendre ce système plus résistant à la fraude afin que les recettes de TVA puissent effectivement être utilisées par les États membres dans leur budget. Plutôt que de taxer davantage le pouvoir d'achat des citoyens européens, c'est sans conteste la fraude que nous devons essayer de réduire.

Ce système doit être plus efficace et donc simplifié, et les socialistes soutiennent pleinement le principe de destination, principe entériné par la réforme proposée par la Commission. Mais dans la lutte contre la fraude, nous pensons qu'il ne faut pas non plus pénaliser les entreprises qui respectent les règles du jeu et c'est la raison pour laquelle nous avons soutenu, avec le rapport de mon collègue Jeppe Kofod... (*le Président interrompt l'oratrice*)... et nous regrettons que le Conseil n'ait pas, pour l'instant, repris la proposition qui figure dans le rapport de M. Kofod du statut d'assujetti certifié, qui leur permettrait de bénéficier de procédures simplifiées.

Stanisław Ożóg, w imieniu grupy ECR. – Szanowny Panie Przewodniczący! Delegacja polska grupy ECR zdecydowanie popiera podstawowe kierunki reformy systemu VAT na poziomie europejskim. Obie inicjatywy legislacyjne wpisują się w politykę obecnego rządu polskiego, który od samego początku podjął zdecydowane działania uszczelniające system podatkowy VAT w Polsce. Trzeba przyznać – odniósł na tym polu wręcz spektakularne sukcesy. Tym samym popieramy wszystkie tzw. cztery filary nowej regulacji.

Nie popieramy jednak lansowanej koncepcji podatnika certyfikowanego. Pragnę zwrócić uwagę, że Rada i Komisja porozumiały się już dawno co do zrezygnowania z tego projektu, a zatem nasza parlamentarna konsultacja nie nadąża za rozwojem wydarzeń. To nie jest co najmniej dziwne? Delegacja polska ECR w głosowaniu nad tym sprawozdaniem wstrzyma się z tego powodu od głosu.

W pełni natomiast popieramy projekt sprawozdania w sprawie harmonizacji stawek VAT. Polska przez ostatnie dwa lata zabiegała przecież o nadanie takiego kierunku przedmiotowej reformie. W mojej ocenie przedstawiony projekt sprawozdania dobrze wyważa dwa aspekty legislacji: elastyczność i niezbędną minimalną harmonizację, i zasługuje na uznanie i poparcie.

Thierry Cornillet, au nom du groupe ALDE. – Monsieur le Président, je tiens à remercier les deux rapporteurs pour le travail accompli dans cette procédure de consultation.

Ce n'est pas anodin, nous sommes unis et notre message aux ministres des finances est extrêmement clair: il faut sans tarder engager cette réforme, qui est guidée par deux maîtres mots, à savoir simplicité et efficacité.

La simplicité réside dans le choix d'un plancher à 15 % et d'un plafond à 25 %. C'est aussi une simplification qui se traduit par une procédure beaucoup plus flexible que l'unanimité pour définir les taux réduits. C'est encore une simplification par rapport à ce qui reste naturellement à créer, c'est-à-dire un système d'assujettis certifiés, qui permettra d'accéder à des procédures beaucoup moins lourdes et de faciliter le paiement de la TVA dans les opérations transfrontalières.

L'efficacité, quant à elle, tient à la mise en ligne d'un portail complet multilingue grâce auquel les entreprises et les citoyens pourront comprendre le système. L'efficacité passe aussi par un système de mécanisme de règlement des conflits entre États.

Il reste maintenant une autre étape, qui sera, elle aussi, guidée par l'efficacité et la simplicité, à savoir le principe de l'imposition dans l'État de destination, soit l'un des moyens de lutter contre la fraude estimée à 50 milliards d'euros en cette matière.

Par conséquent, un espace de TVA unique pour toute l'Union est dans l'intérêt de tous – tant des citoyens que des entreprises et des États membres – sauf des fraudeurs, ce qui est aussi le but recherché.

Molly Scott Cato, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group. – Mr President, although I doubt many citizens will be glued to their screens watching this debate, we have done some important work in agreeing on a series of legislative proposals to update the VAT system, which we have been working with on a temporary basis since 1993.

This clear and streamlined tax-raising regime should play an important part in reducing VAT fraud, which currently costs the public purse around EUR 50 billion a year. So it's worth celebrating this unique, unified tax regime across our Union. It is also flexible, allowing Member States to choose how they use reduced rates to incentivise their own political preferences, while ensuring that, overall, rates are equal.

At a time when the EU27 are demonstrating unprecedented cooperation on VAT, it is a matter of sadness and concern to me, as a British Member, that there is still no clarity on the VAT regime for British businesses after March next year. This poses a serious risk to small businesses, and I would urge the Prime Minister to end this uncertainty by making a definitive decision to stay with the unified tax regime.

Miguel Viegas, em nome do Grupo GUE/NGL. – Senhor Presidente, nós acompanhamos a oportunidade de simplificar o regime do IVA e concordamos com o princípio da lista negativa que dá maior latitude aos Estados-Membros para poder determinar as diferentes taxas de IVA.

O que nós não compreendemos é a inclusão dos instrumentos musicais nesta lista negativa. A redução do IVA dos instrumentos musicais é uma velha reivindicação da comunidade artística. Em Portugal, com a ação dos deputados do PCP foi possível, em 2018, reduzir a taxa dos 23 para a taxa intermédia dos 13 % e faço, portanto, daqui um apelo para que amanhã esta Assembleia aprove a nossa proposta de retirar os instrumentos musicais do Anexo 3-A, permitindo assim aos países prosseguir com as suas políticas de apoio à criação e fruição cultural.

Bill Etheridge, on behalf of the EFDD Group. – Mr President, I am going to say a couple of things that won't normally be heard in this Chamber but I feel it's a good start: tax is theft and competition is good.

We have to accept that taxation is required in order to run a state and we have to have a minimum of taxation because that is the best way to get people to work for their money and for business to thrive. But if you wish to get the best out of businesses, give them a competitive environment instead of harmonising across the EU with one rate of tax.

Why not have localised tax, where different people have different sales taxes and people can compete to see which environment is best for business, which one entices people to set up companies, and what do the people in the area want: jobs or control and regulation?

The whole concept of harmonising taxes across the EU is entirely against business, against competition, totally undemocratic and totally against the nation-state and all its values.

Angelo Ciocca, a nome del gruppo ENF. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, saccheggiare tutti i giorni con una tassa ingiusta e pensare che il semplificare sia la soluzione non andiamo lontano. Io vorrei far vedere questo cartello, due miliardi è l'IVA italiana versata al carrozzone europeo. Mi sarebbe piaciuto ragionare su come spendere l'IVA e come ridurre questi sprechi. È impensabile che 2 miliardi di IVA italiana finanziano l'accoglienza, finanziano la doppia sede, questa, che ci ospita di Bruxelles, sede inutile.

Ecco, oggi quello che servirebbe è lasciare qualche soldo in più in tasca ai cittadini italiani e non qualche soldo in meno. Pensare di far digerire una tassa ingiusta con il termine semplificazione è un grande errore, come è un grande errore aver messo questo tetto del 25%. Poi pensate, si parla di un quarto del bene, cioè io compro un bene e per un quarto mi viene saccheggiato dallo Stato e dall'Europa e voi pensate che il popolo italiano e il popolo europeo debba essere contento di queste scelte.

Le famiglie italiane così si sentono punite. Così si sentono colpite da un'Europa che va cambiata.

Dobromir Sośnierz (NI). – Panie Przewodniczący! Przyznajcie państwo, że w tych sprawozdaniach obecny system VAT-owski od dziesięcioleci pozwala oszustom wyciągać z unijnego budżetu miliardy euro. Od dziesięcioleci to wiadomo i nic z tym nie zrobiliście. Dlaczego dopiero teraz tym się zajmujecie i kto odpowiada za stworzenie tak patologicznego systemu? Jeśli tyle lat zajmuje Państwu zauważenie słonia w pokoju, zrozumienie tak prostej rzeczy, to obawiam się, że podatnicy nie wytrzymają tempa edukacji ekonomicznej. Bo zanim zrozumiecie, że nie działają też unijne dotacje, że nie działa wasza komunistyczna polityka rolna, że cały system ubezpieczeń społecznych prowadzi do katastrofy, że cały ten socjalizm w ogóle to jedna wielka porażka, to tu kamień na kamieniu w tej Europie nie zostanie. I popieram kierunek, który pozwala uniknąć oszustw podatkowych, natomiast nie popieram zdecydowanie harmonizacji podatków, bo to oznacza dla większości z nas podwyżkę.

Werner Langen (PPE). – Herr Präsident! Ich möchte mich zuerst bei dem Berichterstatter für die Änderung der Mehrwertsteuersätze bedanken. Es sind ja insgesamt sieben Vorschläge bei Herrn Kollegen Szanyi. Wir haben mit 44 Ja-Stimmen und vier Nein-Stimmen ein gutes Ergebnis erzielt. Es ist eine entsprechende Richtlinie des Rates, wir können also nur Änderungswünsche äußern. Das haben wir getan, und einige Kollegen haben daran erinnert, dass seit den 90er-Jahren dieses vorläufige Mehrwertsteuersystem dazu geführt hat, dass der Betrug immer stärker angewachsen ist.

Im Jahre 2016, so hat der Rechnungshof festgestellt, waren es 147 Milliarden Euro, die durch Betrug oder durch Nichtzahlung der Mehrwertsteuer entstanden sind. Das ist eine gewaltige Summe, und die Reform ist dringend notwendig. Die Vorschläge zu den Mehrwertsteuersätzen geben den Mitgliedstaaten mehr Spielraum. Wir haben einen mittleren Satz von 12 % unterstützt, einen Höchstsatz von 25 % und einen Mindestsatz von 15 %, sowie Ausnahmen, die einzelne Mitgliedstaaten in Anspruch nehmen dürfen, die andere Mitgliedsstaaten auch verwirklichen, damit keine Wettbewerbsverzerrungen entstehen.

Der wichtigste Punkt ist allerdings, dass wir uns nicht auf ein System geeinigt haben, um das Übergangsregime abzulösen. Das einzige System, das erkennbar einen dauerhaften Mehrwertsteuerbetrug verhindert, wäre das *reverse-charge*-System. Das ist eine außerordentlich effektive und effiziente Maßnahme. Die Kommission war bisher dagegen, und ich kann den Kommissar nur bitten, dass sie die bisherige Zurückhaltung aufgibt. Deutschland, Österreich und Tschechien haben das beantragt. Hier sieht man, dass alle ergriffenen Maßnahmen nicht wirken, weil die Einstimmigkeit im Rat immer noch Voraussetzung für eine sinnvolle Harmonisierung ist. Deshalb bitte ich, dass wir gemeinsam diesen Bericht beschließen.

President. – Mr Langen, it is my understanding that Ecofin today adopted a decision on the reverse charge system. I would have to double check, but I understand there has been a development in that respect.

Arndt Kohn (S&D). – Herr Präsident! Herr Kommissar! Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Vorschläge der Kommission zur Anpassung des Mehrwertsteuersystems sind grundsätzlich zu begrüßen. Aber warum ist es wichtig, dass wir diese Mehrwertsteuer endlich reformieren?

Das gegenwärtige Mehrwertsteuersystem ist in die Jahre gekommen. Für Unternehmen und die Steuerverwaltung ist es mittlerweile mehr als schwierig, durch den Dschungel von Steuersätzen, Regeln und Rechtsprechung den richtigen Weg zu finden. Betrüger wissen aber genau, wie sie das System ausnutzen. Allein im Jahr 2016 gingen dem EU-Haushalt durch Mehrwertsteuerbetrug 50 Milliarden Euro verloren, 100 Milliarden Euro gingen verloren durch Insolvenzen, fehlerhafte Berechnungen etc. 150 Milliarden insgesamt – das entspricht dem EU Haushalt des kompletten Jahres 2018. Dieses Geld fehlt an allen Ecken und Enden, in Schulen, Straßen, Rentenkassen.

Der Handlungsbedarf ist also mehr als deutlich. Es liegt auf der Hand, dass die neuen Regeln für alle Beteiligten möglichst einfach sein müssen. Ich komme aus einer Grenzregion, und Bürokratie darf den grenzüberschreitenden Handel in keinsten Weise behindern. Als Steuerprüfer weiß ich aus eigener Erfahrung, wie wichtig klare und konkrete Gesetze und Durchführungsbestimmungen sind, denn nur so können wir Mehrwertsteuerbetrug und Steuerausfälle in Milliardenhöhe wirksam bekämpfen. Mein Appell geht daher an die Mitgliedstaaten, sich schnell auf ein System zu einigen, das den Anforderungen, die ich gerade beschrieben habe, auch entspricht.

Νότης Μαριάς (ECR). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, ο εξορθολογισμός του συστήματος του ΦΠΑ θα συμβάλει πραγματικά στην αντιμετώπιση της απάτης τύπου καρουσέλ, που έφτασε στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση μέχρι και τα 147 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ. Πρέπει βεβαίως να ληφθούν μέτρα τα οποία να στηρίζουν τις μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις και κυρίως πρέπει να υπάρξει μηδενικός ή ελάχιστος ΦΠΑ για τα είδη πρώτης ανάγκης και για τα τιμολόγια των Οργανισμών Κοινής Ωφέλειας, σε μια Ευρώπη η οποία πραγματικά έχει χιλιάδες φτωχούς και ανέργους.

Από την άλλη, πρέπει να αντιμετωπιστεί ο ανταγωνισμός των τρίτων χωρών. Και αναφέρομαι στα νησιά του Αιγαίου, τα οποία αντιμετωπίζουν τον ανταγωνισμό από την Τουρκία, που έχει ΦΠΑ 5%. Όμως η τρόικα έχει επιβάλει στα νησιά του Αιγαίου ΦΠΑ 24%. Δεν μπορεί να συνεχιστεί αυτή η κατάσταση, διότι τα νησιά αυτά πλήττονται πλέον, πέραν των άλλων, και από τεράστιες μεταναστευτικές ροές. Το μέτρο λοιπόν που πρέπει να ληφθεί είναι η επιβολή χαμηλού ΦΠΑ στα νησιά του Αιγαίου, όπως ίσχυε και στο παρελθόν.

Jean Arthuis (ALDE). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, votre proposition de directive TVA va dans la bonne direction pour au moins deux motifs.

Le premier, c'est qu'elle va permettre de lutter efficacement contre ce scandale qu'est la fraude à la TVA, avec des systèmes tels que le «carrousel». Le deuxième motif de satisfaction, c'est que vous permettez aux États de choisir des taux réduits par rapport au taux normal.

Vous indiquez, dans la réécriture que vous suggérez de l'article 98 et en ce qui concerne l'annexe III de la directive de 2006, que les taux réduits doivent servir le consommateur final et servent à poursuivre, de manière cohérente, un objectif d'intérêt général.

Je voudrais simplement vérifier auprès de vous qu'il en est ainsi de la filière «cheval». Celle-ci a une dimension socio-éco-environnementale – aménagement du territoire, développement rural, activité sanitaire, équithérapie et secteur créateur d'emplois non délocalisables. Il n'y a pas de risque de concurrence déloyale en cette matière. La semaine dernière, on a même assisté, ici au Parlement, à la présentation d'un petit cheval qui peut servir de guide d'aveugle. Je voudrais donc vérifier auprès de vous, Monsieur le Commissaire, que cette filière peut effectivement bénéficier, si tel est le souhait de l'État membre, d'un taux réduit. C'est la compréhension que j'ai de votre proposition, et je vous remercie pour la réponse que vous nous apporterez.

Δημήτριος Παπαδημούλης (GUE/NGL). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, η φορολογική απάτη στον τομέα του ΦΠΑ είναι κυριολεκτικά μια γάγγραινα. Χάνουμε περίπου 150 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ τον χρόνο από φορολογική απάτη και από μη καταβολή ΦΠΑ.

Τα μέτρα που προτείνει το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο και τα οποία συγκλίνουν με τα μέτρα της Επιτροπής οδηγούν σε εναρμόνιση, απλούστευση, περισσότερη ευρωπαϊκή συνεργασία, με ενίσχυση της διαφάνειας, με ευρωπαϊκό σύστημα ανταλλαγής πληροφοριών και μπορούν, αν εφαρμοστούν, να εξασφαλίσουν έσοδα 45 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ ετησίως και να μειώσουν και το κόστος για τις επιχειρήσεις κατά 1 δισεκατομμύριο ευρώ ετησίως.

Πρέπει λοιπόν να προχωρήσουμε. Και ο λόγος που δεν προχωράμε είναι ότι αυτό στο οποίο συγκλίνουν το Ευρωκοινοβούλιο και η Επιτροπή αρνείται να το προωθήσει το Συμβούλιο, γιατί μερικά κράτη μέλη βάζουν φρένο σε αυτή την προσπάθεια. Αυτό πρέπει να αλλάξει.

David Coburn (EFDD). – Mr President, VAT is the greatest nightmare for any small business. It is an overcomplicated imposition on hardworking entrepreneurs trying to build their businesses and employ their fellow citizens in gainful employment.

We welcome these simplifications, but they are simply not enough. There should be less obsession by the EU with loss of revenue and more concern about the damage to businesses and employment caused by VAT. All I hear is whining about loss of revenue from politicians more interested in oiling the wheels of this place with other people's money. Tax should be decided by Member States, competition encouraged and taxes lowered. Britain should not stick with the unified tax regime after Brexit. The Brexit dividend should be to get rid of VAT – an EU tax – introduce a sales tax at 6%, like the United States of America, and leave the money in the pockets of the citizens.

Dariusz Rosati (PPE). – Mr President, the two reports we are discussing today represent an important step in the direction of completing the definitive VAT regime in the European Union. The report by Mr Szanyi makes progress in three crucial areas: firstly, Member States shall adopt a maximum of two reduced rates, which shall not be lower than 5%. These reduced rates would only be allowed for goods, the supply of which is in the genuine public interest. This will reduce dispersion in the VAT rates across the EU and benefit final consumers.

Secondly, the weighted average VAT rate should be at least 12%. Thirdly, while the derogations and the reduced rates will continue to be determined by individual Member States, they will also be available to exporters from all other Member States. Together, these changes will help achieve a level playing field in the single market, eliminate distortions and allow for a consistent application of the country of destination principle. At the same time, they will give more freedom to Member States in fixing the national VAT rates according to their priorities.

The other report by Mr Kofod aims at harmonising and simplifying certain rules in the VAT system. In particular, harmonising rules in VAT treatment of chain transactions will significantly reduce the scope for VAT fraud across the EU. This is especially true when it comes to so-called 'triangular transactions' or 'carousel schemes', which had been one of the most popular VAT fraud schemes in intra-Community trade.

Mr President, while acknowledging the progress achieved, I have to stress that the definitive VAT system is still a largely unfinished construction. I call on the Commission, and especially on the Member States, to show more resolve and determination in completing this important work.

Doru-Claudian Frunzulică (S&D). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, chers collègues, je voudrais tout d'abord féliciter le rapporteur pour son rapport.

Comme suite à la proposition de la Commission visant à modifier la directive TVA dans le but de donner plus de flexibilité aux États membres pour établir le taux de TVA, je salue les modifications proposées dans le rapport car elles soulignent que le taux réduit devrait bénéficier en premier lieu au consommateur final, tout en poursuivant des objectifs sociaux et environnementaux.

Par conséquent, je partage l'avis que le taux réduit et l'exception devraient s'appliquer seulement aux produits ayant un impact positif sur l'intérêt général présentant des avantages culturels, sociaux ou environnementaux évidents et ne devraient jamais être appliqués aux produits nocifs ou de luxe.

En ce qui concerne les petites et moyennes entreprises, je soutiens la proposition de la Commission visant à créer un portail d'information sur la TVA de l'Union, complet, multilingue et accessible au public, sur lequel les entreprises et les consommateurs pourront rapidement et efficacement obtenir des informations précises sur le taux de TVA dans les différents États membres, y compris les biens concernés ou les services bénéficiant de taux réduits ou d'exceptions.

Tom Vandenkendelaere (PPE). – Voorzitter, collega's, in theorie zijn fiscale principes niet zo moeilijk. Een bedrijf betaalt vennootschapsbelasting in het land waar het zijn winst maakt en indirecte belastingen zoals btw komen in de staatskas van het land waar er wordt geconsumeerd. Maar de realiteit zegt helaas iets helemaal anders. Die ogenschijnlijk simpele principes blijken in de praktijk helemaal niet zo vanzelfsprekend. Sterker nog: belastinginkomsten verdwijnen langs ramen en deuren. Winsten die in Europese lidstaten gemaakt worden, worden via niet eens zo'n ingenieuze constructies doorgesluisd naar belastingparadijzen. Via btw-carroussels gaat mijn btw aanrekenen aan derden om die dan in eigen zak te steken in plaats van deze door te storten naar de schatkist waar ze eigenlijk moesten aankomen. In het geval van btw-fraude kunnen we eigenlijk niet meer spreken van mazen in het net. Het komt zo veel voor en het komt op zo'n grote schaal voor dat we door de mazen gewoon het net niet meer zien. Elk jaar innen lidstaten van de Unie samen meer dan 1000 miljard euro aan btw-inkomsten, maar dat zou nog veel meer kunnen en moeten zijn. In 2016 bedroeg het verschil tussen de inkomsten en de uiteindelijk geïnde inkomsten zo'n 147 miljard euro, we hebben het cijfer vanavond al gehoord. Voor mijn land België komt dit neer op 3,3 miljard euro. Ik herhaal het nog eens: 3,3 miljard euro. Het aanpakken van btw-fraude, collega's, vergt politieke moed en Europese actie. Het valt niet uit te leggen dat we in Europa al 24 jaar met een soort overgangsregime aan het werken zijn voor grensoverschrijdende transacties tussen bedrijven. 24 jaar draaiden de btw-carroussels lustig door met een factuur voor de Europese lidstaten van 50 miljard euro. Elk jaar opnieuw. Het is dus geen 5 voor 12, het is geen 5 na 12, de lunch is eigenlijk al lang voorbij. Definitief btw-regime is daarvoor echt noodzakelijk, niet alleen omwille van de maatschappelijke verontwaardiging na de Panama en de Paradise papers, maar ook en vooral omwille van de morele onrechtvaardigheid. De kranten staan bol van kloven in Europa en verloren legitimiteit. Het is tijd voor actie.

Neena Gill (S&D). – Mr President, congratulations to both the rapporteurs, who are tackling VAT fraud and ensuring that Member States set VAT rates at a consistent level. Not only will this affect citizens' daily lives, but it will also reduce compliance costs for businesses by up to EUR 1 billion.

However, just a note of caution: this depends on how quickly the governments of the 28 Member States approve and implement this agreement. Large-scale VAT fraud means EUR 50 billion lost from national budgets each year because of the complexities with differing rules – money that could have been better spent on housing, better schools and improved health-care facilities. However, national tax authorities on their own have lacked the resources to tackle cross-border VAT fraud thoroughly. One big flaw is the system of VAT refund for exported goods. Far too often, this system has been abused, leading to carousel VAT fraud. This can be addressed only if we have a clear, automated, definitive and EU-wide VAT system. Particularly where there are disputes, a simple EU-wide VAT dispute resolution mechanism is urgently needed.

Therefore, I welcome today the fact that agreement has been reached in the Council to move towards a strong, harmonised, definitive VAT system. An important step that this report is proposing is to enable Member States to reduce rates up to 5%, and for one item they can reduce it to even lower than 5%. This is hugely important. The so-called tampon tax, whereby VAT on this product can now be zero percent, is an issue that this House has been fighting for and prioritising as a means of addressing poverty. It is therefore essential that the Council accelerates ...

(The President cut off the speaker)

President. – Colleague, I apologise. Seriously, I do understand, but we all have hugely important points to make, but we would still be sitting here at midnight if we were to address them all. My apologies. I am sure this is relevant but I had to take the floor away from you.

Theodor Dumitru Stolojan (PPE). – Domnule Președinte, în domeniul fiscal se pare că nimic din ceea ce este tranzitoriu nu rămâne tranzitoriu și ține vreme foarte lungă, iar regimul de TVA din Uniunea Europeană este de prea mulți ani tranzitoriu. Acest regim favorizează evaziunea fiscală și, totodată, constituie o birocrație imensă dacă statele membre trebuie și vor să facă acel schimb de informații ca să-i identifice pe cei care fac evaziune.

Iată de ce consider că propunerile făcute de Comisie și amendamentele aduse de către colegii noștri în ECON reprezintă un pas bun înainte. Asemenea propuneri, cum sunt, de pildă, noul concept de certificare a plătitorilor de TVA, ca și noile intervale propuse pentru variația cotelor de TVA în statele membre reprezintă nu numai o simplificare a regimului de TVA în Uniunea Europeană, dar și pași concreți spre acel regim definitiv pe care dorim să-l obținem pentru TVA în Uniunea Europeană.

Othmar Karas (PPE). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, meine Damen und Herren! Wir setzen mit diesen Berichten wichtige Schritte auf dem Weg zur Schaffung eines einheitlichen europäischen Mehrwertsteuerraumes. Wir wollen statt einem System der Ausnahmen ein System der gemeinsamen Regeln schaffen.

Es ist richtig, dass wir so den Mehrwertsteuerbetrug bekämpfen. Denn wir haben eine Mehrwertsteuerlücke von 170 Milliarden und einen grenzüberschreitenden Mehrwertsteuerbetrug von 50 Milliarden. Es ist richtig, dass wir mit der Korridorlösung das System der Mehrwertsteuersätze harmonisieren, weil derzeit über 250 Ausnahmen in den Mitgliedstaaten zur Fragmentierung und zur Ungleichbehandlung führen. Es ist richtig, dass wir mit dem Konzept der zertifizierten Steuerpflichtigen Vereinfachungen einführen, weil Komplexität und Bürokratie beim aktuellen System Wachstum und Beschäftigung bremsen. Es ist richtig, dass wir ein gemeinsames Online-Informationsportal schaffen, weil die Bürgerinnen und Bürger und Unternehmen ein Recht auf mehr Transparenz haben. Und es ist richtig, dass wir ein besseres System schaffen, denn die Mehrwertsteuer ist eine wachsende öffentliche Einnahme, auch für die Europäische Union.

Ich fordere den Rat auf, diese Maßnahmen raschest Realität werden zu lassen.

Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE). – Mr President, this is once again a perfect example of why we need more harmonisation, better integration and 'more Europe'. We had noticed that the existing system cannot tackle tax fraud and tax evasion, nor is it easy or manageable for those operating it. The answer is what Parliament has been calling for and what the rapporteurs have talked about: a single, European, united VAT system which is clear and simple, in which issues are resolved at European level, and which is supervised at European level.

While this is being realised, I hope that, in the next review, the sustainable finance principles can be included in our VAT system. This will mean that products with a higher environmental and climate load should have higher VAT rates, while goods that are reused or recycled, or which impact less on climate change, should have a lower VAT rate – instead of the haphazard approach to lower rates, with percentage point differences here and there, which we see at the moment. Hopefully – and this is a message to the Commission – provisions to that effect can be included, especially now that we have the Commissioner responsible for climate change.

Miguel Arias Cañete, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members of the European Parliament, I want to thank all of you for this debate which shows the high interest and need for deep reform of the European VAT system. There is significant progress that we have already made, because, since 2015, new rules for sales of e-services online came into force which allows Member States to collect VAT where the consumer is based, through a one-stop shop. Member States have also now agreed to extend this new system to services and goods online, delivering another boost for VAT collection in the European Union.

As I mentioned in the introduction, the European Union has also recently agreed on a ground-breaking new framework to exchange more information and boost cooperation between national tax authorities and law enforcement authorities.

However, after all the fundamental reform, a European Union VAT definitive system is still to be adopted by the Council. In his State of the Union speech, President Juncker called for an end of unanimity in taxation policy. Unanimity can block proposals that are in the interests of the majority and thus prevent companies and citizens from benefiting from a full single market.

The Commission will play its role in the reflection towards a chain of rules by presenting a communication in the coming months on qualified majority voting in the field of taxation. With your support, I am confident that the two proposals you will vote on will benefit from broad support and that progress can be achieved on all VAT proposals in the coming months.

Finally, in reply to the question from Mr Arthuis, yes, the horse sector can benefit from VAT reduced rates if the Member State so decides.

Commission Statement

(in writing)

The Commission and the Council are aware of a certain divergence in the VAT treatment of independent groups of persons that pool their services and share costs between their members. The Council and the Commission recognize the need to clarify such VAT rules on independent groups of persons. The Commission will analyse this matter in detail in a study to be launched shortly with a view, subject to its right of initiative, to a possible proposal.

PREȘEDINȚIA: IOAN MIRCEA PAȘCU

Vicepreședinte

Tibor Szanyi, *Rapporteur*. – Mr President, I do appreciate the very cooperative manner in which we have been able to discuss this whole issue. Thank you for that.

I would just like to come back to one single item in this debate, namely the praise, the acknowledgment and the sense of change towards the principle of 'place of destination'. This means that, from whenever this new system is introduced, there will be no possibility to issue invoices with so-called zero-VAT rates unless it prevails in the country of destination. But the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and we are longing to see whether or not it will function in practice. We believe that it will. We also believe that, ultimately, small and medium-sized enterprises and the final consumers will be the prime beneficiaries of this whole issue.

I would like especially to thank the Commission because I think that it was a good proposal and so Parliament had a fairly easy job.

Finally, I would say that now governments are going to be responsible for their own respective voters. They can't say 'it's Brussels'.

Președintele. – Dezbateră a fost închisă.

Votul va avea loc joi, 3 octombrie 2018.

Declarații scrise (articolul 162)

Barbara Kappel (ENF), *schriftlich*. – Das derzeitige Mehrwertsteuersystem in der EU ist ein vorübergehendes System, das alle zwei Jahre verlängert wird. Es gilt ein Mindeststeuersatz von 15% mit einigen Ausnahmen, sodass Kürzungen möglich sind. Die zulässigen Kürzungen sind derzeit in einem Anhang aufgeführt. Das endgültige System bestätigt den Mindeststeuersatz von 15% und führt einen Höchstsatz von 25% ein. Der Anhang der zulässigen Ermäßigungen (bis 5%) wird durch eine Liste von Waren und Dienstleistungen ersetzt, für die keine Ermäßigungen zulässig sind. Dies gibt den Mitgliedstaaten mehr Freiheit, die Mehrwertsteuersätze für bestimmte Waren und Produkte zu senken, wobei der durchschnittlich gewichtete Steuersatz über 12% liegen sollte. Diese Vorgehensweise könnte sich in der Praxis als Einschränkung der fiskalischen Freiheit nationaler Parlamente erweisen. Darüberhinaus bietet die Einführung einer sogenannten „Certified Taxable Person“ (CTP) keine ausreichende Garantie gegen betrügerische Wirtschaftsakteure und sollte

deshalb vor einer endgültigen Festlegung des Mehrwertsteuersystems nicht erörtert werden. Grundsätzlich bin ich skeptisch gegenüber einer weiteren Harmonisierung der Mehrwertsteuer, insbesondere bei der Festlegung von Mindestsätzen. Ich begrüße zwar die anhaltende Flexibilität der Mitgliedstaaten bei der Festlegung ihrer eigenen Mehrwertsteuersätze, bin jedoch nicht davon überzeugt, dass die Flexibilität durch die neu zu setzenden Maßnahmen tatsächlich erhöht wird. Der Schwerpunkt sollte weiterhin auf fiskalischer Zusammenarbeit liegen.

Vladimír Maňka (S&D). – Podporujem návrh Komisie týkajúci sa smernice Rady, ktorá sa týka harmonizácie a zjednotenia určitých pravidiel v systéme dane z pridanej hodnoty a konečného systému zdaňovania obchodu medzi členskými štátmi. Európska únia môže týmto opatrením zabrániť daňovým únikom vo výške takmer 50 miliárd EUR ročne. Návrhom sa zavádza inštitút certifikovanej zdaniteľnej osoby, ktorý budú uznávať všetky členské štáty. Vnútroštátny daňový orgán na požiadanie udelí tento status osobe, ktorá preukáže riadne platenie daní, systém vnútornej kontroly a dôkaz o finančnej spôsobilosti. Tieto subjekty sa budú pokladať za spoľahlivého daňovníka, čo im umožní používať zjednodušené postupy priznania a zaplataenia cezhraničnej DPH. Vzájomná spolupráca členských krajín a kontrola spolu s navrhovanými opatreniami znížia administratívnu náročnosť podnikom a zlepšia výber DPH.

17. De opkomst van neofascistisch geweld in Europa (debat)

Președintele. – Următorul punct de pe ordinea de zi este dezbaterea privind Declarații ale Comisiei și Consiliului referitoare la ascensiunea violenței cu caracter neofascist în Europa (2018/2869(RSP)).

Juliane Bogner-Strauss, President-in-Office of the Council. – Mr President, you have invited the Presidency to speak on behalf of the Council on a topic of common concern, namely how the EU can respond to politically motivated violence. I am grateful to have this opportunity.

First, I would like to express my sympathy to Ms Forenza, who was attacked in Bari a week ago, and who informed us on Monday at the opening session. Such attacks, especially against a Member of the European Parliament and her staff, have no place in Europe. It is our joint responsibility to safeguard the values on which the Union is founded. EU values are the backbone of the Union and encompass pluralism, tolerance, justice and fundamental rights. Among the fundamental rights, the Charter of Fundamental Rights includes freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly. Any politically motivated attack on a peaceful demonstration is an attack on our common values.

The use of violence for political reasons to forbid others to express their ideas is unjustifiable in our open democratic societies. We are appalled by the most recent violent incidents in several Member States. Evidence from different sources, such as the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights and the Council of Europe, confirms an alarming increase in intolerance and hatred in Europe.

Whatever the source might be, let me be clear that there is no justification for this. At EU level, the Council attaches great importance to ensuring the effective transposition and implementation of the Framework Decision on Combating Racism and Xenophobia and other relevant hate crime laws at national level. The Council constantly calls upon Member States to develop effective methods to report and ensure proper recording of hate crimes. At national level, it is for law enforcement authorities and the national courts to protect fundamental rights when these are attacked by political extremists.

Let me also underline the important role of education and youth work. In my capacity as a Youth Minister, I want to stress the need to develop democratic resilience, media literacy, tolerance, critical thinking and conflict resolution skills in learning processes. I would like to conclude by stressing how important it is to prevent our societies from becoming dominated by hatred. We are therefore obliged to take all incidents of this kind seriously and never ignore them.

Věra Jourová, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, we have all seen shocking cases of neo-fascist violence in Europe in recent months, including the shooting of six people of immigrant background in Macerata, Italy, the violent far-right protests that followed, and a fatal stabbing which sparked racial tensions in the German city of Chemnitz. According to the latest data we have, there are roughly four anti-Semitic incidents per day in France, the United Kingdom and Germany.

We expect Member States to act forcefully against crimes committed by neo-Nazi groups – whether in the streets, in football arenas or in the targeting of places of worship or asylum shelters. However, we also have to look at where this violence comes from. Societal polarisation has increased, not least in the social media. We read and talk to the like-minded, and this increases the polarisation of our societies. As a society, we need to step up action against racism, intolerance and the toxic narratives which are shrinking the space for well-informed and democratic discussion in the public sphere and are polarising our societies.

We have our Charter of Fundamental Rights and we have to make clear that its basic principles really matter: that they are not negotiable. But we have to ensure that people in Europe can also relate to them. These principles should become an anchor in the fast-changing and sometimes confusing world. Simply, they should be the bedrock of our society. For me, I understand the key principles as follows: equality before the law; no tolerance for discrimination; freedom of speech, but with limits to exclude, for instance, speech calling for violence; freedom of religion within the limits of the legal order; and access to justice for all, not only the privileged or the rich. And finally, among the main principles, I want to mention the right of feeling secure, of feeling safe, but not at the expense of the safety of others. These principles can only work if they are applied and visible in people's everyday lives.

The Commission is leading the work on countering the increasingly worrying phenomenon of illegal online hate speech. We are working intensively with Member States to step up the implementation of EU law to combat racism and xenophobia and to ensure that prompt investigation, prosecution and proportionate sanctioning become a reality in the EU Member States. The intent is to be practical, and we are striving to make a difference on the ground.

Our work with Member States includes the compilation of promising practices and guiding principles on key issues such as hate-crime training and hate-crime victim support. We will also present a comprehensive guidance document on the practical application of the Framework Decision on Combating Racism. I consider these issues very important because they also send strong signals that hate crime and illegal hate speech are not tolerated and will be penalised.

We too, as individual politicians, have a role to play in avoiding divisive attitudes and in sticking to the norms. This is the moment to stand up for the principles of our Charter. And the independent media also have their role to play here: it is their responsibility to counter discourse that sows division, spreads disinformation and encourages exclusion. The media are also instrumental in holding politicians to account and in defining the limits of what is acceptable and what is unacceptable in society.

The Commission is also tackling the worrying rise of far-right violent extremism under its radicalisation policies. The Radicalisation Awareness Network has dedicated, and will continue to dedicate, its efforts, inter alia, to training frontline practitioners – police officers and prison staff – on how to address far-right extremism and all manifestations of polarisation.

Overall, I can assure you, honourable Members, that this is a priority issue for the Commission and that we are working with all the relevant actors, including in law enforcement, civil society and industry, especially the digital industry, to tackle all these problems not only through the law but also in our work to foster a more tolerant, safer and law-abiding society.

Róža Gräfin von Thun und Hohenstein, w imieniu grupy PPE. – Panie Przewodniczący! Pani Komisarz! Ja przypominę słowo, które wszyscy znamy, słowo świętego Jana: „Na początku było słowo”. I wiemy wszyscy, że sprawy wielkie zaczynają się od słowa, ale rzeczy straszne i podłe też mogą mieć swój początek w słowie, i wszyscy wiemy, że słowo potrafi zmieniać się w czyn.

Niestety dziś jesteśmy świadkami agresji słownej w wielu miejscach w naszej Unii, dzielenia społeczeństwa na lepszy i na gorszy sort, na patriotów i na zdrajców. Przyzwolenie na hejt w mediach audiowizualnych, pisanych i w sieci. Opowieści o uchodźcach przynoszących pasożyty i choroby. To przypomina najohydniejszą propagandę z najczarniejszych momentów w historii Europy. A za tymi słowami idzie często przyzwolenie na marsze faszystowskie nawołujące do przemocy, do rasizmu, do homofobii. Dochodzi już do takich ekscesów jak spalenie kukły Żyda czy symboliczne wieszanie portretów polityków, którzy wyraźnie artykułują potrzebę ochrony słabszych, mniejszości i nawołują do przestrzegania wartości europejskich. Mamy przykłady tego w Czechach, w Polsce, na Węgrzech, na Malcie. W niektórych krajach media publiczne sięgają nienawiści do przeciwników politycznych rządu, w innych rząd robi to osobiście.

A słowa zaczynają przechodzić w czyny, czego przykładem jest to, co widzieliśmy ostatnio we Włoszech. Wspomnę też nieszczęsne ekscesy w Chemnitz. I nie możemy udawać, że nic się nie dzieje lub że to są problemy wewnętrzne kilku krajów, bo ta straszna zaraza się rozlewa. Walka z tą zarazą to jest przede wszystkim obowiązek państw członkowskich, a Komisja – dziękuję tu Pani Komisarz – musi z nimi bardzo blisko pracować, ciągle opracowywać plan działania oraz konsekwentnie go egzekwować.

I na koniec, Panie Przewodniczący, Auschwitz jest w moim okręgu wyborczym. Przy wejściu do bloku czwartego jest tablica, na której wyryte jest zdanie filozofa Santayany „Kto nie pamięta historii, skazany jest na ponowne jej przeżycie”. Proszę Państwa, wyciągajmy wnioski!

Cécile Kashetu Kyenge, *a nome del gruppo S&D*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, un nuovo spettro si aggira per l'Europa, lo spettro del neofascismo. Troppo a lungo i parlamenti nazionali e l'Unione europea hanno ignorato il sorgere di una nuova e violenta ondata di nazionalismo. Diciamolo apertamente: le molteplici crisi economiche e istituzionali hanno portato al riaffiorare della macchia più nera della nostra storia.

Noi, come membri di un'istituzione democratica non possiamo accettare l'intolleranza. Per il bene e la libertà di tutti, dobbiamo opporci alla violenza nazionalista portando avanti i principi fondamentali sanciti dai trattati costitutivi dell'Unione europea.

Se non saremo in grado di farlo, troveremo nei parlamenti nazionali e anche qui, in questo europarlamento, i detrattori dei diritti umani che spalancheranno le porte, le nostre porte, sfaldando l'Unione.

Vediamo ogni giorno, nella nostra società, le ripercussioni dell'intolleranza e dell'odio: insulti, aggressioni, spedizioni punitive, raid contro le minoranze e blitz razzisti. Sono questi episodi quotidiani, alimentati dal vortice di odio esacerbato e dagli slogan propagandistici, in un clima di campagna elettorale senza fine.

Una propaganda contro i migranti, contro i rom, contro gli afro-discendenti, appunto la afrofobia, contro ebrei o musulmani, contro le minoranze. Le forze politiche populiste accusano dei loro fallimenti i più deboli, senza mai guardare al bene pubblico e mentendo spudoratamente.

I nuovi nazionalisti europei hanno scelto terminologie alquanto strane per nominarsi: Alba Dorata, Casa Pound, Forza Nuova, Front National, Jobbik, per citarne solo alcuni. Questi ed anche gli altri partiti che si fingono più moderati, non fanno altro che perpetuare la loro violenza. Sono addirittura disposti a stringere patti incoerenti pur di vendere un po' della loro propaganda disfattista. Ma le uniche cose che i partiti populistici e nazionalisti condividono sono il sentimento anti-europeo, la xenofobia e il razzismo.

Le forze democratiche devono quindi reagire, unite e forti. Dobbiamo difendere i nostri Stati e la nostra Unione per salvare la libertà, l'uguaglianza, i diritti umani, lo Stato di diritto, il pluralismo e la solidarietà.

Jussi Halla-aho, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – Mr President, if you listen to the left or the mainstream media you easily get the impression that fascism and fascist violence are the top threats to public security in Europe. Of course, any kind of violence should be condemned, but it seems to me that Islamic and left-wing radicalism are much more relevant problems in today's Europe, including when we talk about anti-Jewish violence.

It is very unfortunate that whenever ordinary people express their concern over immigrant or Islamic violence, they are immediately labelled fascists, racists and Nazis. One very good example are the recent events in Chemnitz, Germany. Many nationalist politicians and parties are systematically terrorised by the extreme left in many European countries. I find it worrying how little attention and condemnation this phenomenon gets in the public debate.

Linnéa Engström, för Verts/ALE-gruppen. – Herr talman! Herr kommissionär! Det är inte stöveltrampet på våra gator som skrämmer mig. Det är inte heller gaphalsarna som vrålar ut slagord från förr som gör mig orolig. Mitt fokus är helt och hållet inställt på de människor som manipulerar och understödjer dessa människor.

Vår demokrati är inget stabilt system. Det måste försvaras. Våra förutsättningar är konstant under attack. Vetenskapliga rön förväxlas med åsikter. Erkända experter benämns som elitistiska besserwissrar som borde hålla käften. I dessa grumliga vatten grov faktaresistensen, rasismen och fascismen. Åsikter och ideologier som vi trodde hade försvunnit är nu på väg tillbaka och är här. Det som tidigare var osägbart får nu luftas fritt. Hatet och hoten mot journalister och politiker ökar. Antirasister och feminister är särskilt utsatta. Efter hat och hot följer våld, och våld föder mer våld.

Vi måste kämpa för demokratin i både små och stora gärningar. Vi får inte ge upp och lägga oss platta. Vi måste våga fortsätta måla upp den bild av det samhälle som vi vill se och kämpa för det varje dag. Där står människans okränkbara rättigheter i fokus.

Eleonora Forenza, a nome del gruppo GUE/NGL. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, il mio intervento si potrebbe riassumere in due parole: Bella ciao. Due parole che dovrebbero invitare l'Unione europea e quest'Aula a svegliarsi perché i fascisti sono tornati a colpire. A colpire in Grecia, in Germania e in Italia e a colpire in tutta Europa, legittimati da culture razziste e xenofobe che spesso sono ormai culture di governo.

Due parole che ci ricordano che l'Europa è nata dalla sconfitta del nazifascismo e che oggi può rinascere soltanto raccogliendo il testimone dei partigiani e delle partigiane. Io vengo da uno Stato membro la cui Costituzione è antifascista e in cui, però, il ministro degli Interni si diverte ad andare a cena con gli esponenti di Casa Pound e a festeggiare per l'arresto di Mimmo Lucano. Di Casa Pound sono gli squadristi che hanno aggredito e minacciato me e altri militanti antirazzisti, venerdì 21 settembre a Bari, e tuttora sulla mia pagina Facebook ritrovo minacce di gente che esorta 7 negri a stuparmi perché il razzismo e il sessismo sono la matrice del fascismo.

Ricordo, infine, che dobbiamo chiedere che l'Unione europea sia antifascista, che l'antifascismo sia un valore fondativo dell'Unione e dobbiamo chiedere la chiusura di tutte le sedi fasciste e dedico questo mio intervento a Begni, Auro, Dax, Renato e a tutti i compagni e le compagne vittime della violenza neofascista.

David Coburn, on behalf of the EFDD Group. – Mr President, it is not just the rise in neofascism and neofascist violence that's the problem, it is political violence from both sides, including far left groups, such as Antifa, who are known for violent disturbances. Britain's own Labour Party has been accused of anti-Semitism, and, may I say, the SNP (Scottish National Party) has tried to close down many businesses in Scotland undemocratically because they didn't agree with them. So that wasn't particularly democratic.

The rise of extremist politics in the EU has been caused by the EU itself. The EU has ignored so-called populist parties like UKIP, the Five Star Movement and the Swedish Democrats, and has left the doors open to unlimited number of people competing for jobs with ordinary working people. What do you expect if the EU tries to replace the nationalistic working class with a homogeneous bunch of people from abroad who will support the EU? They believe a vote for them. Chancellor Merkel opens the doors to everyone. What do you expect?

People will defend their jobs and their homes, and they don't want their religions or anything else changed. They want their homes and their freedoms; you can't stop them defending that.

(The President cut off the speaker)

Mario Borghezio, *a nome del gruppo ENF*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, è veramente grottesco sentir parlare di pericolo fascista a 75, 73, 74 anni dalla fine della guerra e delle guerre civili e quindi anche del fascismo storico.

Ce l'avete proprio sempre in mente, dev'essere un fenomeno freudiano e grottesco, perché il fascismo non c'è più. Questo dibattito mi ricorda una frase illuminante di un grande intellettuale italiano sicuramente antifascista, Pier Paolo Pasolini, che mise in guardia contro quelli che sventolano il pericolo fascista, dice, non è forse «un'arma di distrazione di massa» per ignorare quello che è il vero fascismo, il fascismo finanziario contro cui quelli che si sbracciano contro quattro ragazzotti in camicia nera, magari violenti – in qualche caso che condanniamo, in questo specifico – e non si danno da fare per niente per combattere il fascismo finanziario, come invece fanno i populist, facciamo noi populist che non ci siamo dimenticati dei 5 milioni di poveri, ai quali i governi precedenti non davano niente, noi populist, nazionalisti, cosiddetti fascisti ci abbiamo pensato. E voi non avete mai fatto un cazzo!

Stanislav Polčák (PPE). – Pane předsedající, podhoubím pro nárůst neofašistického násilí v Evropě je jednak úspěch krajně pravicových stran ve volbách, jednak samozřejmě různé formy šíření neonacismu a neofašismu. Příkladem je rozmach vzpomínkových akcí v Chorvatsku vyzývajících ustašovce jako hrdiny, na které poukázala a před kterými rovněž varovala nedávná zpráva Rady Evropy. Krajně pravicové násilí v německém Chemnitzu myslím, že máme ještě všichni dostatečně v paměti. Navzdory těmto incidentům není síla krajně pravicových stran v tuto chvíli podle mého názoru taková, aby mohla podkopat demokratické základy, na nichž stojí Evropský unie. Pokud ovšem demokratické strany nenajdou způsob, jak proti nim účinně bojovat v politické soutěži, může se tato situace snadno skutečně změnit k horšímu. Chci v této souvislosti upozornit také na to, že nebezpečí evropské demokracii hrozí nejenom z krajní pravice, ale také z krajní levice. Levicový extremismus považuji za neméně zhoubný jako ten pravicový. A v Evropě stále existuje množství komunistických stran, které jsou pravověrnými vyznavačkami marxismu-leninismu, tedy ideologie, která má na svědomí srovnatelný počet lidských životů. Každá demokracie je z povahy věci křehká a zranitelná, proto musíme o tu naši evropskou náležitě pečovat, aby se nestalo, že nám proteče mezi prsty. V praxi to znamená zvolit vhodnou kombinaci preventivních a represivních opatření proti všem druhům extremismu: jak toho pravicového, tak toho levicového. Jestli jste zaznamenali správně, jsem i pro represivní opatření. Útok na evropskou demokracii totiž může přijít z obou stran.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señor presidente, comisaria, es verdad que hay un fantasma que recorre Europa: el fantasma del nacionalismo, que es la negación de Europa; el fantasma del populismo, que ofrece la respuesta simplona a quienes se sienten golpeados por la desigualdad y el empobrecimiento de señalarles un chivo expiatorio como si fueran enemigos del pueblo.

Pero es el fantasma de la extrema derecha, que excita el discurso del odio. El fascismo hizo un daño incalculable en el siglo XX, pero no se extinguió en el siglo XX. No solamente llega al siglo XXI, sino que está representado también en el Parlamento Europeo. Ese fascismo que propone el miedo y la explotación del miedo y del odio al diferente.

Pero para vencerle es imprescindible que la Unión Europea ofrezca algo más que un buen diagnóstico e incluso que un buen discurso. Tiene que ofrecer esperanza a quienes la han perdido. La esperanza de la integración en la diversidad, del respeto al diferente, de la capacidad de vencer los desafíos y los cambios sin oponer la respuesta reaccionaria de la estimulación del odio y del desprecio al diferente.

(El orador acepta responder a una pregunta formulada con arreglo al procedimiento de la «tarjeta azul» (artículo 162, apartado 8, del Reglamento interno))

David Coburn (EFDD), *blue-card question*. – What you said is very interesting, but would you perhaps not agree with me that it doesn't matter from which side violence comes, whether it be the left or the right, bearing in mind that the National Socialists in Germany in the 1930s were socialists? They came from socialism, as did Stalin's mob. So, quite frankly, in all this thing about fascism – they are always waving this word about – what about just making sure we don't have violence on any side and settle everything democratically? Wouldn't you agree with me that left-wing authoritarianism is just as bad as right wing authoritarianism? At the moment the Labour Party in Britain are having tremendous troubles.

President. – Stalin, as far as I remember, was a communist.

(Interjection from Mr Coburn: '... then so was Hitler and so was Mussolini!')

I know.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D), blue-card answer. – I too listened carefully to what you said, but let me tell you that it is simply grotesque to maintain in the present day that there is a relationship between National Socialism and whatever socialism stands for throughout the history of Europe. Socialism is, first of all, democracy and respect for human rights, and National Socialism is pure fascism, which is the denial of democracy, human rights and the European ideal, the denial of civilisation and the instigation of hatred in a pure state of negative mind. So being a socialist in the 20th and 21st centuries means standing up against any form of fascism, whatever you call it. National Socialism is fascism, whatever you call it.

(Interjection from Mr Coburn: 'Tell that to Honecker')

President. – I wonder where he is.

Marek Jurek (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie i Panowie Posłowie! Hans-Georg Maassen, prezes Federalnego Urzędu Ochrony Konstytucji, został odwołany ze stanowiska po deklaracji, że polowanie na ludzi w Chemnitz to był poprawny politycznie fake news, tak samo jak film publikowany w internecie, który miał tę tezę popierać. Do tej pory właściwie nie wiemy, co się stało w Chemnitz. Ja się dziwię, że tak mało pytań w tej sprawie pada. Ale jedno jest pewne – Niemcy mają kłopot z prawami podstawowymi, a władze Unii Europejskiej zachowują dziwne dyskretnie milczenie. Bo albo ze społeczeństwem niemieckim jest źle, albo na ulicach poluje się na ludzi, albo władze Republiki Federalnej wprowadzają w błąd swoje społeczeństwo, ukrywają prawdę i uprawiają manipulację opinią publiczną po prostu po to, żeby sprawować skutecznie władzę. *Out, out, tertium non datur.* Niemcy mają problem, a władze Unii Europejskiej twierdzące, że bronią praw podstawowych, właściwie w ogóle się tym nie interesują. Pora najwyższa, żebyśmy się tym zainteresowali, bo jedno jest pewne. Zachowujemy się tak, jakby Niemcy stały ponad prawem.

Cécile Kashetu Kyenge (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, non è una domanda proprio diretta all'onorevole Jurek, perché l'uso di alcune parole in quest'Aula è inammissibile. Io ho visto che non c'è stata nessuna reazione. Invito la Presidenza a riascoltare l'ultimo passaggio delle parole di Borghezio e a giudicare proprio quelle parole lì, perché ho aspettato tanto, ma non ho visto nessuna reazione e vi invito a poterle risentire per decidere sul caso.

President. – This should not require us to ask Mr Borghezio to repeat the phrase, but in any case I would appeal to you to mind your language and not to use bad language, if that was the case.

Romeo Franz (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident! Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Alleine in Deutschland sind seit 1990 169 Menschen durch rechtsradikale und neofaschistische Gewalt ums Leben gekommen. Der Grund dafür sind rechte Parolen. Menschenverachtende Worte dürfen nicht verharmlost werden, so wie es heute schon passiert. Erst verändert sich die Sprache, und dann fallen die Hemmschwellen. Wir dürfen nicht weiter Neofaschismus relativieren oder sogar ignorieren, denn damit beleidigen wir die Opfer und die Hinterbliebenen dieser abscheulichen Gewalt.

Auch hier in diesem Haus sitzen Brandstifter, die mit dafür verantwortlich sind, dass Asylbewerberheime brennen und Menschen sterben. Und hinter Zahlen stehen Menschen und persönliche Schicksale. Das dürfen wir nicht vergessen. Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, wer von uns einen Funken Anstand besitzt, stellt sich gegen diesen aufkeimenden Neofaschismus.

Martin Schirdewan (GUE/NGL). – Herr Präsident! Faschismus ist keine Meinung, sondern ein Verbrechen. Erst gestern wurde in Deutschland eine Gruppe mutmaßlicher rechtsextremer Terroristen dingfest gemacht. Seit der letzten Woche wissen wir durch Recherchen renommierter Medien, dass in Deutschland seit 1990 mindestens 169 Menschen durch Neonazis ermordet worden sind. Vor ungefähr einem Monat fand in Chemnitz eine Demonstration von Neonazis gemeinsam mit AfD-Politikern statt, aus der heraus es zu Angriffen auf Migranten und Journalisten kam. Nur zur Erinnerung: Der Vorsitzende dieser Partei sitzt auch hier im Parlament.

Wir, die Linke, werden Europa nicht den Rechten und ihrer mörderischen Ideologie überlassen. Wir sind Teil einer starken Bewegung der Solidarität, der Demokratie und des Antirassismus. In Deutschland haben Hunderttausende in vielen Städten für grundlegende Menschenrechte demonstriert. In Berlin erwarten wir am 13. Oktober zu der „unteilbar“-Demonstration Hunderttausende, die sich unter dem Motto „Für eine freie und offene Gesellschaft, Solidarität statt Ausgrenzung“ der rechten Hetze widersetzen werden. *No pasarán!*

Julie Ward (S&D). – Mr President, during Ramadan, I attended a wonderful interfaith community event at Didsbury mosque in my constituency. Taste Ramadan was an example of the We Stand Together movement that has grown up in response to the attacks on our multicultural 21st century society. On 20 October, activists from Stand Up to Racism and Unite Against Fascism will stand in solidarity with the mosque community against an intimidating protest planned by the fascist English Defence League.

But this is not an isolated incident. We have seen similar neo-fascists targeting communities across Europe because of their religion, race, ethnicity or sexuality. We mustn't forget that the results of fascism in Europe are tragic. In 2016, a week before the UK referendum, a Nazi-inspired terrorist murdered the pro-EU Labour MP, Jo Cox, while shouting 'Britain first'. Jo was the mother of two young children and an inspiration to many. I was privileged last week to attend the naming of a square in Brussels in honour of her memory. So let's remember Jo's message as we continue her work: we have more in common.

(The speaker declined to take blue-card questions from Mr Coburn and Mr Sośnierz under Rule 162(8))

Ελένη Θεοχάρους (ECR). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, ο νεοφασισμός δεν είναι μόνο συμπεριφορές σύγχρονων κινημάτων παρεμφερών προς το κόμμα του Μουσολίνι. Αυτή η εμμονή προκαλεί λειτουργική τύφλωση απέναντι στον φασισμό της καθημερινότητας που βιώνουμε ως πολίτες σε κράτη ως επί το πλείστον ή κατ' επιφάνεια δημοκρατικά.

Σε μια Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση αρχών και αξιών, σε κοινωνίες που μάχονται κατά του ολοκληρωτισμού, ο νεοφασισμός εκφράζεται και μέσα στη ρητορική μίσους, η οποία μετατρέπεται όλο και πιο συστηματικά και επικίνδυνα σε καθημερινή συστηματική βία κατά των πολιτών. Εκφράζεται όμως και με ανήθικες και ψευδείς ειδήσεις και επιθέσεις ανωνυμογράφων κατά πολιτικών μέσω των Μέσων Μαζικής Επικοινωνίας και του Διαδικτύου με στόχο την ηθική εξόντωση εντίμων πολιτικών. Φασισμός είναι η φίμωση κάθε αντίθετης φωνής.

Αυτός ο φασισμός είναι επικίνδυνος και ύπουλος και στρέφεται βάνανυσα και εξευτελιστικά εναντίον αδυνάτων, ξένων, μεταναστών, ομοφυλοφίλων, φτωχών, αλλοθρήσκων· τραυματίζει βαρύτατα τη Δημοκρατία και το κράτος δικαίου. Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση σημαίνει ευθύνη και όσοι κατανοούμε αυτή την ευθύνη παλεύουμε κατά του φασισμού.

Στέλιος Κούλογλου (GUE/NGL). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, είναι ντροπή αυτό που γίνεται σήμερα εδώ με ορισμένους συναδέλφους. Μιλάμε για την αύξηση της νεοναζιστικής βίας στην Ευρώπη και αυτοί αναφέρονται στον κομμουνισμό και τον σοσιαλισμό. Στην πραγματικότητα με αυτό που κάνετε αθρώνετε τον φασισμό.

Η Χρυσή Αυγή, το νεοναζιστικό κόμμα που έχουμε στην Ελλάδα, θα χαιρέται που σας ακούει, θα τρίβει τα χέρια της που σας ακούει. Αυτοί στη χώρα μου σκότωσαν· σκότωσαν ένα τραγουδιστή, σκότωσαν ένα μετανάστη, χωρίς λόγο, εν ψυχρώ και εξακολουθούν και επιτίθενται στους πρόσφυγες στα νησιά, προχτές σ' έναν βουλευτή του ΣΥΡΙΖΑ, του κυβερνώντος κόμματος. Αυτοί είναι οι πραγματικοί φασίστες και σ' αυτούς κλείνετε τα μάτια και, όταν κλείνετε τα μάτια, είστε στην πραγματικότητα συνένοχοι.

Intervenții la cerere

Elly Schlein (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, c'è un pericoloso rigurgito nazionalista e fascista in tanti, troppi dei nostri paesi.

Lo stiamo vedendo in Italia, come ricordava Eleonora, oltre 100 aggressioni fasciste negli ultimi cinque anni. Oggi poi c'è una novità: c'è chi si riempie la bocca di sicurezza, ma con la sua propaganda di odio quotidiana sta legittimando la violenza e rendendo di fatto le nostre città meno sicure. L'abbiamo visto anche a Bari. Esprimo di nuovo la solidarietà e un sincero abbraccio ad Eleonora, Claudio, Antonio e Giacomo.

Caro Presidente, cara Commissaria questo succede oggi in Italia, le organizzazioni fasciste girano indisturbate con le mazze pronte e con il tirapugni in tasca e la copertura politica di qualche ministro che invece, secondo la Costituzione, dovrebbe scioglierle quelle organizzazioni, ma preferisce andarci a cena.

Ecco, nella nostra Unione basata sui valori della democrazia e del rispetto dei diritti fondamentali queste violenze e intimidazioni non possono essere tollerate. Resistenza!

Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE). – Senhora Comissária, eu venho de um país que sabe muito bem o que é o fascismo. Ainda temos uma fundação com o nome do ditador Franco, ainda temos a residência de verão, o *Pazo de Meirás*. Como esta camiseta, como esta t-shirt que eu visto que representa 19 pessoas que estiveram pacificamente na residência do ditador Franco e que agora estão na justiça, uma justiça que consente.

A Fundação faz a apologia do fascismo e deveria ser ilegalizada, repito, ilegalizada. Assim defendemos o grupo da memória histórica no Parlamento Europeu e também o Vale dos Caídos.

Senhora Comissária, como tantas perguntas que já fizemos, contra o fascismo: tolerância zero. Infelizmente há um bom número de fascistas que estão representados neste Parlamento.

João Pimenta Lopes (GUE/NGL). – Senhor Presidente, não ignoramos as causas e o caldo em que se alimentam as forças de extrema direita e fascistas. A União Europeia, que invoca cinicamente a preocupação ante esse avanço, é a mesma que apoiou e continua a apoiar o golpe fascista na Ucrânia, que imprime uma natureza exploradora e xenófoba na sua política migratória, a mesma que promove e aprofunda as políticas que atacam direitos sociais, laborais e a soberania dos Estados, a mesma que impõe ameaças, chantagens e sanções contra os seus povos.

As políticas de direita da União Europeia, implementadas pela direita e social-democracia, não se distinguem nos objetivos do que defendem as forças reacionárias: aumentar a opressão, a exploração e a concentração da riqueza, garantir a manutenção de uma ordem social iníqua, a do capitalismo. O fascismo, criação do capitalismo, tem hoje uma inquietante expressão institucional em parlamentos e governos na União Europeia. O firme combate às forças de extrema-direita e fascizantes exige que não se branqueiem as políticas que lhes abrem caminho.

Σωτήριος Ζαριανόπουλος (NI). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, κάποιοι εδώ μέσα βρήκαν την ευκαιρία της συζήτησης για τη φασιστική βία για να θυμηθούν τον κομμουνισμό. Με τη σειρά μας όμως θα τους θυμίσουμε ότι, αν δεν είχε καρφωθεί η κόκκινη σημαία στο Reichstag και αν δεν υπήρχαν οι 20 εκατομμύρια Σοβιετικοί νεκροί στον Δεύτερο Παγκόσμιο Πόλεμο, σήμερα ούτε εδώ θα ήταν, ούτε καν θα μιλούσαν.

Οι προσχεδιασμένες δολοφονικές επιθέσεις της ναζιστικής Χρυσής Αυγής στην Ελλάδα και αντίστοιχων ταγμάτων εφόδου σε όλη την Ευρώπη τεκμηριώνουν τον ναζιστικό, άρα εγκληματικό, χαρακτήρα τους, με χυδαίο αντικομμουνισμό, μίσος για τους εργάτες και τους κομμουνιστές· αποτελούν δύναμη κρούσης του κεφαλαίου.

Πέντε χρόνια μετά τη δολοφονία του αντιφασίστα Φύσσα και τα άλλα εγκλήματά τους, η δίκη της Χρυσής Αυγής ακόμα δεν ολοκληρώθηκε και οι φασίστες κυκλοφορούν ελεύθεροι. Αποθρασύνονται από την αντικομμουνιστική ιδεολογία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, εκτρέφονται από την αντιλαϊκή πολιτική της, εκμεταλλευόμενοι τη δίκαιη λαϊκή αγανάκτηση, ενθαρρύνονται από τμήματα του κεφαλαίου και του κρατικού μηχανισμού. Απάντηση μοναδική είναι η απομόνωσή τους από τον λαό, η πάλη για την ανατροπή του συστήματος που τους τρέφει.

Ángela Vallina (GUE/NGL). – Señor presidente, en Asturias, mi región, hemos vivido en las últimas semanas una campaña de acoso a nuestros cargos públicos, agudizada y amplificada tras el asesinato de nuestro concejal en uno de nuestros municipios.

Quisiera expresar mi dolor ante este crimen salvaje: como no pudieron con los golpes en la cabeza, acabaron estrangulándolo. Ahora, otros cargos de mi partido en otro municipio, también de Asturias, han tenido que soportar amenazas a los tres días de este asesinato, también ha habido amenazas de muerte contra nuestra alcaldesa y, tres días después, a otro concejal nuestro le destruyeron el coche y le pintaron el acrónimo de «Descanse en paz».

Yo misma, durante mi etapa de alcaldesa, recibí anónimos y sufrí amenazas, e incluso me mataron al perro de un tiro dentro de mi casa. Nunca se descubrieron los culpables. Nunca se puso el empeño en ello. Por eso, ante esta situación que tantos y tantas compañeras sufrimos de mi partido —y también, hay que decir, de otras fuerzas políticas—, debemos tomar conciencia de que lo que está en juego es la misma democracia. Y hacer política no es posible bajo la amenaza, el chantaje o las coacciones.

Dobromir Sośnierz (NI). – Panie Przewodniczący! To charakterystyczne: pani Ward nie przyjęła od nas niebieskiej karty, zasłaniając się demokracją, a uciszając demokratyczną debatę. Po co chcieliście tej debaty? Po co chcieliście całej tej debaty? Jedyny element debaty, jaki tutaj jest, czyli możliwość zadawania pytań, odrzucacie. Po co to w ogóle było? Chcecie słuchać tylko własnego głosu odbitego od ściany. Jesteście fanatykami i nie chcecie rozmawiać o tym. Tytuł tej debaty jest skandaliczny, mówi tylko o neofaszystowskiej przemocy. A o Antifie nie chcecie porozmawiać? Libertarianie boją się zorganizować spotkanie z prezesem mojej partii, który nie ma nic wspólnego z faszyzmem. Więcej ma z faszyzmem wspólnego lewica, bo to byli narodowi socjaliści. A oni boją się zorganizować spotkanie, ponieważ boją się, że Antifa...

(Przewodniczący przerwał mówcy)

President. – Mr Sośnierz, please mind your speech. We should not launch accusations or anything like that. If you want to say something, say something about the subject, but do not say that the other side was not, because otherwise we will transform this important debate into an exchange between various different positions. We don't like that.

Marek Jurek (ECR). – *(początek wystąpienia poza mikrofonem)*... Pan za każdym razem, kiedy na tej sali wykorzystuje się tę debatę do usprawiedliwiania komunizmu. Pan poseł Zarianopoulos czy pani poseł Forenza mogą nadawać partiom, w których działają, dowolne nazwy. Ale przez pamięć ofiar nazizmu proszę tego nie robić. Panie Pośle! W tym dniu, kiedy wieszano tę czerwoną flagę, o której Pan mówił, to ministrowie polskiego rządu, którzy całą wojnę walczyli z Niemcami, gnili w bolszewickim więzieniu na Łubiance. I Pan powinien szanować pamięć tych ofiar komunizmu.

President. – Mr Jurek, I understand the positions of everybody here, but we have to address the topic at issue here. I would conclude with the reflection of a Soviet scientist, who said that history is very difficult to predict. So let's not get into that.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Věra Jourová, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members, I will do my best! I would like to thank you for the debate, which was emotional and included very strong declarations, which is needed because we have to have debates about this very serious problem, not only in the parliaments but in the many other fora where people are still able to speak to each other. This is one of our problems, that people are more and more divided into bubbles, and this is also due to the digital development in our communication.

I will try to bring a little bit of peace into that because before, at the beginning, I spoke about law enforcement reaction, about sanctioning and about the need to penalise these symptoms and aggressivity and violence.

I would like to pause a little while and consider the reasons why we are witnessing and living through increased violence and aggression in our society. We should speak more about the breeding ground, which is fear, which is poverty, which is uncertainty, which is confusion. People in Europe went through the financial crisis. Some Member States and some societies were more affected, some less. People are still stressed by the migration crisis of 2015 and 2016, which was unprecedented. We were not ready for that. We are stressed by terrorist attacks, we have a lot of uncertainty in our society due to something which sounds positive but which can have negative consequences on many people and that is the technological revolution. People have stopped understanding the world and they ask for more security and more certainty. My question is, why we as democrats, we who say clearly that aggression and violence is intolerable, that collective guilt is unacceptable, why are we not able to reach out to these people and to offer them more security and more certainty? Why do these people come and more and more believe the populist parties and the people who provide them with easy solutions, which might lead to another tragedy in Europe? I think that we should not only deal with the consequences – and this was the debate about the consequences here in Parliament – but we should speak more about the sources, about the breeding ground.

So I will do this, at least in my work, because I am in very frequent contact with normal citizens, with these people which have senior age. They have said to me: we fear, we are uncertain and we want our sons and our grandsons to have a peaceful life in Europe. We have to offer this to the people and we have to take lessons from history and consider seriously what the new elements are. I already touched upon this, it is the digital revolution. Just imagine if the totalitarian regimes of the past, and I will not name them because I don't want to get into the passionate debate again, but what if they had this digital highway for propaganda? It would be much more efficient, much more easy to capture societies and to come with very dangerous proposals which, as we know, were realised.

This digital world enables us to reach for very good things and bad things at the same time. Here, I would say, we should be able to alert society because the passive majority, if it remains passive, will enable the evil again to rule the EU. I think that this is our task: to alert people. You know that we have the Code of Conduct against hate crime and hate speech. We are doing a lot against disinformation and sometimes when I see the statistical figures showing the increase of aggressivity and violence, I ask myself, is it really true that evil is so automatic and so strong and the good must be organised? I think that we should ask ourselves these questions and ask ourselves what are the most efficient instruments, how to address the majority of people, the honest people who need to have the option for their electoral preferences, to vote for the people who offer something other than aggression and violence.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much once again for this debate. I'm sure we will probably, unfortunately, have to debate these worrying phenomena and developments in the future, again.

President. – I was just wondering whether, if you do not communicate in the normal way, but only through gadgets, where you can be very loose with language, and you then meet the real people, is there not an extension of everything you allowed yourself to say to them in that space, which could be translated into physical violence? So there might be this too, but you have a point in that sense.

Juliane Bogner-Strauss, President-in-Office of the Council. – Mr President, the emotionality of this discussion and all the loudness clearly showed us how important this issue is.

There are many factors, as mentioned by the Commissioner before, that might be sources of political violence. However, in my opinion – and I think it is the opinion of most of us – there is no excuse for any kind of violence and the Presidency, and the Council as a whole, rejects any form of politically motivated violence and intolerance, no matter where it comes from.

We have a legal framework in place that needs to be effectively implemented in practice. We need to support it with targeted measures such as education, public debate and counter-narratives to prevent and tackle intolerance.

The Council will continue to follow this debate closely. I can assure Members that I have paid particular attention to the views expressed here today during this debate. In my opinion – and I think in the opinion of most of us – there has to be zero tolerance for any kind of political violence.

President. – The debate is closed.

The vote will take place during the next part-session in October in Strasbourg.

Written statements (Rule 162)

João Ferreira (GUE/NGL), por escrito. – Perante o aprofundamento da crise estrutural do capitalismo, os sectores mais reacionários e agressivos da classe dominante apostam crescentemente no fascismo e na guerra para salvar o sistema, para manter a todo o custo a ordem social iníqua que o caracteriza.

A luta contra o fascismo será inconsequente se não identificar o caldo de cultura que o alimenta: as injustiças e desigualdades geradas pelo capitalismo, a polarização da riqueza sem precedentes, o desemprego, a precariedade e o trabalho sem direitos generalizados, os salários estagnados ou tendo retrocedido para níveis anteriores a 2007/2008. O seu crescimento seria impossível sem um tratamento mediático esquizofrénico que tanto esconde como exagera graves manifestações de natureza reacionária e fascizante, num comportamento ideológico que tende a banalizar o fenómeno em lugar de o combater.

As dificuldades e as contradições do sistema de representação liberal burguês favorecem a demagogia e uma radicalização de extrema-direita apresentada como «antissistema», e em que – como na União Europeia – as ingerências e imposições que espezinham as soberanias nacionais são exploradas para fomentar o nacionalismo, alimento fundamental do racismo e do fascismo.

O fascismo não é uma fatalidade. Mas é um perigo real que é necessário combater com a maior energia. Um combate em que estaremos na primeira linha. Como sempre.

Soraya Post (S&D), in writing. – Nazis are allowed to march on our streets and spread their hate. These groups attack everyone that does not fit into their fascist view of society: ethnic and religious minorities, refugees, LGBTI-people, feminists, human rights activists and political opponents.

They attack our democracy and freedom.

Why and what are we as a society waiting for?

We have already seen in Europe what fascism can do.

When are we going to learn from the past?

We have to ban Nazi and fascist organisations in Europe. We have to stand together against hate and violence.

It is our duty to stop this growing neo-fascist violence and hate.

It is our duty to protect and revive our democracy before it is too late.

Ελισάβετ Βόζεμπεργκ-Βρυονίδη (PPE), γραπτώς. – Ο Ζαν Πωλ Σαρτρ έλεγε ότι ο φασισμός δεν ορίζεται από τον αριθμό των θυμάτων του, αλλά από τον τρόπο που τα σκοτώνει. Η έξαρση της νεοφασιστικής βίας ακολουθεί τη γενικότερη άνοδο ακροδεξιών κινημάτων, που αποδίδεται κυρίως στην οικονομική και τη μεταναστευτική κρίση. Στα κράτη μέλη που επλήγησαν περισσότερο από την οικονομική κρίση, η ανεργία, η λιτότητα, η κατάρρευση του κοινωνικού συμβολαίου και η περιθωριοποίηση σημαντικού τμήματος του πληθυσμού, το κατέστησαν επιρρεπές στον πολιτικό λόγο των άκρων. Ένα λόγο διχαστικό και λαϊκιστικό με προπαγανδιστική ρητορική, που στοχεύει στο θυμικό του αποδέκτη, παρακάμπτοντας κάθε λογική διεργασία. Σε ένα περιβάλλον ανασφάλειας και αβεβαιότητας, ακραίοι αντιευρωπαϊστές κατάφεραν να ενσταλάξουν ένα νέο είδος κυνισμού στην πολιτική, έμπλεο ξενοφοβίας, μισαλλοδοξίας και εθνολαϊκισμού, καταφεύγοντας στην εργαλειοθήκη του φασισμού, που έμενε σφραγισμένη για 70 χρόνια. Το κλίμα εχθρότητας και η «νομιμοποίηση» της βίας ακολούθησαν ως συνέπειες, έχοντας οδηγήσει στην άνοδο της νεοφασιστικής και της ρατσιστικής βίας ακόμη και σε χώρες που δεν είχαν πληγεί ιδιαίτερα από την οικονομική ή την προσφυγική κρίση. Απάντησή μας σε κάθε ακραία φωνή και στους εθνολαϊκιστές: ένα νέο κοινό ευρωπαϊκό όραμα, στηριγμένο απόλυτα στις αρχές της αλληλεγγύης και της συνεργασίας. Η ευρωπαϊκή κυριαρχία πηγάζει από την εθνική κυριαρχία και δεν την αντικαθιστά.

18. Ontnemen van het stemrecht in de EU (debat)

Președintele. – Următorul punct de pe ordinea de zi este dezbateră privind:

— întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns oral referitoare la privarea de drepturi de vot în UE, adresată Consiliului de Cecilia Wikström, în numele Comisiei pentru petiții (O-000069/2018 - B8-0039/2018) (2018/2676(RSP)) și

— întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns oral referitoare la privarea de drepturi de vot în UE, adresată Comisiei de Cecilia Wikström, în numele Comisiei pentru petiții (O-000070/2018 - B8-0040/2018) (2018/2676(RSP)).

Cecilia Wikström, author. – Mr President, it's very interesting to be discussing this issue, which is of great importance to EU citizens, at this hour. However, I'm very pleased that this debate is taking place since voting rights is a key issue for the committee of which I am Chair, namely the Committee on Petitions, in this House.

Participation in the democratic life of the EU and the electoral rights of EU citizens living abroad in another Member State in the Union is frequently the subject of petitions to my committee. Six Member States – namely Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Malta and the United Kingdom – systematically deprive their nationals of the right to vote in national elections due to their residence in another Member State. The same Member States also disenfranchise their nationals in European elections if they live permanently in a third country.

However, the right to vote is a fundamental right. Therefore, depriving citizens of the right to vote once they move to another EU Member State is effectively equivalent to punishing these citizens for having exercised their right to free movement in the Union.

These persons very often feel like second-class citizens. These practices can change their whole lives without giving them the opportunity to participate, which was the case for all the British citizens who were not allowed to participate in the referendum about Brexit because they had lived in another Member State for some time. However, they were directly affected by the result when Brexit was a fact. It is therefore high time that the Member States in this Union address this very concrete concern because disenfranchisement has huge consequences for all the individuals concerned.

The loss of electoral rights for citizens moving to another Member State can be seen as an infringement upon freedom of movement under EU law. It could potentially stop EU citizens from exercising their right to free movement in the Union. Indeed, the discouraging effect in each individual case may be difficult to prove, but the violation of EU citizenship rights does not require statistical or other evidence. It's enough to read the petitions to our committee.

The main justification for disenfranchisement, that citizens living abroad no longer have sufficient links with their home country, seems completely outdated in the globalised world of today. We are interconnected with each other. The nationality bond with a state is still the main connecting factor for the rights and obligations of each citizen, but citizens resident abroad still have obligations deriving from their nationality so they should also be conferred their corresponding rights. In addition, there has been a Eurobarometer on electoral rights, where two-thirds of the respondents thought that it was not at all justified that people lose the right to vote in national elections in their country simply because they reside in another EU country.

The Committee on Petitions considers that EU citizens who move to reside in another Member State should have the possibility to exercise their right to vote in the national elections of their country of origin. The committee therefore calls on those Member States that disenfranchise nationals who choose to live for an extended period in another Member State to ease the conditions for these nationals and preserve their right to vote in national elections. The committee is aware of the fact that the decision on who is conferred the right to vote in national and European elections lies with the Member States. Nevertheless, we also know that the problem of the disenfranchisement of voting rights has been known for a long time. It is therefore high time to take action now.

We therefore urge the Commission to propose specific measures for removing any obstacles to free movement. Especially in view of the upcoming elections in May next year, we must safeguard the right of all EU citizens to choose to vote either in their Member State of origin or in the host Member State where they reside. I look forward to hearing your answers to the questions put forward by the Committee on Petitions.

Juliane Bogner-Strauss, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, the possibility for citizens to express their political will by exercising their right to vote is part of the very fabric of democracy. The Union itself is founded on the value of respect for democracy. For the Council, increasing and improving citizens' participation in the democratic life of the Union is a priority and all European institutions and Member States should join forces to achieve this objective.

The Presidency notes the concerns voiced by Ms Wikström, reflecting the concern of the authors of the petition regarding the consequences of the disenfranchisement of voting rights in national elections in some Member States in relation to the exercise of the freedom of movement. However, the Treaties do not confer any power to the Council to act in this regard, as this is a matter of national sovereignty, which in many Member States is regulated by the Constitution.

Concerning the facilitation of the exercise of the right to vote, I want to emphasise that in July, the Council adopted a revision of the 1976 electoral law act, encouraging the Member States *inter alia* to take the measures necessary to allow citizens residing in third countries to vote in elections to the European Parliament. This has been without any doubt an important move towards a more participative European election process.

Regarding the upcoming elections to the European Parliament, the Council supports the EU-wide information and awareness raising campaign on EU citizenship rights, including electoral rights to support turnout. In particular, last year the Council adopted conclusions where it invited Member States to enhance citizens' participation in the EU democratic process, for example, by better informing them of their rights to vote in local and European elections and by removing barriers to their participation.

In the discussion held last year in the Council on the EU citizenship report 2017, the Council asked the Commission to promote best practices implemented in the Member States to help citizens vote or stand in EU elections. The Council also considered as a positive measure the developments by the Commission of a multilingual standard form to facilitate the swift exchange of information between Member States to its contact points about the rights of citizens to stand as a candidate when residing in another Member State.

Věra Jourová, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, first of all let me thank the Petitions Committee for tabling this question. In my answer I will summarise what the Commission has done up to now on this issue.

Already in the 2013 citizenship report, the Commission underlined that full participation of Union citizens in the democratic life of the Union at all levels is the very essence of Union citizenship. The right to vote is also clearly at the base of democracy. While most Member States allow their citizens to vote in national elections and referenda in their home countries, a few, enumerated by Madam Wikström today, set considerable restrictions on this right when citizens move to another EU Member State. Since no EU country currently awards foreign nationals the right to vote in national elections and referenda, it means that some EU citizens cannot vote in such elections in any of the EU Member States. The Commission recognises that Member States are solely competent to determine who can benefit from the right to vote in national elections. The EU Treaties only guarantee EU citizens the right to vote in their state of residence in municipal and European elections. However, the founding premise of Union citizenship is that it is additional to national citizenship and is meant to give additional rights. The fact that the exercise of the right to free movement may lead to losing the right of political participation is at odds with that principle.

The Commission has kept the situation under observation for a number of years and the Commission therefore issued a recommendation in 2014, in which Member States were asked that their nationals might apply to remain registered on the electoral roll and therefore retain their right to vote. In last year's 2017 report on EU citizenship the Commission referred to this issue of disenfranchisement in national elections. It noted that 67% of respondents to the 2015 Eurobarometer on EU citizenship felt it was unjustified that citizens should lose their right to vote in national elections in their country of origin.

In April this year the Commission included this issue in the discussion paper transmitted to Member States ahead of an exchange between national election authorities organised following the Commission recommendation of February 2018 on the efficient conduct of the European elections.

Let me assure you that the Commission continues to monitor developments and initiate specific actions within its competence. The annual fundamental rights colloquium to be held on 26 and 27 November this year in Brussels is dedicated to this issue and the title of this year's colloquium is 'democracy in the European Union'. You are warmly welcomed to this event.

The colloquium will include a session focused on the exercise of the right to vote when moving to another Member State. I am convinced that if we work together we can induce improvements. With regard to the question on the complaints received by the Commission, I would like to inform you that we analysed the ten complaints received in the past five years, but had to conclude that it was not possible to take further action, notably because of lack of competence.

Michaela Šojdrová, za skupinu PPE. – Pane předsedající, volební právo principiálně souvisí s právním státem a výkonem politických práv a také s volným pohybem občanů Evropské unie. Zaráží mě, že v 21. století některé členské státy odepírají v národních volbách volební právo občanům, kteří žijí v zahraničí. Právo volit je přeci jedním ze základních občanských práv a občané téhož státu by si měli být ve svých právech rovni. Pokud stát občanům v některých situacích neodůvodněně odepírá volební právo, fakticky tím vytváří druhořadé občanství. Provinil se snad občan tím, že pracuje, studuje nebo pobývá v jiné zemi? To přece ještě neznamená, že mu je osud jeho země lhostejný a že by neměl mít právo se vyjadřovat k jeho záležitostem. Členské státy by proto měly více dbát na doporučení Komise z roku 2014 a umožnit účast v národních volbách alespoň těm občanům žijícím v zahraničí, kteří o to požádají.

V institucích Evropské unie bychom se však měli zabývat především evropskými volbami. Za nešťastné považuji to, že některé členské země – a Česká republika mezi ně patří – neumožňují v evropských volbách svým občanům žijícím v zahraničí volit své národní kandidáty. Velmi podporuji aktuální návrh zákona, který byl v ČR předložen, na zavedení korespondenčního hlasování. V evropských volbách by totiž tento zákon vůbec poprvé umožnil českým občanům volit české kandidáty ze zahraničí. Považuji to za fér z hlediska rovného zacházení s občany žijícími v zahraničí. A věřím tomu, že by se tím i zvýšila volební účast. V návaznosti na tuto novou možnost vznikne samozřejmě i potřeba zamezit dvojímu uplatnění volebního práva. Věřím ale, že nám v tom pomůže dobrá spolupráce a výměna zkušeností s ostatními členskými státy stejně jako nedávno schválená novela volebního kodexu.

Jude Kirton-Darling, on behalf of the S&D Group. – Mr President, EU citizenship is fundamental for our millions of citizens. It is a shared identity in addition to our national or regional identities which unlocks the possibilities of exploring this great continent, allowing free movement and the opportunity to live, work and study in other EU countries. Political rights as basic as the right to vote or stand as a candidate sit at the very heart of our shared European values.

Since the EU referendum, we Brits are perhaps more aware than most of the value of EU citizenship, since we fear we will lose it. However, while we might share equal treatment protection in the workplace and in access to university places, we do not have equal treatment in that most fundamental bedrock of our societies: the right to democratic participation. Citizens who have taken advantage of the freedom of movement from five Member States, notably my own, often find themselves completely disenfranchised of national representation. They are unable to vote in national elections, both in their home country and in their adopted country.

While I have sympathy for those who argue the logic that citizens who live in another Member State may not be affected by domestic laws or taxes made in their home country, this complete lack of national voting rights for EU citizens who have moved using EU treaty rights is incompatible with our European values.

Moreover, today we have a further complication – in fact, we have lots of complications in relation to Brexit – as we will see EU citizens, either UK nationals in the rest of the EU or EU citizens in the UK, disenfranchised on purpose. These EU citizens, whether Brits abroad for longer than 15 years or EU nationals from our sister countries in the UK, are the most acutely affected by Brexit. Yet they had no say in 2016, and now their democratic rights are being disregarded again as there are no provisions in the draft withdrawal agreement on voting rights, no guarantee of existing rights and no provision for future rights. This is a moral dereliction of duty. What are you doing in the Commission and the Council to avoid this intentional disenfranchisement? Personally, I support a people's vote and a final say for all.

Νότης Μαρίας, εξ ονόματος της ομάδας ECR. – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, η πρωτοβουλία της Επιτροπής Αναφορών να φέρει προς συζήτηση τη στέριση των εκλογικών δικαιωμάτων σε επίπεδο Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης νομίζω ότι είναι πάρα πολύ σημαντική. Και πρωτοβουλίες τέτοιου είδους πρέπει να αναλαμβάνουμε συχνά, καθώς θα προχωρούμε προς τις ευρωεκλογές, γιατί πρέπει να υπάρξει πλήρης διασφάλιση και άσκηση των εκλογικών δικαιωμάτων κατά τη διάρκεια των ευρωεκλογών, οι οποίες έρχονται σε πολύ σύντομο χρονικό διάστημα.

Θα πρέπει να υπάρξει πλήρης διασφάλιση και άσκηση των εκλογικών δικαιωμάτων για όσους έχουν φύγει από τα κράτη μέλη καταγωγής τους. Και αυτό ισχύει για πάνω από 400.000 Έλληνες πολίτες που έφυγαν από την Ελλάδα λόγω της κρίσης, οι οποίοι πρέπει να μπορούν να ασκήσουν τα εκλογικά δικαιώματά τους. Και όσο είναι στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, αυτό, τουλάχιστον από πλευράς Ελλάδας, είναι δυνατό. Έχουν δηλαδή τη δυνατότητα να ψηφίσουν με ελληνικό ψηφοδέλτιο, ακόμη και αν είναι π.χ. στη Γαλλία.

Θα πρέπει όμως αυτή η δυνατότητα, κατά την άποψή μας, να δοθεί και σε όσους Έλληνες πολίτες είναι εγγεγραμμένοι στους εκλογικούς καταλόγους και κατοικούν σε τρίτες χώρες, κατά κύριο λόγο στις Ηνωμένες Πολιτείες, στην Αυστραλία, στον Καναδά. Πρόκειται για την ελληνική ομογένεια η οποία, εφόσον είναι εγγεγραμμένη στους ελληνικούς εκλογικούς καταλόγους, θα πρέπει να μπορεί να ασκήσει το δικαίωμά της αυτό στις ευρωεκλογές, είτε με επιστολική ψήφο είτε στα προξενία και στις πρεσβείες της Ελλάδας στις χώρες αυτές. Μόνο με αυτό τον τρόπο μπορεί να υπάρξει πλήρης άσκηση των εκλογικών δικαιωμάτων.

Θεωρώ επίσης ότι πρέπει να επεκταθεί η συζήτηση για να εξετάσουμε τους όρους με τους οποίους τα μέσα μαζικής ενημέρωσης προβάλλουν τις ευρωεκλογές και τις απόψεις των πολιτικών κομμάτων.

Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea, *en nombre del Grupo ALDE*. – Señor presidente, gracias señora Jourová por estar aquí hoy, porque hablamos de la libre circulación de personas, que ha sido una de las principales banderas históricas de la Unión Europea.

Sin embargo, esta libertad se pervierte cuando un ciudadano europeo se traslada a otro país de la Unión y pierde su derecho de votar en su país de origen. Esto es lo que ocurre en varios Estados miembros —entre ellos, el Reino Unido—, que retiran el derecho de voto a los ciudadanos cuando trasladan su residencia.

¿Qué habría pasado con el *Brexit* si el millón de británicos residentes en otros países de la Unión Europea hubieran podido votar en ese referéndum? Y también está el caso de países como España, que no retiran el derecho de voto, pero crean procedimientos tan complejos que en la práctica es imposible ejercerlo. Se llama «voto rogado».

Es profundamente antieuropeo que haya fronteras para los derechos fundamentales, que cuando un europeo cambie su residencia dentro de la Unión se convierta en ciudadano de segunda. Está en nuestras manos evitarlo.

Ángela Vallina, *en nombre del Grupo GUE/NGL*. – Señor presidente, en los últimos años, efectivamente, hemos observado en la Comisión de Peticiones de este Parlamento una triste realidad, en la que el derecho al voto, un derecho político básico, es negado sistemáticamente a millones de ciudadanos y ciudadanas de la Unión. En mi país, por ejemplo, la reforma de la Ley Orgánica de Régimen Electoral ha ayudado a que el 95 % de las personas que vive en el extranjero no participe en las elecciones, por las barreras administrativas existentes.

Las técnicas utilizadas, vistas en otros países también, incluyen el voto rogado, plazos imposibles de cumplir, trámites consulares complejos, pagarse los propios gastos de envío del voto, pérdidas de la documentación para votar, falta de personal en los consulados, etcétera. Votar se ha convertido en un calvario para más de dos millones y medio de personas que viven fuera de España.

Así que, como representantes elegidos, exigimos que los Estados cumplan con los principios democráticos, eliminen todas las barreras posibles y que la Comisión haga una evaluación global del cumplimiento de las leyes electorales en base a sus competencias.

No tomar medidas supone robarle a la ciudadanía la posibilidad de expresarse, y robarle aún más al sistema la legitimidad que tiene.

David Coburn, *on behalf of the EFDD Group*. – Mr President, every country has the right to establish its own rules on how to conduct elections. Countries like Great Britain, which has had a functioning parliament for over a thousand years, do not need, with due respect, advice from the European Parliament, which only allowed elections in 1979.

The rules in the UK are clear: a person cannot vote in a UK election if they are not on the electoral roll. This is a means by which we can ensure only people entitled to vote can do so. Without this very reasonable check, we could see elections in jeopardy. Already postal vote fraud perpetrated in some migrant communities has undermined the integrity of the vote in many constituencies. Over the last decade, an average of 282 complaints per election reached the Electoral Commission concerning electoral fraud. We have every right to maintain our strict system in the face of these challenges.

The EU complains about our system but fortunately, in March we won't be here so you won't have that problem. I would say to Ms Kirton-Darling and Ms Becerra Basterrechea regarding more Brits voting for the European Union if they're abroad that I lived abroad for many years and you don't get anybody more pro-Brexit than me.

Peter Jahr (PPE). – Herr Präsident! Das Hohe Haus sollte dem Petitionsausschuss sehr dankbar sein dafür, dass wir das Thema diskutieren. Allerdings ist es nicht gerade die beste Sende- und Sitzungszeit. Vielleicht sollte man das in Zukunft beachten, denn das Thema ist an sich viel zu ernst, als dass wir das so nebenbei als letzten Tagesordnungspunkt behandeln müssen.

An und für sich scheint ja alles eindeutig. Die Staatsbürgerschaft und die damit verbundenen Rechte werden durch die Mitgliedstaaten geregelt. Das Recht zu wählen gehört mit dazu und liegt in der Verantwortung der Mitgliedstaaten. Nun glaubt man ja als naiver Zeitgenosse, dass die Mitgliedstaaten sich bemühen, dass ihre Bürger auch lange dieses Recht behalten. Die Wahrheit ist aber teilweise anders oder, um es staatsmännisch zu formulieren: Die Mitgliedstaaten entscheiden in der Europäischen Union sehr unterschiedlich, wann und wie die Bürgerinnen und Bürger, die nicht mehr auf ihrem Staatsgebiet wohnen, ihr Wahlrecht ausüben können. Wir können nicht akzeptieren, dass ein Wahlrecht in der Europäischen Union de facto vom Geburtsort abhängig ist. Meine Vorrednerin hat es schon gesagt: Besonders spektakulär war die Situation ja beim Brexit, wenn man so will: Bürgerinnen und Bürger Großbritanniens, die im Auftrag ihres Landes in Brüssel gearbeitet haben, durften sich nicht mal am Votum über den Brexit beteiligen. Das ist an sich eine ziemlich groteske Situation.

Deshalb bitte ich – eindringlich – auch den Rat – wir wissen ja im Petitionsausschuss selber, wie die gesetzliche Lage ist –, über das Wahlrecht zu diskutieren, es zu harmonisieren und eine bessere Lösung zu finden. Denn das Wahlrecht ist ein Grundrecht, und das sollte man den Bürgerinnen und Bürgern der Europäischen Union nicht nehmen und vor allen Dingen nicht vom Geburtsort abhängig machen.

Michela Giuffrida (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, è imminente la più importante, più decisiva consultazione elettorale della storia d'Europa. Eppure noi l'affronteremo in mancanza di un intervento che deve invece assolutamente arrivare, ancora una volta privando migliaia di cittadini europei del diritto di voto, assieme a quello della libera circolazione, se questi risiedono in un paese diverso da quello di appartenenza.

E questo accade in mancanza di una legislazione uniforme perché non tutti gli Stati eliminano le barriere burocratiche e consentono l'esercizio di voto in queste condizioni. Tutto questo è veramente assurdo e assolutamente anacronistico. Sappiamo bene quanto spesso le procedure di voto all'estero siano complicate, ma chiedo al Consiglio come si possa ancora oggi, a maggior ragione, in un momento in cui massima dovrebbe essere la coerenza rispetto ai valori fondanti di partecipazione e condivisione e comune progettualità, come sia possibile portare avanti una situazione del genere.

Grazie all'intervento della commissione per le petizioni, noi speriamo che si colmi quella che è una lacuna enorme per l'esercizio democratico di tutti i cittadini europei.

Martina Anderson (GUE/NGL). – Mr President, citizenship is supposed to be a community of equals, yet 1.8 million EU right holders in the North of Ireland could be disenfranchised from their democratic right to vote and to stand in the European elections post Brexit. LBC has reported that the DUP wants, I quote, 'as hard a border as possible' in Ireland and disenfranchised citizens, no matter the cost. It is against the very principle of democracy that the citizens be left without a voice in any decision-making process that affects them, but that is actually what the Democratic Unionist Party is saying.

Sinn Féin has legal advice that demonstrates there is no constitutional or legal impediment to (a) facilitate external voting for all Irish nationals and (b) create a new European constituency for the North of Ireland. It is the entitlement and birthright of everyone born on the island of Ireland to be part of the Irish nation and therefore the Irish Government needs to amend its national law to reflect this. Civil liberties for people in the North of Ireland cannot be allowed to evaporate before our very eyes, and I want to say that this Parliament and the EU are saying they are going to uphold the Good Friday Agreement in all of its parts, then that means upholding the civil liberties of the people in the North of Ireland too.

Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE). – Señor presidente, el derecho de sufragio es un derecho fundamental y está reconocido en los propios Tratados. Es más, cuando hablamos de ciudadanía europea es esencial garantizar el derecho a la participación política.

Votar es un derecho civil básico; no es, en ningún caso, un privilegio. Hemos recibido en la Comisión de Peticiones muchísimas peticiones alertando de la dificultad de poder ejercer ese derecho fundamental en algunos países de la Unión: en Alemania, en Dinamarca, en Chipre, en Malta, en Irlanda y en el Reino Unido; en España y Portugal, dificultades por los obstáculos existentes para poder ejercitar este derecho.

Es necesario garantizar esta participación política si queremos realmente conseguir el cumplimiento de los valores europeos. En este sentido, en España, parece que se van a eliminar obstáculos para poder ejercer este derecho al voto. Las últimas noticias es que se va a eliminar la petición del voto rogado para que pueda durar cuatro años; se van a ampliar los plazos para que la documentación llegue al elector; se van a habilitar, además de los consulados, los institutos Cervantes, las casas regionales, las casas de España y otros centros para poder facilitar el derecho al voto, y se intentará siempre que las garantías y la transparencia posibiliten al máximo esa participación política.

Es verdad que la problemática del voto exterior es más compleja porque hay más vulnerabilidad y es más difícil garantizar la transparencia, pero es imprescindible trabajar desde la Comisión, el Consejo y los Estados miembros para garantizar que la libre circulación de ciudadanos europeos, que es uno de los logros de la Unión, no impida nunca el derecho a la participación política.

Tenemos que lograr —y, en ese sentido, creo que pueden hacer mucho la Comisión y el Consejo— que la participación electoral de la diáspora deje de ser, de una vez por todas, la cenicienta de la democracia.

Catherine Stihler (S&D). – Mr President, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak this evening. Firstly, I want to say how appalled I was today to hear the British Prime Minister boast about ending freedom of movement. This is denying every UK citizen the opportunity to live, work and study across 27 countries. On a personal level – I myself, my family, my friends, my constituents – we are all going to lose our EU citizenship. This is something we value and it is shameful to boast about denying individuals the rights they currently enjoy. With Brexit, far from creating a global Britain, my country is becoming Little Britain, smaller, insular and isolated.

On voting rights, the dreadful disenfranchisement of UK citizens living abroad during the EU referendum is one which the EU must never allow to happen again. How could those who have most to lose have been denied their rightful say? The terrible uncertainty hanging over UK citizens currently living in the EU is one which could have been avoided. The EU needs to act to protect all its citizens' rights.

John Howarth (S&D). – Mr President, can I first of all reiterate everything my colleague Catherine Stihler said just now. The right to vote is a fundamental right, and it is the fundamental right that itself protects democracy, because at the end of the day, it is democracy that protects the individual from the excesses of the state. That can only be protected by participation. However, instead of making it easier for people to vote now, we seem to be making it more difficult, either by rigging the register or making it more difficult for people to turn out to vote on the day.

It is vital that we give people who move the right to vote, because it's people who move in search of work, to discover, to learn, to export, to trade or to create wealth who are the people to whom we need to give a stake in the communities in which they choose to live. Those who have chosen to live in the European continent have been betrayed by the British Government in that referendum and betrayed in the withdrawal agreement. We are now seeing Brexit for what it is, namely the wholesale removal of rights from individuals by the state. They should get the right to reconsider the outcome.

(Applause)

Intervenții la cerere

Csaba Sógor (PPE). – Mr President, the fundamental right to be able to vote in elections is the most important of political participation rights. Democratic participation at elections confers legitimacy to those exercising public power and their decisions affecting citizens.

Democratic participation is also linked to the right of free movement in the European project. Nowhere was this more visible than in the Brexit referendum, in which more than 700 000 British expat citizens were not entitled to vote, although it was clear from the beginning that, out of all citizens, it was their lives that the referendum result would affect the most.

Citizens who move to and reside in another EU Member State should not be stripped of their democratic rights in their country of origin. The Council and the Member States are well advised to take steps to ease the conditions of disenfranchisement and to protect the right of EU nationals living in another EU Member State to vote in elections and referenda taking place in their home country.

(Applause)

Julie Ward (S&D). – Mr President, (*inaudible*) citizens in modern democracies and free movement of citizens is one of the founding principles of the EU, enshrined in the Treaties. Despite both these statements being facts, thousands of citizens are unable to exercise their right to vote because they've used the opportunity to live in another European country.

As an elected Member from the United Kingdom, I'm appalled at my national government's disregard for British citizens' freedom to exercise conjointly the right to vote and the right to move freely in other European countries. Another very urgent issue concerns the rights of UK citizens who, despite having lived in European countries for many years, may not be able to take part in the local political life of their host country. This is also a concern for European citizens living in the UK.

These voting rights are not merely abstract ideas, they have a concrete effect on national and European politics – one of them being the gerrymandered results of the 2016 British referendum. Now, less than one year away from the European elections, I hope colleagues realise what is at stake. The very survival of our citizens' faith in the European Union as a truly democratic project.

Luke Ming Flanagan (GUE/NGL). – Mr President, Ireland is one of six EU Member States which deprived their citizens of the right to vote in national parliamentary elections due to residence abroad. As I'm sure you probably know, there are a lot of Irish people abroad. If you're gone for longer than 18 months, you've given up your right to representation, it seems.

However, during both the marriage and abortion referendums, the 'Get the Boat to Vote' campaign demonstrated that thousands of Irish people abroad are deeply concerned about the future of their country and, if the property market would allow it, they would one day return. Last year our government made the tokenistic proposal to extend voting rights in the election of the president, a largely ceremonial role with no executive powers. Why not enact meaningful reform and allow every Irish citizen a say in how the country is actually run?

The answer, of course, is that these disenfranchised voters are also disenfranchised voters, and cannot be counted on for their support. By consistently refusing to act and privileging those voters who didn't have to resort to migration, Ireland is effectively gerrymandering the country and blocking those most affected by the catastrophic decisions of successive Irish governments. It's got to change.

Γεώργιος Επιτήδειος (NI). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, το δικαίωμα της ψήφου είναι θεμελιώδες, είναι αναφαίρετο και, για τον λόγο αυτό, είναι αυτονόητο για κάθε πολίτη κράτους της Ευρωπαϊκής Ενώσεως. Κάθε κράτος έχει την υποχρέωση να λαμβάνει τα απαιτούμενα μέτρα, ούτως ώστε να εξασφαλίζει τη δυνατότητα στους ψηφοφόρους του να ψηφίζουν, είτε κατοικούν στη χώρα τους είτε σε άλλη χώρα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ενώσεως, ακόμη και σε χώρα άλλης ηπείρου.

Ορισμένες χώρες όμως δυστυχώς δεν δίνουν το δικαίωμα αυτό στους πολίτες τους και δεν τους επιτρέπουν να ψηφίζουν στις ευρωεκλογές, όταν ζουν σε άλλη χώρα εκτός από τη δική τους. Το επιχείρημα το οποίο προβάλλουν ότι κάποιος ο οποίος ζει σε τρίτη χώρα –εννοώ σε άλλη χώρα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ενώσεως– δεν έχει καλή πληροφόρηση, άρα δεν μπορεί να έχει και ορθή κρίση για τα όσα συμβαίνουν στην πατρίδα του, είναι τουλάχιστον υποκριτικό. Η Ελλάδα εξασφαλίζει το δικαίωμα στους Έλληνες πολίτες που ζουν σε χώρες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ενώσεως να ψηφίζουν στις ευρωεκλογές. Δεν αναγνωρίζει όμως αυτό το δικαίωμα στην ομογένεια η οποία ζει εκτός Ευρωπαϊκής Ενώσεως.

(Încheierea intervențiilor la cerere)

Věra Jourová, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, as I said at the beginning of this very interesting debate, the Commission does not have the general power to intervene in electoral matters and it is primarily for the Member States to lay down the arrangements on national elections, including defining the composition of the electorate. As I also said, the Commission will continue to work in this area within its limited competences under the Treaty.

We have used and will continue to use all the tools at our disposal to address the issue of losing the right to vote in exercising the right of free movement. We look forward to continue working with Members of the European Parliament on this matter, and thank you for your attention.

Juliane Bogner-Strauss, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, the Council notes that, in accordance with Article 4, the Union must respect the national identities of Member States and that it belongs solely to the Member States to decide on the composition of the electorate for national elections. However, I want to thank you very much for raising awareness about these issues, which are important for those Union citizens who wish to move freely to another Member State and not to be penalised by such decisions.

As mentioned by Commissioner Jourová, there will be a Colloquium on Fundamental Rights, where this issue will certainly be discussed in more detail. I think that we will certainly have the opportunity at this event to deepen the exchange.

President. – The debate is closed.

19. Agenda van de volgende vergadering: zie notulen

20. Sluiting van de vergadering

(The sitting closed at 22.42)

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Verklaring van de gebruikte tekens

*	Raadplegingsprocedure
***	Goedkeuringsprocedure
***I	Gewone wetgevingsprocedure (eerste lezing)
***II	Gewone wetgevingsprocedure (tweede lezing)
***III	Gewone wetgevingsprocedure (derde lezing)

(De aangeduide procedure is gebaseerd op de in de ontwerptekst voorgestelde rechtsgrond.)

Afkortingen van de commissies

AFET	Commissie buitenlandse zaken
DEVE	Commissie ontwikkelingssamenwerking
INTA	Commissie internationale handel
BUDG	Begrotingscommissie
CONT	Commissie begrotingscontrole
ECON	Commissie economische en monetaire zaken
EMPL	Commissie werkgelegenheid en sociale zaken
ENVI	Commissie milieubeheer, volksgezondheid en voedselveiligheid
ITRE	Commissie industrie, onderzoek en energie
IMCO	Commissie interne markt en consumentenbescherming
TRAN	Commissie vervoer en toerisme
REGI	Commissie regionale ontwikkeling
AGRI	Commissie landbouw en plattelandsontwikkeling
PECH	Commissie visserij
CULT	Commissie cultuur en onderwijs
JURI	Commissie juridische zaken
LIBE	Commissie burgerlijke vrijheden, justitie en binnenlandse zaken
AFCO	Commissie constitutionele zaken
FEMM	Commissie rechten van de vrouw en gendergelijkheid
PETI	Commissie verzoekschriften
DROI	Subcommissie mensenrechten
SEDE	Subcommissie veiligheid en defensie

Afkortingen van de diverse fracties

PPE	Fractie van de Europese Volkspartij (Christendemocraten)	Parlement
S&D	Fractie van de Progressieve Alliantie van Socialisten en Democraten in het Europees	
ECR	Fractie Europese Conservatieven en Hervormers	
ALDE	Fractie Alliantie van Liberalen en Democraten voor Europa	
GUE/NGL	Confederale Fractie Europees Unitair Links/Noords Groen Links	
Verts/ALE	Fractie De Groenen/Vrije Europese Alliantie	
EFDD	Fractie Europa van Vrijheid en Directe Democratie	
ENF	Fractie Europa van Naties en Vrijheid	
NI	Niet-fractiegebonden leden	