

Terça-feira, 13 de dezembro de 2022

RELATO INTEGRAL DOS DEBATES DE 13 DE DEZEMBRO DE 2022

(2023/C 292/02)

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VORSITZ: KATARINA BARLEY

Präsidentin

1. Abertura da sessão

(The sitting opened at 09:14)

President. – Good morning, Commissioner, good morning, dear colleagues, first of all I have to apologise: we have been waiting because the meeting of the Conference of Presidents is going on and we were expecting to have a result soon that could be announced. To not interrupt the session after a few minutes, we waited, but apparently they are now discussing further items, and we are starting.

I will switch to German, if you don't mind.

2. Diretivas energia de fontes renováveis, desempenho energético dos edifícios e eficiência energética: alterações (REPowerEU) (debate)

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über den Bericht von Markus Pieper im Namen des Ausschusses für Industrie, Forschung und Energie über den Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zur Änderung der Richtlinie (EU) 2018/2001 zur Förderung der Nutzung von Energie aus erneuerbaren Quellen, der Richtlinie 2010/31/EU über die Gesamtenergieeffizienz von Gebäuden sowie der Richtlinie 2012/27/EU zur Energieeffizienz (COM(2022)0222 – C9-0184/2022 – 2022/0160(COD)) (A9-0283/2022).

Markus Pieper, Berichterstatter. – Frau Präsidentin, Herr Kommissar! Es ist jetzt keine große Freude; als erster Redner nach diesen schlimmen Ereignissen zu versuchen, in die fachliche Debatte wieder einzusteigen. Aber wir müssen natürlich das jetzt auch ablegen, denn wir müssen uns auf die legislative Arbeit konzentrieren. Die Menschen erwarten von uns eine konsequente Korruptionsbekämpfung, ja, sie erwarten von uns aber auch einen konsequenten Ausbau der erneuerbaren Energie.

Diese Energiewende muss schnell gehen, dazu braucht es Voraussetzungen. Wenn wir von der fossilen Energie weg wollen, wenn wir von den einseitigen Abhängigkeiten weg wollen, wenn wir mehr europäische Energiesouveränität wollen, wenn wir Energieimporte diversifizieren wollen und wenn das Ganze für die Menschen und die Unternehmen bezahlbar sein soll, dann geht das mit der erneuerbaren Energie.

Es geht, wenn wir es richtig machen: Denn Sonne, Wind, Wasser, nachwachsende Rohstoffe schicken keine Rechnung. Sie sind unbegrenzt verfügbar. Sie könnten schon längst unsere wichtigste Energiequelle sein. Warum aber sind wir dann erst bei 20 % Erneuerbare? Nun, weil wir es zu kompliziert machen. Weil Bürokratie und Ideologie dem im Wege steht. Dazu fünf Punkte:

Wer die Erneuerbaren will, der muss erstens grünen Wasserstoff möglich machen. So wie die Kommission das jetzt mit Additionalität macht, ist es ein No-Go für Investoren. Es ist ein No-Go für die Länder, die grünen Wasserstoff gerne nach Europa exportieren wollen. Wir brauchen grünen Wasserstoff, aber keinen Wasserstoff mit Goldrand.

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Wer die Erneuerbaren will, der muss ihnen zweitens ein überragendes öffentliches Interesse bis hin zur Klimaneutralität einräumen und nicht nur für die nächsten sieben Jahre, liebe Kollegen aus dem Umweltausschuss.

Wer den Ausbau der erneuerbaren Energie will, der muss drittens ihren Ausbau schneller und pragmatischer genehmigen – deshalb die Beschleunigungsgebiete, die wir vorgeschlagen haben. Wenn Verwaltungsverfahren dort zu lange dauern, müssen die Bauanträge nach einer gewissen Frist automatisch genehmigt werden. Ausdrücklicher Dank hier an alle Kollegen und Kolleginnen, dass wir uns auf ein *positive silence* – schönes englisches Wort –, geeinigt haben.

Viertens: Wer die Erneuerbaren will, der darf eine einzelne Feldmaus nicht vor den Onshore-Windpark stellen. Wenn die Population der Feldmäuse in Europa nicht gefährdet ist, muss es Ermessensspielräume bei der FFH-Richtlinie geben. Die Vorschläge des Rates und der Kommission sind dazu nicht eindeutig genug. Es drohen Klagen von NGO, von denen einige sowieso gegen alles sind. Deshalb brauchen wir hier eine eindeutige Grundsatzausnahme für die Anlagen der erneuerbaren Energien. Bitte unterstützen Sie hier den Änderungsantrag der EVP.

Und – *last but not least* – fünftens: Wer es ernst meint mit der Energiewende, der muss auch in bestimmten Natura-2000-Gebieten die *go-to areas*, die Beschleunigungsgebiete, zulassen. In vielen Regionen Europas ist das gar nicht anders möglich. Wir haben alleine in den Bundesländern 50 % Anteil an Natura-2000-Gebieten, und wenn wir erneuerbare Energie wollen, dann müssen wir da auch bestimmte Anlagen zulassen.

Uns eint das Ziel schnellerer Genehmigungsverfahren. Für Mittwoch in der Abstimmung hoffe ich, trotz dieser taktischen Anträge jetzt aus allen Fraktionen, auf tragfähige Kompromisse. Ich bin zuversichtlich, auch durch die Gespräche heute. Wir haben es mit der Richtlinie für erneuerbare Energie, mit der RED, immer hinbekommen. Wir arbeiten vertrauensvoll zusammen im Team. Und ja, Sonne und Wind schicken keine Rechnung. Und wenn menschliche Regulierung es zulässt, können die Erneuerbaren auch günstig bei den Menschen und bei den Unternehmen ankommen.

Nils Torvalds, *rapporteur for the opinion of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety*. – Madam President, Mr Timmermans, I start with a very personal comment I just told the Commissioner. I've usually been fairly critical of his deeds, but I have to say that I was very proud of what he did in Sharm El-Sheikh. I think it actually is worth the wait, I applaud.

Then to the issue. Russia has forced us into a position where we need to find more energy and quickly. Having said that, to ensure that will be much more difficult. That means that we have to take environmental law and threats of biodiversity very seriously. It means also that we need to ensure that temporary emergency measures are temporary and they are not something we do and then it goes on forever.

But at the same time, we need to know that it's not always easy. Member States have very different energy mixes. Member States have very different natural circumstances. Member States have very difficult and different policies. Also in this case, you know the rule, one size does not fit all.

Frans Timmermans, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Madam President, with REPowerEU, the Commission has set out how to respond best to Russia's weaponisation of our energy supply. We see high energy prices continuing and the winter cold starting to bite in earnest, as we all noticed this morning, so we must continue deploying the necessary measures to help our citizens and businesses to make it through not only this winter, but also the next and the next winters.

However, we also need to continue working on what is the only fundamental solution to the situation that we are in, which is a faster deployment of renewable energy. Renewables are and remain the cheapest source of energy and they are home grown. They are exactly what we need. But a faster rollout of renewables will not happen if we do not seriously tackle the factors that slow down the pace of permitting for the solutions, in particular new or re-powered renewable power plants.

That's why I think today's debate is so important. If we want to accelerate the deployment of renewables, we must streamline radically the administrative procedures to approve renewable projects together with Member States, who will need to act in parallel.

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I want to thank this Parliament very much for the speedy review of our proposal to speed up the permitting. I also want to thank Parliament for its broad support for the measures that we proposed. Several of your amendments would strengthen our proposal. I am very grateful, for instance, for your proposed shortening of permitting deadlines both within and outside the so-called go-to areas, the areas where we want to simplify permitting so that one comprehensive permit allows for renewable projects to go there without separate permits being needed.

Ambitious deadlines for approval can obviously make a huge difference, but shorter deadlines will do little if national authorities do not have the tools to deliver. So we also welcome your proposals to reinforce the staffing and skilling of the competent national authorities to get speedier permitting done. The same goes for your amendments to speed up the permitting for the underlying energy grids.

Let me turn to the emergency regulation that we proposed on 9 November to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy already during the energy crisis. This crisis is urgent and is getting more urgent every day. If some elements for renewables deployment can be accelerated now, we should do that. The proposal includes those parts of the REPowerEU that we believe are less controversial but can accelerate the permitting within the timeframe of the crisis. It can be the bridge until the permanent solutions on permitting in the Renewable Energy Directive are agreed by Parliament and Council and implemented in the national legal systems.

The Commission very much welcomes that Parliament didn't wait for the permanent solutions entirely, but now seeks to include elements from the emergency regulation on permitting into the REPowerEU proposal, making them permanent.

Let me also, however, mention amendments that trigger concern. The selection of the location for biomass combustion plants simply does not depend on the renewable energy potential in the same way as wind and solar. To put it simply, biomass combustion plants can be built anywhere. That is why the Commission proposed to exclude such plants from go-to areas contrary to what some amendments now put forth. On the other hand, excluding new hydropower plants from go-to areas does not seem proportionate as suitable go-to areas can be identified where there would be no significant environmental impact.

The Commission regrets the amendments making the tacit approval of projects voluntary. We understand your concerns, but our proposal already includes safeguards. We are, for instance, excluding tacit approval where a project is subject to an environmental impact assessment. Tacit approval would give a much needed incentive for the Member States to reinforce staffing in permitting authorities.

This Commission is committed to an open and meaningful dialogue with Parliament on the ways to overcome the energy crisis. It is extremely important that you feel involved and this College will use all avenues available to discuss it with you. And also my doors are always open for this discussion. The faster deployment of renewables is the only fundamental way to get out of the energy crisis, together, of course, with saving energy, reducing our energy use. I will work hand-in-hand and with you to get us there.

Elsi Katainen, *maatalousvaliokunnan lausunnon valmistelija*. – Arvoisa puhemies, arvoisa komissaari. Kiitos esittelijälle työstä Repower-aloitteesta. Venäjän hyökkäys Ukrainaan herätti EU:n tarkastelemaan energiajärjestelmäänsä uudelleen. Euroopan unionin huoltovarmuutta ja energiaomavaraisuutta on lisättävä, ja fossiilisesta energiasta on päästävä irti niin nopeasti kuin mahdollista. Siksi uusiutuvan energian tuotantoa ja luvituksia täytyy edistää kaikin mahdollisin keinoin.

Olemme eläneet kriisistä toiseen, ja epävakaus koskee kaikkia, koska tuotantoketjut ovat globaaleja. Siksi omavaraisuutta ja huoltovarmuutta jäsenvaltioissa ja EU:ssa on edistettävä. Euroopassa on oltava kaikki kriittiset toiminnot ja tuotanto, jota ei pidä rakentaa yksittäisiin maihin.

Maatalousvaliokunnan viesti on vahva. EU:lla ei ole varaa jättää bioenergiaa nopeampien luvitusten ulkopuolelle varsinkaan nyt, kun energiakriisi on iskenyt jokaiseen kansalaiseen ja koko yhteiskunnan huoltovarmuuteen. Esimerkiksi maatalouden sivuvirroista valmistettavassa biokaasussa on valtava potentiaali, joka pitää hyödyntää. EU:n on asetettava sitova biokaasun tuotantotavoite ja pyrittävä sitä kohti nykyistä paljon, paljon vahvemmin. Näin saamme hyötyä alkutuotantoon, kuluttajille ja koko yhteiskunnalle.

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Maria Spyra*ki*, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, Executive Vice-President, dear Colleagues, we are living very sad days and we have to clean our houses as soon as possible. And at the same time we have to continue to serve our mandate.

As part of the REpowerEU package, this House makes today another step forwards towards Europe's energy independence from fossil fuel. A large bundle of measures are intended to lower dependence on Russian fossil fuels, reduce CO₂ emissions and accelerate the expansion of renewables.

Today we sent another clear message to all third parties who consider that Europe is being blackmailed. We are now having a close eye to the end-consumers: trying to avoid the imposition of extra burdens, charges and red tape. What matters at this very stage is that Member States shall bear the responsibility to implement as fast as possible the acceleration schemes of legislation that we are voting.

The overall target of increasing the renewable energy sources' share to 45% by 2030 stands as the sole opportunity to accelerate even further the efforts for further rapid deployment of renewables, but with significant improvements on the appropriate infrastructure and development of the grid.

At the same time, the identification and promotion of go-to areas for renewable energy infrastructure and the recognition of renewable energy as an overriding public interest stands as a unique opportunity but it needs to be seized. It is important to underline that permitting granting process shall not exceed the six months in renewable go-to areas, the Executive Vice-President has already mentioned.

Finally, importantly, is that in order to facilitate the development of roof-top solar. Member States must remove all administrative burdens, improving significantly the conditions for photovoltaic systems up to 50 kilowatts in size. Member States need to take up fast implementation decisions in this direction.

Dear colleagues, we need to act with fast and efficient steps. But, last and not least, the Council needs to proceed with a realistic compromise on the correction mechanism and to come all together to political agreement. It is an essential instrument to our societies in this difficult window.

Nicolás González Casares, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señora presidenta, señor presidente, si la emergencia climática exige energías renovables para mitigar los efectos del cambio climático, la crisis energética exige renovables para contener las facturas de los ciudadanos y ciudadanas e independizarnos de los combustibles rusos. Por ello, acelerar los permisos administrativos es vital; sin acelerarlos, los objetivos climáticos son una promesa vacía.

Este informe recoge instrumentos para afrontar ese problema. En primer lugar, la planificación espacial y la identificación de las zonas con bajo impacto medioambiental —no todo el territorio vale en este sentido—. En segundo lugar, el acortamiento de plazos y también el autoconsumo o la repotenciación. Y, por último, tener en cuenta a todas las partes implicadas en las zonas de implantación.

Pero vuelvo a repetir que la aceleración de los permisos debe ir de la mano de la participación social. Estas instalaciones deben generar beneficios para las comunidades locales y debe tenerse en cuenta las actividades preexistentes y también el potencial laboral e industrial local.

Asimismo, debemos ser escrupulosos con la evaluación ambiental. No debemos confundir aceleración con eliminar la protección de los territorios. Eso haría mella en la conciencia ciudadana; es un riesgo real si no tenemos en cuenta algunas de las enmiendas presentadas.

Este informe contiene importantísimas mejoras para la aceleración renovable y para la implicación ciudadana. Pero podemos y debemos ir más allá. Yo les pido humildemente que apoyen nuestra enmienda número seis, que mejora la participación ciudadana.

Además, debemos mantener un diálogo ciudadano en esta Cámara, no romper acuerdos, como ha hecho uno de los ponentes, que ha dinamitado un acuerdo que teníamos en marcha.

En definitiva, más renovables significa menos gas ruso, menos fósiles, más compromiso climático, menores precios para los ciudadanos. En definitiva, todos ganamos si elaboramos una buena Directiva.

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Morten Petersen, *for Renew-Gruppen*. – Fru Formand! Vi skal bruge meget mere grøn strøm i Europa, og vi skal blive meget bedre til at spare på energien. Det skal vi for at kunne indfri vores klimamål, og det skal vi for at frigøre os fra Putins jerngreb på den europæiske energiforsyning. Og på den måde så er vedvarende energi og energieffektivisering gået hen og blevet sikkerhedspolitik fra øverste hylde, og derfor har vi brug for hurtigere tilladelser til at kunne bygge ud. Der er masser, der står og gerne vil i gang med at bygge ud på Nordsøen og på Østersøen. Der er investorer og konsortier, der står og tripper efter at komme i gang, og det kræver tilladelser til at kunne bygge ud. Derfor er det godt med »go-to areas«. Det er vigtigt at sige, at »go-to areas« så ikke må betyde, at alt andet er »no-go-to areas«. Det er godt med tidsfrister, så det er gode ting, vi gør her i dag, og vi kan gøre endnu mere. Så lad dagen i dag også være starten til, at vi får forhandlet et virkelig godt bygningsdirektiv på plads, for på den måde at kunne spare på energien og gøre os fri af Putins gas. Det er en god dag. Det er vigtige skridt i den grønne omstilling.

Ciarán Cuffe, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, Executive Vice-President Timmermans, our shadow rapporteur, Ville Niinistö, could not be here today as he is heading to the biodiversity COP in Montreal. But he asked me to say a few words on his behalf.

This limited revision of the Renewable Energy Directive stemming from the REPowerEU package of May aims at simplifying and shortening the administrative permit-granting processes applicable to renewable energy projects, related storage and grid connections. This is necessary to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy, especially in the face of the current energy crisis and the need to stop using fossil fuels as soon as possible. We are happy to see stricter timelines for permit-granting and obliging Member States to ensure sufficient staff resources to make the shorter permit times doable.

For our group, fighting the climate and biodiversity crises are crucial. We cannot just do one at the cost of the other. They should be solved together. And the compromises are a delicate balance in this aspect and close to the Commission's proposal. But we must also ensure that the rights of the public enshrined in the Aarhus Convention on access to information, public involvement in decision-making and access to justice are upheld in these revisions.

We also welcomed the introduction of some of the measures from the Council's emergency regulation on permitting into the Renewable Energy Directive, especially the even quicker permit-granting for heat pumps and solar installations in the built environment. These are low-hanging fruit in the energy transition that also bring direct benefits to people, reducing their expensive fossil fuel bills while transitioning to renewable energy sources. And I've incorporated some of this into the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive. So we need to knit all of this together.

In conclusion, MEP Ville Niinistö would like to thank the rapporteur and shadows for their cooperation, and hopes to close this file quickly in the new year based on a strong EPP mandate.

President. – Thank you very much, and as I announced in the beginning, of course these shocking and devastating events of the last days will have their consequences, and have to in a functioning democracy. Therefore, we now interrupt this session for the President to announce the results of the CoP session.

IN THE CHAIR: ROBERTA METSOLA

President

3. Comunicação da Presidência

President. – Today, I have convened an extraordinary meeting of the Conference of Presidents on the application of Rule 21 for the early termination of office of Vice-President Eva Kaili.

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The Conference of Presidents unanimously decided to propose to Parliament that it bring to an end the term of office of Vice-President Eva Kaili, pursuant to Rule 21 of the Rules of Procedure. Parliament shall take a decision on that proposal today, at the beginning of the voting session at noon, acting by a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast, constituting a majority of its component Members.

IN THE CHAIR: KATARINA BARLEY

Vice-President

4. Diretivas energia de fontes renováveis, desempenho energético dos edifícios e eficiência energética: alterações (REPowerEU) (continuação do debate)

Die Präsidentin. – Wir setzen nun unsere Aussprache über den Bericht von Markus Pieper im Namen des Ausschusses für Industrie, Forschung und Energie über den Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zur Änderung der Richtlinie (EU) 2018/2001 zur Förderung der Nutzung von Energie aus erneuerbaren Quellen, der Richtlinie 2010/31/EU über die Gesamtenergieeffizienz von Gebäuden sowie der Richtlinie 2012/27/EU zur Energieeffizienz (COM(2022)0222 – C9-0184/2022 – 2022/0160(COD)) (A9-0283/2022) fort.

Paolo Borchia, a nome del gruppo ID. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, ringrazio il relatore per la concretezza. L'ideologia e la burocrazia credo siano i primi elementi che debbano essere contrastati per raggiungere una transizione energetica a misura dei territori.

Sul tema dell'idrogeno verde, le tecnologie stanno migliorando, i prezzi che, ricordo sono costituiti per il 70 % dall'elettricità e per il 30 % dagli elettrolizzatori, stanno scendendo, però la domanda arranca e il mercato effettivamente va ancora creato.

La ricerca di un'autonomia energetica per l'Unione va nella giusta direzione, però non sempre questo Parlamento riesce a legiferare con una tabella di marcia che sia coerente con le possibilità e con le capacità di generazione degli Stati membri. La sostenibilità non deve essere soltanto ambientale, ma deve essere estesa anche al lato sociale e al lato economico, perché se le aziende chiudono o delocalizzano e se i posti di lavoro vanno persi, allora avremo fallito l'obiettivo.

Evžen Tošenovský, za skupinu ECR. – Paní předsedající, pane komisaři, dnes projednáváme jeden z důležitých dokumentů řady *Fit for 55*, a to obnovitelné zdroje. V první řadě bych chtěl poděkovat kolegovi Markusu Pieperovi jako zpravodaji v této věci a ne úplně lehké materii. Velmi oceňuji jeho snahu najít maximální podporu společného postupu. Jedná se o skutečně důležitý dokument, který by měl hlavně zjednodušit administrativní proces při výstavbě obnovitelných zdrojů.

V současné době se skutečně setkáváme v mnoha členských zemích se situací, kdy jsou různá nastavení, ať již geografická, energetického mixu a tyto podmínky jsou velmi složité. Proto i my bychom neměli opomíjet skutečně rozdílnou situaci a dbát na to, aby nedošlo ke krizovým situacím. Stejně tak musíme brát velmi vážně nezbytné udržení stability energetických sítí, protože členské země se musí vypořádat se záložními zdroji elektřiny i při výpadku produkce z obnovitelných zdrojů.

Ještě jednou bych chtěl poděkovat Markusu Pieperovi a věřím, že se nám společně podaří najít rozumné řešení v této složité legislativě tak, abychom na jedné straně procesy zjednodušili a urychlili, ale nezpůsobili zbytečné krizové situace v dodávkách elektřiny nebo energií obecně.

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Sira Rego, *en nombre del Grupo The Left*. – Señora presidenta, señor comisario Timmermans, sin duda, la crisis ecosocial nos empuja a actualizar la Directiva de energías renovables, por supuesto, para desplazar los combustibles fósiles, para abaratar el precio de la factura eléctrica y, sin duda, también para afianzar la autonomía energética de la UE. Pero, obviamente, con eso no será suficiente. Además, hay que plantear un despliegue de renovables que vaya asociado a una reducción del consumo energético y a un modelo que avance en criterios de justicia y participación pública. De hecho, si algo ha demostrado la crisis energética actual, es que el aumento de los precios es consecuencia, entre otros factores, del modelo de mercado fallido —el mercado marginalista—, de la falta de control público y de la falta de planificación.

Desde luego, creemos que avanzar en la aceleración de proyectos renovables de generación distribuida, autoconsumo y comunidades energéticas, así como establecer elementos de planificación pública y zonificación, son elementos positivos de esta Directiva, como también lo es el compromiso de reforzar los recursos de las administraciones públicas.

Sin embargo, nos preocupa que esta Directiva no contribuya a cambiar el modelo energético e introduzca elementos que resultarán conflictivos, como el silencio administrativo positivo, que incrementará problemas previos de planificación del territorio, o la formulación del interés público general que, tal y como aparece, más bien parece que tiene que ver con el interés empresarial particular.

Ojalá seamos capaces de mejorar esta Directiva con inteligencia y determinación.

András Gyürk (NI). – Elnök Asszony! Európa példátlan energiaválsággal küzd. Az európai polgárok nap mint nap szankciós felárat kénytelenek fizetni az energiáért. Ezért most minden erőnket az energiaválság megoldására kell fordítanunk. A mostani helyzetben minden olyan kezdeményezés támogatandó, ami növeli a megújuló energia szerepét és csökkenti a bürokráciát. Az engedélyezési eljárások felgyorsítása egyszerre teljesítheti ezt a két célt, ezért a kiegyensúlyozott jelentésért köszönet illeti Pieper képviselő urat.

Fontos azonban, hogy a megújuló energia súlyának növeléséhez az áramhálózat jelentős fejlesztésére is szükség van. Ez pedig nagy beruházásokat igényel, amelyekbe csak egy erős gazdasággal rendelkező Unió vághat bele. Ezért el kell törölni a káros szankciókat, a tagállamoknak oda kell adni a nekik járó forrásokat, és minden segítséget meg kell adni a vállalkozásoknak. Csak így, komplex módon lehet ezt a válságot kezelni.

President. – I have to say that now I have to be a bit more strict on the speaking time because at 10:30 we are expecting the Prime Minister of Slovenia, Mr Golob.

Dan Nica (S&D). – Doamna președintă, domnule vicepreședinte executiv Timmermans, ați făcut o propunere foarte bună pentru că și dumneavoastră, și noi, și toți cei care sunt interesați să avem și o energie care să fie ieftină, și care să fie și disponibilă, au constatat că această energie regenerabilă nu o avem disponibilă în cantitățile necesare. De ce? Păi, dacă media de aprobare și de punere în funcțiune a unui proiect de regenerabil în Uniunea Europeană este de șapte ani? Sunt state membre care aveau și 10 ani de zile. Deci, era o situație absolut inacceptabilă. Din acest motiv, faptul că am redus timpul de implementare obligatoriu la nouă luni de zile, faptul că am spus că pentru elementele care trebuie să vină să pună în funcțiune aceste parcuri de energii regenerabile, fie că sunt eoliene sau solare, timpul de aprobare este limitat la șase luni de zile, ca să le putem avea în funcțiune repede și în beneficiul tuturor.

Și am mai făcut un lucru. Știți, toți au încercat și au început să își pună acum pe casele lor panouri solare. Tuturor le-am spus un singur lucru: nu mai e nevoie de niciun fel de aprobare ca să-ți spui panouri solare pe acoperișul casei tale. Trimiți o simplă notificare și hai să-i dăm drumul și să fim serioși.

Și un ultim lucru: ne vom bate să avem hidrocentrale. Este singura sursă de stocare pe care o avem disponibilă și pe care o putem folosi. Fără stocare nu putem avea energii regenerabile, nu putem avea cantitățile pe care ni le dorim. Și pentru ca să fim consistenți cu politica noastră energetică, acesta este un lucru pe care noi vrem să îl facem. Și mulțumesc încă o dată pentru tuturor celor care au lucrat la acest dosar extrem de important.

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Claudia Gamon (Renew). – Frau Präsidentin! Die Energiekrise zeigt die zerstörerische Kraft fossiler Energieträger. Sie zerstören unser Klima, und sie zerstören die europäische Sicherheit. Erneuerbare Energien sind unsere Zukunft, nicht nur im Kampf gegen die Klimakatastrophe, sondern für die europäische Unabhängigkeit und für leistbare Energie.

Diese Gesetzesänderungen geben uns endlich die Instrumente, die wir brauchen, um wirklich in die Genehmigungsverfahren, in die Bürokratie ordentlich reinzuholen. Jede unnötige Verlängerung in den Verfahren für PV, für Windenergie oder auch für Pumpspeicher steht der Freiheit der Europäerinnen im Weg.

In Vorarlberg, in meiner Heimatregion, zum Beispiel droht Bürokratie eines der wichtigsten Infrastrukturvorhaben der nächsten 15 Jahre unnötig zu verlängern: Lünensee II – ein wirklich zukunftsträchtiges Pumpspeicherprojekt, das 1000 - Megawatt Leistung für die ganze grenzübergreifende Region bringen wird, schaut einem Verfahren von sechs bis acht Jahren entgegen. Das ist zu viel. Das können wir uns nicht mehr leisten. Und so etwas muss auch endlich ein Ende haben – für unsere Freiheit.

Martin Häusling (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, lieber Herr Kommissar! In vielen Punkten sind wir uns einig: Wir müssen beschleunigen, um die Ziele für Erneuerbare zu erreichen – gar keine Frage. Wir müssen schneller Genehmigungen erteilen, Erneuerbare müssen Vorrang erhalten – ganz klar, da sind wir uns einig. Und wir brauchen einen Vorrang vor allem für Wind und Solar. Das sind unsere größten Potenziale. Aber wir dürfen auch nicht vergessen, Herr Kommissar, Sie haben es angesprochen: Wir müssen auch über Energieeffizienz, Erneuerbare und Einsparungen reden. Und das vermissen wir in vielen Punkten.

Probleme haben wir nach wie vor – und da bin ich auch weiterhin sehr kritisch – bei der Biomasse. Was den Ausbau von Holzbiomasseverbrennung angeht, können wir das nicht noch weiter steigern. Bei Biogas müssen wir Reststoffe verwerten, ganz klar, und nicht darauf setzen, dass wir Maisenergieanlagen bauen. Das ist keine Zukunft.

Leider will die EVP in dieser ganzen Gesetzgebung gleich ein paar Umweltgesetze mit eliminieren. Da werden sie mit unserem Widerstand rechnen müssen. Und ganz klar: Natura-2000-Gebiete dürfen und müssen einen besonderen Schutz haben.

Lieber Markus Pieper: Nicht nur Umweltverbände behindern den Ausbau, sondern auch übertriebene Abstandsregelungen in einigen Bundesländern wie etwa Bayern.

Georg Mayer (ID). – Frau Präsidentin! Ja, ein Vorstoß zur Vereinfachung von Bürokratie ist meiner Meinung nach in der Europäischen Union immer willkommen und auch in vielen anderen Bereichen notwendig. Der sollte aber nicht nur eine Notfallmaßnahme sein, sondern diese Vereinfachung der Bürokratie sollte eigentlich die Regel sein.

Und in diesem Zusammenhang bin ich auch der Meinung, dass man generell einmal die Russlandsanktionen evaluieren sollte. Denn die einzige Auswirkung, die diese Sanktionen derzeit haben, ist, dass wir hier in Europa und die Menschen in Europa spüren, dass die Energie immer teurer wird und bald nicht mehr leistbar sein wird.

Eine verfehlte Energiepolitik der letzten Jahrzehnte führt genau dazu, dass die Menschen ihre Wohnungen nicht mehr heizen können, dass etwa wir unsere drei Standorte, die wir ja dringend benötigen, auch nicht mehr richtig heizen können. Das einzige, was dieses Haus noch etwas aufheizt, sind die brandgefährlichen Kontakte der S&D-Fraktion zu Katar, die noch dazu illegal sind.

Trotzdem bleibt eines: Wir werden den Energiebedarf für das Jahr 2030, 2035, wo wir wissen, dass die E-Mobilität stark zunehmen wird, nicht mit Windrädern bedienen können.

Anna Zalewska (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Panie Komisarzy! Koleżanki i Koledzy! Ceny energii rzeczywiście są nie do zaakceptowania, ale stały się one nie do zaakceptowania w ostatnim kwartale 2021 r. przed wybuchem wojny. Wojna przyspieszyła wszystko. Rzeczywiście trzeba podejmować decyzje o dywersyfikacji, magazynowaniu, oszczędzaniu. Ale niestety te zmiany w dyrektywie niczego nie zmieniają. Są gwarancją absolutnego chaosu, w dodatku bez właściwego finansowania. W dodatku są pogwałceniem tego, o czym zawsze mówiliśmy o udziale społeczeństwa, o ochronie środowiska, siedlisk, natury, dlatego, że o tym zapominamy.

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Nieakceptowalny jest artykuł 16d, który mówi o tym, że z jakiegoś powodu urządzenia do tego rodzaju energii odnawialnej są inwestycjami celu publicznego. To znaczy, że pozwolimy na bezwzględne działania inwestorów, które będą ingerować w prywatność, we własność Europejczyków, powodując absolutny chaos. W kontekście skandalów korupcyjnych, również otwieramy furtkę na tego rodzaju działania przy lokowaniu inwestycji energii odnawialnej.

Γιώργος Γεωργίου (The Left). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, Κύριε Επίτροπε, κύριοι συνάδελφοι, ο πλανήτης εκπέμπει σήμα κινδύνου. Η καταστροφή του περιβάλλοντος λόγω της κατάχρησης των φυσικών πόρων και της αλόγιστης χρήσης και της δράσης των πολυεθνικών είναι τεράστια. Την ίδια στιγμή, η ενεργειακή φτώχεια, η ενεργειακή ένδεια, ταλανίζει έναν στους τέσσερις Ευρωπαίους συμπολίτες μας. Για την ομάδα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ενωτικής Αριστεράς είναι ξεκάθαρο ότι απαιτούνται νέες πολιτικές με στόχο την αιχμώδη ανάπτυξη προς όφελος των λαών. Ο πράσινος καπιταλισμός που επιβραβεύει με πακτωλό χρημάτων τους κύριους ρυπαντές ως πράσινα μονοπώλια δεν μπορεί να συνεχιστεί. Είναι αδήριτη ανάγκη να προωθηθεί μια ολοκληρωμένη στρατηγική για την ανάπτυξη των ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας. Εκτιμούμε, κύριε Επίτροπε, ως θετική την προσπάθεια της έκδοσης να προωθήσει πανευρωπαϊκά γενικούς κανόνες αδειοδότησης για έργα και εγκαταστάσεις ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας, ζητώντας επιτάχυνση των διαδικασιών, δημόσιο σχεδιασμό και προτεραιότητα σε υποβαθμισμένες περιοχές. Μας προβληματίζει βέβαια ο κίνδυνος που ελλοχεύει για μείωση των απαιτήσεων όσον αφορά τις περιβαλλοντικές επιπτώσεις και την προστασία των περιοχών Natura 2000. Αξιοποιώντας την ευρωπαϊκή οδηγία, αναμένουμε ότι και η Κύπρος θα προχωρήσει σε μελλοντικούς διαγωνισμούς, ώστε να εξασφαλιστεί φτηνό ρεύμα για τον λαό μας.

Gilbert Collard (NI). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, je vous prie de bien vouloir excuser ma tenue un peu hivernale, mais dans cette époque de mensonges contemporains, je ne crois qu'au bouclier énergétique que je représente. Donc je me vêts en conséquence.

La seule question que je voudrais poser dans la minute qui m'est donnée, c'est: «Que cache cette crise énergétique?» Jusqu'alors on n'en parlait pas trop, et voici que soudain, on se met à se poser des questions de tous côtés. Les énergies renouvelables deviennent le renouveau de l'humanité, alors que l'on passe par l'exploitation des terres rares, qui nous mettent sous la soumission de la Chine.

Je n'ai pas fait de choix, mais j'ai mon inquiétude, et je repose ma question: dans les temps troublés que nous vivons, dans les temps inquiétants que ce Parlement vit, que cache cette crise énergétique soudaine, qui nous ramène à la période de la bougie, sans que nous ayons la moindre lumière?

Cristian-Silviu Bușoi (PPE). – Doamna președintă, de la semnarea declarației de la Versailles am intensificat activitatea în Parlamentul European și în special în comisia ITRE, pentru a permite Uniunii să acționeze cât mai repede posibil în implementarea planului REPOWER EU și în adaptarea propunerilor Fit for 55 la acest plan.

Directiva privind promovarea utilizării energiei din surse regenerabile a fost deja amendată de două ori.

În calitate de președinte al comisiei ITRE, aș vrea să îi mulțumesc și să îl felicit pe colegul meu Markus Piper și pe colegii responsabili din partea grupurilor politice pentru viteza rapidă de reacție și spiritul de echipă din ultimele luni. Vom susține, deci, accelerarea procedurilor de autorizare pentru proiectele de energie regenerabilă, o mai bună definiție a zonelor de acces, criteriile pentru stabilirea locațiilor de interes public.

În paralel cu activitatea noastră legislativă, Comisia Europeană a propus un nou Regulament temporar de urgență al Consiliului pentru a accelera implementarea producției de energie din surse regenerabile în baza articolului 122. Și, chiar dacă avem rezerve serioase legate de folosirea mult prea des a articolului 122, Parlamentul European a luat în considerare și este coordonat în poziția sa și cu această inițiativă a Comisiei.

Dragi colegi, domnule vicepreședinte executiv, Parlamentul a arătat că poate reacționa rapid și în deplină solidaritate cu celelalte instituții. Asigurăm în mod ferm cetățenii europeni că vom lucra eficient alături de statele membre, cu sprijinul Comisiei, pentru a avea cea mai bună legislație, pentru a găsi soluții la criza actuală a prețurilor și pentru a ne atinge ambițiile ținte climatice.

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Tiemo Wölken (S&D). – Frau Präsidentin, sehr geehrter Herr Kommissar, lieber Frans! Das Europäische Parlament macht zusammen mit den Mitgliedstaaten ernst beim Ausbau der erneuerbaren Energie. Wenn wir bis 2030 45 % Erneuerbare erreichen, können wir dabei 200 Milliarden Euro sparen, die wir nicht in fossile Energien investieren müssen. Wir können uns unabhängig machen von Putins Gas. Und dieses Ziel ist mit einer vereinten Kraftanstrengung erreichbar.

Ich bin froh darüber, dass wir hier im Haus, aber auch im Rat diese Verfahrensvereinfachung, die wir brauchen, um mehr Erneuerbare zu haben und sie schneller auszubauen, diskutiert haben und uns breit geeinigt haben. Wir haben ein Agreement, das einen verhältnismäßigen Ausbau vorsieht und gleichzeitig das Naturschutzrecht achtet.

Diesen ausgewogenen Ansatz jetzt zu gefährden, wie es vonseiten der EVP vorgenommen wird, ist wirklich ein großes Problem. Keine Umweltprüfung mehr bei Biomassekraftwerken: Das ist gefährlich, das macht keinen Sinn und das hilft niemandem. Natura-2000-Gebiete vollzubauen, hilft auch nicht. Es würde sehr viel mehr helfen in Staaten, in Bundesländern wie Bayern z. B. unnötige Abstandsflächen für Erneuerbare abzuschaffen. Deswegen lassen Sie uns an dem Kompromiss festhalten und heute darüber abstimmen.

Искра Михайлова (Renew). – Г-жо Председател, безспорно Европа се нуждае от цялостна трансформация на енергийната си система, което налага взимане на ключови решения, касаещи политиките в областта на енергетиката, темпото на решенията за ефективен енергиен преход и на енергийна независимост. Войната в Украйна безапелационно ни показва колко е важно това за бъдещето на Европа.

Изпълнението на REPowerEU ще ускори разпространението на възобновяеми енергийни източници в Европа, ще насърчи по нататъшното засилване на енергийната ефективност като важен компонент от цялата система и в крайна сметка ще доведе до завишени икономии на енергия, енергийна сигурност и независимост. Предложените промени включват засилени мерки за ускоряване на процедурите за издаване на разрешителни за нови ВЕИ и соларни инсталации. Абсолютно необходима мярка, която подкрепяме и която ще бъде ефективна, ако страните членки активно се включат в нейното изпълнение и намерим подкрепата на местните власти.

Ignazio Corrao (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, good morning Mr Executive Vice-President. Yesterday, a historic scientific breakthrough was announced. In ten years, nuclear fusion might power a completely decarbonised energy system. But we are still talking about ten years at least.

What do we do until then? Shall we keep growing our dependence on fossil fuels and foreign countries that produce them? Doesn't seem very wise. Shall we keep pouring water on conventional nuclear plants and sweep their waste under the rug?

The solution in the meanwhile is investing in solar panels, wind turbines, heat pumps. This is the cheapest and fastest way to decarbonise the energy system now. And we need to accelerate because the climate crisis does not wait for administrative procedures to be done. Citizens are on our side, on this as long as we let them be part of the process and aid their advantage on the process, on bills, for example, and don't impose choices on them.

Citizens are actually the power that our renewable energy system is built on.

Ivan David (ID). – Paní předsedající, návrh novely tří směrnic je jednostranně zaměřen na podporu výhradně solárních a větrných elektráren, tedy občasných zdrojů energie. Komise v podstatě znevýhodňuje bioplynové stanice. Dnešní technologie umožňují z bioplynu vyrábět teplo a elektřinu a po předčištění také používat k pohonu zemědělských strojů. Dnes už existují traktory, nakladače a také kombajny, které mohou fungovat na bioplyn.

Bioplyn lze po přečištění vtláčet do již existujících plynových rozvodů. Neexistuje tedy jediný rozumný důvod pro to, aby byl tento perspektivní a přitom ekologický a hlavně domácí zdroj legislativně diskriminován. V době, kdy Komise a Parlament protiruskými sankcemi způsobily zdražení hnojiv a jejich nedostatek, zdražení energií a pohonných hmot, je nesmyslné legislativně poškozovat výrobu v bioplynových stanicích. Proto jsem spolu s kolegy předložil řadu pozměňovacích návrhů, jejichž cílem je vytvořit pro bioplyn příznivé právní podmínky.

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Krzysztof Jurgiel (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Panie Komisarzu! Transformacja energetyczna musi spełniać określone cele. Po pierwsze, cel nadrzędny zapewnienia udziału energii ze źródeł odnawialnych w końcowym zużyciu energii brutto w Unii w 2030 r. na poziomie 45% jest nierealny. Po drugie, w celu zapewnienia sprawiedliwej transformacji energetycznej należy uwzględnić różnice w poziomie zamożności obywateli Unii Europejskiej w poszczególnych państwach członkowskich poprzez zwiększenie dofinansowania w krajach o mniejszym produkcie krajowym brutto. Po trzecie, należy włączyć instalacje spalania biomasy do środków REPowerEU oraz zapewnić dodatkowe finansowanie.

Po czwarte wreszcie, inwestycje OZE powinny wiązać się z jak najmniejszym obciążeniem. Należy skreślić artykuł 16d umożliwiający ograniczenie praw własności właścicieli nieruchomości.

Sandra Pereira (The Left). – Senhora Presidente, este plano estratégico propõe intervir sobre o sistema energético, reagindo aos desenvolvimentos neste setor desde o ano passado, agravados pelas consequências da guerra e das sanções que, cumprindo a agenda dos Estados Unidos da América, sacrificam os povos da Europa. As medidas previstas nas suas diversas dimensões respondem, no essencial, aos interesses dos grandes grupos económicos e das potências europeias.

O caminho traçado está longe de responder às necessidades dos povos, de garantir a equidade socioeconómica e de respeitar a soberania dos Estados. Serão, como em outros momentos, os consumidores familiares a suportar a fatura do chamado mercado único da energia, enquanto os grandes grupos económicos, que exploram o sector e os recursos, esfregam as mãos e acumulam lucros.

Defendemos como necessária a intervenção dos Estados ao nível da prospeção, o aprovisionamento, produção, transporte e comercialização das diferentes formas de energia, que devem estar na esfera pública, sob controlo público e democrático. É neste quadro que urge dar as respostas necessárias às famílias e às pequenas empresas que enfrentam sérias dificuldades. É este o caminho social e ambientalmente sustentável.

President. – Because we have the Slovenian Prime Minister here at 10:30, I will now close the catch-the-eye list. We have six people on the list and we will not be able to take any more.

Francesca Donato (NI). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, le modifiche alla direttiva sulla promozione delle energie rinnovabili proposte dalla Commissione fissano per gli Stati membri obiettivi ancora più irrealistici ed insostenibili di quelli già previsti nel pacchetto *Fit for 55* del luglio 2021, imponendo una riduzione dei consumi energetici del 13 % entro il 2030, raggiungibile soltanto tramite una massiccia deindustrializzazione.

Le misure tese ad accelerare le autorizzazioni per gli impianti produttivi di energia rinnovabile sicuramente gioveranno alle imprese che producono e vendono pannelli solari, ma è semplicemente illusorio, anzi ingannevole, pensare che con queste si possa supplire al deficit di energia che attualmente affligge l'Europa, a causa di scelte basate solo su ragioni ideologiche e obiettivi geopolitici che nulla hanno a che vedere, anzi confliggono, con l'interesse dell'industria e dell'economia europea.

Una nuova lista di compiti a casa inutili e autolesionistici è l'ultima cosa di cui abbiamo bisogno: le politiche europee smettano di soffocare i Paesi membri con prescrizioni assurde e inneschino la retromarcia prima che arriviamo allo schianto.

Jerzy Buzek (PPE). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Gratuluję sprawozdawcy dobrego sprawozdania i wykonanego bardzo sprawnie. Gratuluję także Komisji Europejskiej i panu przewodniczącemu Timmermansowi, bo ten projekt, plan REPowerEU był najlepszą możliwą odpowiedzią na istniejący głęboki kryzys. Pamiętajmy, jedną z głównych przyczyn naszego kryzysu było zbyt mało energii odnawialnej, a nie zbyt dużo. Również uzależnialiśmy się od paliw kopalnych ze wschodu, zamiast wydawać więcej i więcej pieniędzy na energię odnawialną.

Ale dla mnie są dzisiaj cztery najważniejsze sprawy. Po pierwsze, uznanie projektów produkcji energii elektrycznej z OZE za leżące w nadrzędnym interesie publicznym. Chodzi o nasze zdrowie, chodzi o życie i unikanie przedwczesnych śmierci, chodzi o nasze poczucie bezpieczeństwa i także o rachunki za prąd, żeby były jak najniższe. W przypadku każdej drogi podejmujemy trudne decyzje, bo jacyś obywatele mogą na tym tracić, ale interes publiczny zyskuje. Pamiętajmy także o przyspieszeniu instalowania pomp, o ocieplaniu budynków, o biogazowniach, a także o magazynowaniu energii. Baterie i zielony wodór to nasza przyszłość.

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Цветелина Пенкова (S&D). – Г-жо Председател, планът REPowerEU беше изключително нужна мярка, за да гарантира стабилността и предвидимостта на европейските граждани и бизнеси. В преговорите по Директивата за енергийни характеристики на сградите веднага създадохме член, който да позволи по-бърз процес за издаване на разрешителни за домашни фотоволтаични инсталации.

Европейските граждани имат един единствен въпрос към нас в момента - как да намалим енергийните им сметки? Това може да стане единствено, ако изградим балансирана енергийна система, която разчита както на възобновяеми източници, така и на базови мощности, което включва и ядрената енергетика. Не трябва да залитаме в нито една крайност, а да следваме технически най-добрите решения, за да можем реално да намалим сметките и да отговорим на исканията и нуждите на европейските граждани и европейската индустрия.

Nicola Danti (Renew). – Signora Presidente, signor Vicepresidente esecutivo, onorevoli colleghi, quest'anno in Italia, a fronte di richieste per 300 gigawatt di rinnovabili, riusciremo ad allacciarne alla rete solo tre, un dato reale che dimostra quanto le procedure autorizzative ai diversi livelli, siano esse nazionali, regionali o territoriali, rappresentino il vero ostacolo da sormontare.

Valutiamo quindi positivamente questo provvedimento, che prevede strumenti concreti per individuare le cosiddette zone di accelerazione per le energie rinnovabili, in cui gli impianti potranno beneficiare di pratiche autorizzative più rapide.

Accogliamo con favore anche il concetto di interesse pubblico prevalente per l'autorizzazione e la pianificazione degli impianti rinnovabili, riconoscendone la priorità per la nostra economia e per la nostra società.

A causa della guerra in Ucraina il dispiegamento delle energie rinnovabili e una sempre maggiore integrazione dei mix energetici di diversi Paesi membri non assumono solo un valore ambientale, ma anche uno strategico, a difesa della nostra sovranità e della nostra libertà.

Senza abbattere il grande muro della burocrazia, la sfida della transizione energetica rimarrà un obiettivo solo sulla carta.

Manuela Ripa (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin, sehr geehrter Herr Kommissar! Der Ukrainekrieg hat endlich vielen vor Augen geführt, dass wir den Ausbau der erneuerbaren Energie beschleunigen müssen. Die vorliegende Verordnung will dies unterstützen, und das ist gut und wichtig.

Gleichwohl sehe ich einige Aspekte dieser Verordnung kritisch. Neben der Klimakrise dürfen wir nicht vergessen, dass wir auch eine Biodiversitätskrise haben, wie uns die zurzeit stattfindende UN-COP15 ganz deutlich macht. Der dramatische Verlust der Artenvielfalt ist eine tickende Zeitbombe. Der Naturschutz darf deshalb nicht unter die Räder des Klimaschutzes fallen. Leider zielen aber einige Regelungen und Änderungsanträge des Plenums genau darauf ab. Gerade der Bereich zum überwiegenden öffentlichen Interesse wird dem Naturschutz nicht immer gerecht. Das können wir besser.

Nehmen wir z. B. die breit vorhandenen Industriebrachflächen für den Ausbau erneuerbarer Energie statt Naturflächen. Wir brauchen eine naturverträgliche Energiewende, und diese beschränkt sich eben nicht auf den Austausch fossiler Energie durch Erneuerbare. Klimaschutz ist auch Naturschutz. Beides bedingt einander.

Johan Nissinen (ECR). – Fru talman! EU har en vision om att 240 miljoner byggnader ska bli utsläppsfria. Visst är det fantastiskt, men kommer det fungera i praktiken? Tyskland spenderade mellan år 2010 och 2018 342 miljarder euro på åtgärder för att spara energi. Det är lika mycket som tre stycken svenska statsbudgetar. Trots detta var energiförbrukningen nästan densamma.

Vi bör lära oss av Tyskland och inte kasta pengarna i sjön. Om vi verkligen vill göra skillnad investerar vi i moderna kärnkraftverk samt forskning och utveckling. Vi måste sluta med ineffektiv och dyr detaljstyrning och börja satsa på klimatåtgärder som faktiskt ger effekt. Vi måste inte bli världsmästare på att spara på marginalen utan bäst på det som faktiskt gör skillnad.

Mislav Kolakušić (NI). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, poštovani kolege, dragi građani, posljednjih mjeseci smo proglasili nepoželjnim jeftine energente: plin, naftu naših najnovijih neprijatelja, novih neprijatelja Europske unije. I počeli smo te iste energente kupovati po nekoliko puta višim cijenama, od naših saveznika.

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Moram priznati da mi ništa nije bilo jasno sve do prije neki dan. Ovih dana, kada su uhapšeni kolege socijalisti zbog korupcije jednog od naših novih saveznika koji, uzgred, proizvodi i plin i naftu, sve mi je postalo jasno. Jesu li velika inflacija i ogromni porast cijena, deindustrijalizacija, posljedična, Europske unije posljedica korupcije ili nečeg drugog, nije uopće teško zaključiti.

Seán Kelly (PPE). – *A Uachtarán*, permitting and licensing procedures remain one of the biggest hurdles in achieving mass deployment of renewable technologies. Procedures differ in Member States. We have more cross-border cooperation on complex energy projects. Without action, we would likely see more and more unnecessary time wasted in getting the required bureaucracy in order.

In the Renewable Energy Directive, I tabled an amendment to introduce a Fit for 55 label for public interest renewable energy projects, which would allow the granting of a priority status in national law for such projects and thus speed up the whole permitting and planning process.

The war has changed the trajectory of EU energy policy and there is now a much greater need to ensure our regulatory framework can react to our needs. This legislation certainly goes in the right direction and it includes many positive aspects. However, in order to unblock the pipeline of projects that are waiting for approval, existing permitting procedures should also be considered to be of overriding public interest. This is hugely important.

Jens Geier (S&D). – Frau Präsidentin, sehr geehrter Herr Vizepräsident, lieber Frans, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Herr Timmermans, Sie haben in Ihrer Eröffnung völlig richtig gesagt, dass es keine preiswertere Energie als die Erneuerbaren gibt. Tatsächlich, und das ist hier vielfach ausgeführt worden, sind sie die Antwort auf die Preiskrise, die Russland durch seinen Krieg ausgelöst hat – wenn wir sie nur hätten. Erneuerbare plus Wasserstoff als Speichermedium brauchen wir, und das so schnell wie möglich. Daher ist es richtig, wenn wir dafür sorgen, dass die Genehmigungsverfahren beschleunigt werden, ohne den Naturschutz dabei komplett zu beseitigen.

Und dann kommt die christdemokratische Fraktion. Sie reißen nicht nur die Schranken des Naturschutzes komplett nieder – den Sie ja nie so richtig gemocht haben –, Sie wollen auch die bereits im Spätsommer erreichten Beschlüsse durchs Hintertürchen wieder infrage stellen, die Sie ja eigentlich auch nicht mögen.

Noch einmal: Wir brauchen ambitionierte Beschlüsse und Beschleunigung, nicht die endlose Wiederholung von Debatten, die schon entschieden sind.

Mauri Pekkarinen (Renew). – Arvoisa puhemies, 45 prosentin tavoite on kova. Parlamentti ja komissio – EU – nojaa nyt vahvasti aurinkovoimaan ja tuulivoimaan. Asennetun tehon nostaminen aurinkovoiman osalta 150 gigawatista 600 gigawattiin, tuulivoiman nostaminen 180 gigawatista 500 gigawattiin ja biokaasun tai biometaanin nostaminen 18 gigawatista 40 gigawattiin vaatii radikaaleja toimia, jotta näissä voidaan onnistua.

Ydinkehittämislueen ajatus on hyvä ja varmasti käyttökelpoinen ajatellen sekä lupaprosesseja että myös uusiutuvan energian saamista verkkoon. Nämä esitykset ovat hyviä. Siitä olen kuitenkin pahoillani, että koko tämä mietintö ei noteeraa bioenergiaa niin kuin pitäisi, eikä sitä noteerata myöskään ydinkehittämislueella.

Komissaari Timmermans sanoo, että sitä voi muutenkin rakentaa. Voi, mutta siihen tarvitaan lupia. Tarvitaan kaavoitus- päätöksiä. Tarvitaan monenlaisia ympäristölupia ja tarvitaan rakennuslupia. Myös bioenergian käytön edistämisessä nopeatutet menettelyt ovat paikallaan ja tarpeen.

Pilar del Castillo Vera (PPE). – Señora presidenta, señor vicepresidente, discutimos esta mañana la cuarta revisión de la Directiva relativa a la energía procedente de fuentes renovables, antes incluso de que se acuerde y apruebe la tercera.

Esta nueva propuesta es una respuesta, como sabemos, a la crisis energética provocada por la crisis de Ucrania cuyo objetivo es acelerar aún más el despliegue de energías renovables en la Unión Europea. Para ello se propone que el objetivo de uso de energías renovables en el consumo final en el 2030 sea del 45 %. Sin embargo, su valor añadido no radica en proponer un objetivo mayor, sino en proponer medidas que contribuyan a alcanzarlo.

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Me gustaría mencionar dos de ellas que me parecen fundamentales: la primera, la apuesta por los entornos de pruebas normativos que permiten el desarrollo de tecnologías innovadoras en el campo de las energías renovables; la segunda, la reducción de las cargas burocráticas y de los tiempos máximos para que las autoridades nacionales emitan los permisos necesarios. En las zonas identificadas, la emisión de los permisos para producir energía basada en renovables no podrá dilatarse más de nueve meses.

Ambas medidas deberían ser también aplicadas a otros campos muy necesarios para el crecimiento y la competitividad, y no solamente a este asunto de las energías renovables, que es, no obstante, tan importante.

Niels Fuglsang (S&D). – Fru Formand! Den 29. november — for små to uger siden — indgik Tyskland en aftale med Qatar om 15 års levering af to millioner tons flydende gas om året. Tidligere i år indgik EU en aftale med Aserbajdsjan. Senest i 2027 skal de levere 20 millioner kubikmeter gas til EU. En fordobling i forhold til i dag. Jeg anerkender, at lige nu, når kulden rammer Europa, så har vi ikke noget valg. Det er tragisk, at vi er endt sådan. Men det er tragisk, at vores ledere igennem årtier har bundet os til naturgas fra en slyngelstat, og det skal vi væk fra hurtigst muligt. Derfor er det i vores fælles interesse, at vi kommer af med russisk gas, at vi ikke binder os til nye slyngelstater. Det er i vores fælles interesse, at vi udbygger den vedvarende energi så hurtigt som muligt, får installeret varmepumper, styrker vores el-net, få opsat solceller og vindmøller. Det ansvar må vi tage på os. Lad os gøre det så hurtigt som muligt. Lad os få vedtaget en ny lov om vedvarende energi for at få sat gang i den grønne omstilling.

Susana Solís Pérez (Renew). – Señora presidenta, señor comisario Timmermans, acelerar el despliegue de renovables es una cuestión de supervivencia en la Unión Europea. Y eliminar los cuellos de botella y agilizar los trámites administrativos en la concesión de permisos debe ser una prioridad. El plan REPowerEU es la respuesta.

Hoy, un proyecto solar puede tardar en aprobarse hasta cuatro años; uno de eólica, hasta diez. Esto es inadmisibles en la crisis actual. Pero cuidado, esto no puede hacerse a cualquier precio. Simplificación: sí, pero respetando las normas medioambientales y, por supuesto, sin dar la espalda a los entes locales que ahora ven cómo macroproyectos de renovables se deciden sin su participación. Deben identificarse las zonas prioritarias y aprovecharse los terrenos sin valor ambiental y los suelos degradados en instalaciones industriales.

REPowerEU también debe ser el mecanismo para modernizar las instalaciones que van a quedar obsoletas, para incentivar el autoconsumo y, también, para apoyar de forma decidida el biometano como energía renovable local, que aporta empleo e industria a nuestras zonas rurales.

Angelika Niebler (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, Herr Vizepräsident, liebe Kolleginnen, liebe Kollegen! Die Energiewende kann nur gelingen, wenn wir massiv erneuerbare Energie ausbauen.

Warum geht es nicht schneller voran? Genehmigungsverfahren dauern zu lange. Hier müssen wir ansetzen. Die Richtlinie, die wir nun in dieser Woche beschließen, kann genau dies erreichen, nämlich eine Beschleunigung der Verfahren. Ich danke unserem Berichterstatter Markus Pieper und allen, die mitgeholfen haben, diese Richtlinie hier auf den Weg zu bringen.

Wenn wir von erneuerbarer Energie sprechen, wovon reden wir denn dann eigentlich? Reden wir nur von Wind und Solar? Nein, ich glaube, das ist falsch. Gerade in Zeiten, in denen wir wie jetzt ein Angebot an Energie haben. Erneuerbare Energie sind eben nicht nur Wind und Solar, sondern auch Biomasse, auch Wasserkraft, auch Geothermie. Wir dürfen keine Art von erneuerbarer Energie diskriminieren. Es darf keine erneuerbare Energie erster und zweiter Klasse geben. Wasserkraft und Biomasse sind dauerhaft verfügbar, sind kostengünstig und vielseitig einsetzbar. Wir müssen sie bei Europas Energiewende ebenso berücksichtigen wie Solar- und Windenergie.

Robert Hajšel (S&D). – Vážená pani predsedajúca, nachádzame sa uprostred veľkej energetickej krízy spôsobenej najmä, ale nielen ruskou agresiou na Ukrajinu, a o to viac musíme urýchľovať transformáciu našej energetiky. Inými slovami, ide o posilňovanie našej strategickej autonómie, čiže energetickej sebestačnosti, a tým pádom najmä o znížovanie našej závislosti od tretích krajín, či je to Rusko alebo Katar či Azerbajdžan. Hlavnou odpoveďou na to je rozvoj obnoviteľných zdrojov, ktoré sa stávajú najlacnejším zdrojom energie, a masívne investovanie do ich využívania. Prekážkou ich výraznejšieho využívania sú ale zdĺhavé povoloacie procedúry, ktoré sú v niektorých štátoch naozaj štandardom, a preto ich treba urýchliť a zjednodušiť bez toho, aby sme poškodili práva miestnych komunít, s ktorými treba viesť dialóg. Ďalším problémom, na ktorého riešenie musíme ďalej pracovať, je nedostatočná trhová disponibilita, napríklad v prípade solárnych panelov, keď jediná fabrika je umiestnená v Nemecku. Solárne panely, veterné turbíny, ale aj jadrová fúzia spolu s bioplynom a zeleným vodíkom sú jedinými zdrojmi energie, na ktoré sa budeme musieť spolie-

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hať v budúcnosti, ak nechceme závisieť od tretích krajín a od fosílnych palív.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Radan Kanev (PPE). – Madam President, REPower is turning, I would say at last, our climate policy in the right direction, facilitating the natural market incentives of our citizens and businesses, and providing administrative stability for the family and corporate investments.

But more needs to be done: first, establish and regulate new financial models and schemes allowing for vulnerable households and businesses to reach the private financial market; and second, include new renewable energy sources, such as the oxidation of hydrogen sulfide in the Black Sea waters, benefiting not only our present members, Bulgaria and Romania, but also our crucial partners in Ukraine and Georgia.

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Doamna președintă, domnule comisar, stimați colegi, nu cred că cineva contestă nevoia, necesitatea de a avea această Directivă privind energia regenerabilă, eficientizarea energetică a clădirilor, însă, mai ales în contextul crizei energetice globale, avem nevoie de un sistem de energie echilibrat. Fiecare țară are alt mix energetic și trebuie să ne gândim până la urmă cum facem ca la cetățean să ajungă facturile. Asta interesează: facturi mai mici de plătit, asta îi interesează pe cetățeni.

Și cred că trebuie, așa cum s-a mai spus aici, să se simplifice birocrăția. Sunt extrem de costisitoare, până la urmă, toată autorizațiile și toată birocrăția.

Apoi, trebuie să existe mai mare dialog pentru înțelegerea corectă a avantajului energiei regenerabile și, sigur, trebuie să vedem cum urgentăm permisele, pentru că până la urmă, de la reglementare până la aplicare și până la efect, drumul este prea lung. De aceea, cred foarte mult că este mult de făcut în implementarea acestei directive, dar este necesară.

Michal Wiezik (Renew). – Vážená pani predsedajúca, obnoviteľné zdroje energie sú skutočne kľúčové pri boji proti zmene klímy, v znižovaní cien energie a pri zabezpečení plynulých dodávok energie do Európskej únie a v konečnom dôsledku v oslobodení sa od diktátu fosílnych palív. Skutočne preto potrebujeme odstrániť administratívne prekážky, ktoré nám bránia v ich maximálnom využití a v rozvinutí ich plného potenciálu. Pritom ale treba pamätať na to, že aj výroba obnoviteľnej energie môže a skutočne poškodzuje chránené územia, a je teda v konflikte s ochranou prírody, a preto jej výrobu a jej rozvoj treba a priori sústreďovať na územia, kde k takýmto konfliktom nedochádza. Obzvlášť kriticky to vnímam v súvislosti s výrobou energie z vody a biomasy, kde prílišná benevolencia pri uplatňovaní nadradeného verejného záujmu nevyhnutne povedie k poškodzovaniu riek a zániku vzácnych lesných oblastí. Tých vyrúbaných chránených lesov a betónom rozkúskovaných živých riek sme už mali skutočne dostatok na to, aby sme pochopili, že ďalšia deštrukcia prírodného prostredia je skrátka neakceptovateľná.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, we need to fast track renewables, that's not in doubt. But the Commission's attempt to enshrine into EU law the principle that renewables should be considered a matter of overriding public interest sets a dangerous precedent.

The proposal takes a sledgehammer to the EU environmental standards. It will roll back hugely important protections under the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive and the Birds and Habitats Directive. This is environmental deregulation; it's a backdoor attempt to water down environmental protections. Environmental legislation is not an obstacle to the deployment of renewables. We are in the middle of a sixth mass extinction. There is no justification to scrap key environmental assessments.

Finally, it's ridiculous that storage facilities for gas should be privileged in the so-called go-to areas. These areas are supposed to be about fast tracking renewables. There are zero excuses for waiving environmental protections for gas storage facilities.

Henna Virkkunen (PPE). – Arvoisa puhemies, Eurooppa on ollut ihan liian pitkään liian riippuvainen tuontienergiasta ja nyt näemme, mihin se on johtanut, kun energiasta on valtava pula kaikkialla Euroopassa. Meidän on ehdottomasti laitettava nyt vauhtia investointeihin ja investoitava kaikkiin vähäpäästöisiin energialähteisiin, ydinvoima mukaan lukien, sekä vauhditettava investointeja energian siirtoyhteyksiin ja varastointiin.

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Tällä hetkellä suurin este kaikissa Euroopan maissa näiden prosessien nopealle etenemiselle on liian hitaissa lupaprosesseissa. Sen johdosta on erittäin hyvä, että asiaan on nyt tartuttu ja ehdotetaan näitä ydinkehittämislajeita, joilla lupaprosessit pitäisi hyvin nopeasti viedä eteenpäin, että saisimme investointeihin vauhtia. Tämä on erittäin tervetullut ehdotus.

Tämän lisäksi omassa kotimaassani Suomessa kansalaisilla on myös hyvin laaja oikeus valittaa investointipäätöksistä, ja sen johdosta on tärkeää, että jäsenvaltiot laittavat myös tarpeeksi resursseja oikeuslaitokseen, että oikeuslaitos voi nopeasti käsitellä erilaiset valitukset ja nämä tarpeelliset rakennusinvestoinnit saadaan käyntiin, koska energiaa tarvitaan nyt.

Billy Kelleher (Renew). – Madam President, *(start of speech off mic)* ... renewables is urgent for many, many reasons: the war in Ukraine and our dependence on fossil fuels from Russia, and the long-term aim of ensuring that our planet survives. From that perspective, it would be a shame if it was the failure of public administrations in Member States across the European Union to implement and allow permitting and planning for REPowerEU.

There's no doubt that we do need to transform. We need to transform quickly and efficiently. And speeding up the planning and permitting process does not mean that you have to jeopardise the Habitats Directive, the Water Directive and other directives that protect the environment. This is significantly important and we have to hold Member States to account to ensure that they invest in their public administration, that they get the resources for the public administration to ensure that they can assess planning permissions and permitting quickly and efficiently.

We cannot wait any longer, Mr Timmermans, and I would ask that you ensure that all Member States are held to account to ensure public services in the area of permitting and planning are funded and resourced efficiently.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen.)

Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Madam President, I've listened very carefully to the contributions of the honourable Members, and what I sense, in conclusion, is a strong willingness to move forward fast on this issue by many in this plenary. And I welcome that and I hope we can move forward very fast.

But having listened also to some other Members of this House, I would like just to take the time I have to take us back to why we're doing this. Why did we put REPowerEU on the table?

You know, it's only about two hours from here by plane where young men and women are dying every day because they're trying to protect their country from an autocratic invader. And this autocrat has weaponised the resource he has, which is fossil fuels, to try not just to subjugate and conquer Ukraine, but also to bring us to our knees and to impose his vision of an autocratic society on the whole of Europe. And he still believes that he can use energy to weaken us and to bring us to our knees.

And I think this should be in our minds when we discuss the measures we need to take today. We need to rapidly increase Europe's energy sovereignty. We can no longer be dependent on outside energy resources which come with political strings attached. So we need to speed up the transition to renewables. We need to rapidly reduce our energy consumption. We need to diversify our energy resourcing – as much as we still need fossil fuels – and diversify it in such a way that not one external party can use that energy as a political weapon to weaken us or to influence us. That is what REPowerEU is all about.

I wanted to emphasise this because I think we, all of us individually, at least once a day, we have to think about these young men and women who are dying for freedom, who are dying for European values, who are dying to protect their country and to keep that country's independence. They are fighting for European values. They are fighting for our way of life. And they should get the support also in a way that leads us to be stronger and more sovereign in the energy field so we can rebuild Ukraine together with them once this aggression is over.

Markus Pieper, Berichterstatter. – Frau Präsidentin! Ich freue mich sehr über die Einigkeit hier im Europäischen Parlament, was die Beschleunigung von Genehmigungsverfahren betrifft. Ich freue mich auch darüber, dass wir beim Thema Artenschutz gewisse Kompromisse hinkommen werden.

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Liebe S&D, niemand möchte hier Umweltgesetze eliminieren. Es geht einfach darum: Wenn eine Population in Europa gesichert ist, dann darf ein einzelnes Individuum einen Onshore-Windpark nicht behindern, und nur darum geht es und nicht um irgendeine Umgehung von Umweltgesetzen.

In dieses Bild passt auch das Thema Biomasse. Die Kommission hat da einen Fehler gemacht: bewusst zu schreiben, Biomasse gehört nicht dazu – das auch noch hineinzuschreiben. Dass das hier im Europäischen Parlament Reflexe weckt, ist ganz klar. Ich räume ein: Man kann es nicht so behandeln wie Solar und Wind, das weiß ich. Dennoch muss uns etwas einfallen. Wir werden hier im Europäischen Parlament wahrscheinlich eine sehr knappe Abstimmung haben. Es muss uns etwas einfallen, dass wir Biomasse auch mit beschleunigten Genehmigungsverfahren hinbekommen.

Letzte Bemerkung: Wir haben heute auch einen Beitrag für Beschleunigung geleistet. Denn es ist schon eine gute Initiative des Europäischen Parlaments gewesen, die Ratsverordnung aufzugreifen, die wichtigsten Punkte daraus zu nehmen – die guten Punkte – und das mit REPowerEU zu kombinieren, und das in einer Debatte. Und wir werden das in einer Abstimmung regeln. Da haben wir auch einen kleinen Beitrag zur Verfahrensbeschleunigung geleistet. Insofern noch mal herzlichen Dank an alle Kolleginnen und Kollegen, die das hier heute möglich gemacht haben. Herzlichen Dank auch an die Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeiter, die fantastisch unterstützt haben. Ich freue mich auf die Abstimmung am Mittwoch. Das wird am Ende schon im Sinne schnellerer Genehmigungsverfahren ausgehen.

Die Präsidentin. – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung findet am Mittwoch, 14. Dezember 2022, statt.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)

Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE), kirjallinen. – On erittäin tärkeää, että puhtaiden ja uusiutuvien energianlähteiden kapasiteettia kasvatetaan nopeasti ja tehokkaasti, jotta Pariisin ilmastopöytäkirjan tavoitteet olisivat saavutettavissa. Uusiutuviin energiamuotoihin siirtyminen nopeasti on myös välttämätön osa Euroopan irrottautumisesta Venäjän fossiilista energialähteistä. Tästä syystä olen tyytyväinen, että parlamentti tukee uusiutuvan energian tuotantolaitosten hallinto- ja lupaprosessien nopeuttamista ja sujuvoittamista sekä uusiutuvien energialähteiden "go-to"-alueiden nopeutettua prosessia. On kuitenkin myös tärkeää huomioida mihin uusia energialaitoksia rakennetaan, minkä vuoksi on hienoa, että Euroopan parlamentti tuki sitä, ettei Natura 2000- luonnonsuojelualueita tai ekologiaa käytäviä voida laskea uusiutuvan energian nopean kehittämisen alueiksi. Tämä on tärkeää luonnon monimuotoisuuden ja ekosysteemipalveluiden turvaamiseksi. Sen sijaan pettymys oli, että Euroopan parlamentti äänesti niukasti myös sen puolesta, että bioenergiaa hyödyntäviä energialaitoksia sijoitetaan uusiutuvan energian ydinkehittämisaueille. Bioenergian kapasiteetin kasvattamista ei tulisi mielestäni tukea eikä siihen tulisi jäsenvaltioita kannustaa.

Carlos Zorrinho (S&D), por escrito. – O documento legislativo que hoje debatemos e amanhã votaremos, adequando os processos de concretização da iniciativa REPowerEU aos novos desafios com que nos confrontamos no domínio da transição energética, tem uma enorme importância. É fundamental conjugar uma resposta forte à emergência e aos impactos da guerra e da chantagem russa no acesso das famílias e empresas europeias à energia, com o prosseguimento da liderança da União no combate às alterações climáticas. Há quem pretenda aproveitar esta janela de oportunidade para travar a transição energética, o Pacto Ecológico e a descarbonização. Votar este relatório, sem distorções de última hora, será afirmar um compromisso forte entre a aceleração da capacidade de resposta às necessidades imediatas das pessoas e a consolidação dos princípios e dos objetivos de sustentabilidade ambiental do planeta. Envolver mais e melhor as entidades nacionais e regionais, reforçar a participação das pessoas como está consagrado no Regulamento de Governação da União da Energia, acelerar os processos de decisão sem quebra de transparência e derrotar a burocracia são passos fundamentais para estarmos à altura do nosso mandato e servir aqueles que nos elegeram para sermos porta-vozes dos seus problemas e promotores das respostas de que necessitam.

(Die Sitzung wird um 10.37 Uhr unterbrochen.)

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PRESIDENZA: ROBERTA METSOLA*President***5. Reinício da sessão***(The sitting resumed at 10:45)***6. Esta é a Europa - Debate com o Primeiro-Ministro da Eslovénia, Robert Golob (debate)**

President. – Dear colleagues, we have with us today the Prime Minister of Slovenia, Robert Golob.

Prime Minister, dear Robert, let me start by thanking you for accepting our invitation to address the European Parliament as part of our ‘This is Europe’ series of debates. These have been difficult days for Europe, and it is time to re-affirm our values.

The war in Ukraine is continuing unabatedly. Pushed back on the battlefield, the Kremlin has increasingly turned its war machine onto innocent civilians, weaponising basic commodities in a desperate attempt to get Ukraine – and Europe – to concede. I am proud of our clear, united and unwavering European response, because our values – our freedom, our liberty, our democracy – are non-negotiable. The people of Ukraine are fighting precisely for these values.

And yet this does not mean that the consequences are not being felt. People in Slovenia are worried. People in Europe are worried. They are worried about heating their homes; about getting to the end of the month; about paying their bills. This is the time when European leadership is needed the most.

This means common actions, solidarity in gas supply, and the creation of the credible energy single market. This is how we address our citizens’ concerns in the short term. But we also need to be clear: our surest way of achieving full energy independence is by speeding up our green transition and this has become just as much about security as it is about climate ambition. This is not the time to backtrack.

Prime Minister, with two-thirds of Slovenia’s power generation being CO₂-free and by further pledging to increase the use of renewable energy by 2030, your country is already showing leadership in this field. What is more, by increasing interconnections with its neighbours, Slovenia is well on track to improve its energy resilience. I look forward to see this same commitment reflected by all Member States within our Union.

Prime Minister, I also see Slovenian leadership when it comes to accelerating the integration process of the Western Balkans, and here I speak more specifically about Bosnia and Herzegovina. This year, we have already seen – with Ukraine and with Moldova – what a powerful message EU candidacy status can give. My hope for us is to have this same courage also with our friends in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Dear Prime Minister, dear Robert, the floor is yours.

Robert Golob, Prime Minister of Slovenia. – Spoštovana predsednica Metsola, spoštovane članice in člani Evropskega parlamenta, drage državljanke in državljani Evrope. Vem, da bo kasneje zelo polno, zato si bom vzel malo časa sedaj, da vas ogrejem za tisto, kar vas čaka ob dvanajstih. In upam, da bom dovolj zanimiv v svojem izvajanju.

V bistvu mi je v veliko čast, da lahko prav danes nagovorim Parlament, nagovorim vse državljanke in državljane, ker želim govoriti o skupni prihodnosti Evropske unije. Skupni prihodnosti, ki verjame v moč povezovanja, v moč sodelovanja in v moč enotnosti.

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Sam, ker prihajam iz majhne članice Evropske unije, se natančno zavedam dejstva, da samo takrat, ko se združujemo na podlagi svojih moči in vrlin in ko vsak prispeva tisto, v čemer je najboljši, lahko tvorimo skupnost, ki bo najuspešnejša. In takrat, ko je ta skupnost enotna in odločna, takrat lahko ta skupnost premika meje mogočega.

In verjamem, da je ravno danes Evropa – Evropa kot celota, ne samo Evropska unija – na preizkušnji, ravno pri tem, koliko moči premore, da bo naslovila zgodovinske izzive, s katerimi se sooča.

Potem ko smo dve leti živeli v obsednem stanju s strani covida, in ne se bat, ne bom govoril o covidu danes, smo se zaradi ruske agresije morali soočiti s situacijo, ki je nismo videli po zaključku druge svetovne vojne na evropskih tleh. Soočamo se s situacijo, v kateri so kršene vse mednarodne norme, kršena je suverenost države na podlagi vojaške agresije brez razloga.

Ta agresija ima poleg vseh ostalih implikacij izjemne posledice tudi na nas, na vse državljanke in državljane Evropske unije in na naše gospodarstvo. Ne samo energetska kriza, ne samo energetske cene, vse to je pripeljalo do tega, da smo danes soočeni tudi z gospodarsko krizo in predvsem z zvišanjem cen na vseh področjih in rekordno inflacijo.

Zato bom danes naslovil predvsem tri področja. Največ bom posvetil – glede na moje ozadje – energetiki in zeleni tranziciji, zelenemu prehodu. Dotaknil pa se bom tudi vladavine prava in pa geopolitičnih prizadevanj, v katerih je Slovenija majhen, ampak vseeno pomemben kamenček v mozaiku.

Dear ladies, dear gentlemen, let me give you just a brief background on myself in order to fully understand why I will address energy as the major topic during my speech.

For the last 15 years, I was working at an energy company: a company that I founded and I was running as a CEO; a company that grew from zero up to 3 billion in revenue; a company that was the largest energy trader in southern and eastern Europe; a company that grew from zero to the largest supplier of electricity in Slovenia; and a company which in the latest years was also the largest provider of solar power plants, meaning that we did embark on investing in renewables as well.

Having said that, let's switch to the main topic, and that is energy. It is totally clear to everyone that overdependence on one gas source, which is from Russia, led to the weaponisation of that particular energy source during the last year, and that we are facing the consequences of that weaponisation right now.

But even though the lack of supply was rightly addressed by the swift action both of the Parliament and Commission during the last weeks – meaning that just by combining the three factors which is being able to reduce the demand, being able to find new sources from friendly countries and being able to keep the pipelines open throughout Europe by implementing the solidarity clause, we were able to cover for the energy needs – it was not enough to address the prices. And this is one topic that I always emphasise whenever I speak to my colleagues at the European Council and that is that, yes, a lot has been done, but more needs to be done as well in the future. And this week is crucial in that regard.

So either we address properly the high energy prices and when I say properly it means decisively, and when I say decisively, we need to implement regulatory changes in the market mechanisms because the internal energy market at the moment, I will not say it is not working, I will say it is being worked by the speculative money, but for their own profits and not for the benefits of the population of Europe.

And this is where the responsibility of the European Council comes into light, because it's up to us to address this issue in the proper manner. And we already asked the Commission once to come up with a set of rules, set of measures, which will adequately address this issue and I cannot say that I am happy with what the Commission has come up with. It will not work. It's not enough. We will need to be more decisive in order to reduce the volatility in the markets. We will need to be more decisive to eliminate price spikes. And we will need to be more decisive when it comes to the gas price caps.

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The energy ministers sit in the council of today and I certainly hope and urge that they will come to a common decision by whatever means in order to show the unity not to the population but to the markets, because we need to show the unity to the speculative traders and, remember, I made my living by doing that, so I know what I'm talking about.

So we need to show them a clear message and unity that we will not be left drained. We will not let them drain our budgets. We will not let them drain the global competitiveness of our industry for their profits.

It's a very important message, and that's why I'm repeating it all over the place and I'm doing it right now.

But the future doesn't stop today and doesn't stop this winter, so we need to look forward, onward, and the green transition is actually not just the only way forward, but it is also the only way that addresses the three issues simultaneously. It does improve and it does bring autonomy, independence, energy independence to Europe. It is the only way to energy independence. It does mitigate climate change because that's the only way how to reduce the impact of energy on climate. And it also, at the end of the day, brings lower energy prices. So we do address all three issues simultaneously and that means that, again, we cannot linger. We need to move as bold and as ambitious as possible.

If that means speeding up the permitting process, well, yes. If that means building more, not just interconnectors, but more gas and pipe and power lines, yes, we do need more power lines at all levels. We can put them underground, but we need them and we need more storage capacity as well to enable the grids to connect more renewables. And this is really the only way forward.

And if we act bold and decisively and if we link the wind potential of north with some potential of the south – put some hydro in the mix and some storage in between – yeah, in the next 10 to 15 years, we could be totally renewable in Europe. It is a vision that is doable. Okay, it might take us five more years than that, but it's doable. And that's the most important message. And for that reason, not just because of the energy crisis that we are facing now, we really owe it, we owe it to our children to do it now because it's doable so there is absolutely no excuse that we wait with our next steps when it comes to that.

Before entering politics, while I was still the executive, I was also the EU Climate Pact Ambassador. I was promoting, and sincerely promoting it, because for living I was doing energy trading but for my soul I was promoting the self-sustainable home energy systems – the systems where each of us that owns a home can become totally independent on himself, on him, on hers or his energy needs, for all energy needs. Electric vehicle, sunroof, solar heating, heat pumps and storage. By doing that, we helped thousands and thousands of households in Slovenia to become totally independent from the existing crisis. So they are not just helping the environment, at the moment they are totally independent on the energy crisis.

The one thing that we are addressing all the time when it comes to the energy transition, we are always addressing the how do we deal with the energy for our machines, for our technologies.

But we are overlooking one important thing. This is my second message. We are overlooking the how do we address the energy that we need to fuel our bodies, which is food. The food system that we are utilising right now is totally unsustainable for our future, totally. Unless we change the food production and food consumption in a very thorough way, we will not be able to meet any of the climate goals. Because if the rest of the world would follow in our steps, we would need seven planets just to sustain the food consumption, which is obviously not something that can be done.

Now, of course, each of us can start a change in himself or herself. Changing the diet. Of course, that's easy. Just switch from less meat – I'm not saying no meat – but that's consume less meat, let's consume more plant-based food. Anyway, it's healthier, but this is not the story today. But in that way, we will help the planet and we will help our children as well. Not just by teaching them how to be healthier, but also in teaching them how to be sustainable.

But that's an individual choice. What is the responsibility of the government or of the authorities? The main responsibility is the building of the awareness, scientific facts when it comes to food plus – and this is important – to enable the choice, enable the choice of healthier food to be available in public systems.

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That's what we did on a small scale in Slovenia back home. And results are amazing. We didn't have to force anyone and 50% of consumers at a particular facility switched within a month on a totally plant-based food. It was an individual choice that was enabled by the authorities. Not enforced – this is very important.

Going back to the other thing where the responsibility of the government or the authorities is even more crucial is, of course, the rule of law. And when it comes to the rule of law, I would share a personal story with you. As you already remember, most probably, I was minding my own business, earning lots of money and being quite happy, up to a certain point when I realised that the rule of law in Slovenia is just being eaten away. By the previous government. The judicial system was slowly being weakened. The freedom of speech and the media – especially freedom of media – was being taken away. And a certain point in time, again, being happy, I just realised I don't want to live in a country where the rule of law is non-existent. This is why I stepped into politics. This is why I stepped out of my comfort zone, not in my comfort zone. And this is why I stand here.

And this is so important and that's why I realised that the rule of law is not something to be negotiated about, but is something to be enforced. And that that is the responsibility of all of us that are in the political system.

By saying that, the first thing that come to your mind once you have to make a decision on whether you step into politician role or not, is okay, how do we deal with all the exposure? The fake news exposure. Hate speech exposure. Because that's immediately what you get once you decide to step into politics. And I'm not speaking about uncoordinated or spontaneous fake news or spontaneous hate speech, I'm speaking about hate speech, which is financed and instigated by the existing political forces or lobbies – it doesn't matter what you call them.

So I urge and I know that you've already done some steps when it comes to hate speech, Parliament, I know it's been the Council, the European Council again, who was blocking, who is blocking it. And I urge you to find new ways, new ways how to address the issue of paid-for hate speech with a clear, clear goal. And the goal is, you know what, to keep the dissent people out of politics. That's really the goal.

I know there is a fine balance between the freedom of speech and the hate speech, the measures against one and the measures to really improve the freedom of speech. And I'm pretty much sure you will know how to strike the balance because the freedom of speech, especially social media, they do play an important role when it comes to really bringing things to our awareness that would otherwise stay hidden. And, in this regard, I would like to especially address the Iranian situation, which would not be noticed by anyone in Europe because of the censorship unless there would be social media. And all the efforts done especially by the Iranian women and with their inventive, non-violent ways of protesting against the brutality of the regime and for their human rights, their women's rights is something to be really proud of and to give them support as much as possible. So I urge you to be loud, to keep staying loud, and to keep pointing the way forward, where they will be heard also within this particular Parliament. I know lots has been done and I urge you to do more. Let's show them that we do know what our geopolitical responsibility is. Even though most of the time, again, within the European Council, that's not the case. Okay, I'm switching back to Slovenian, sorry.

To me pripelje do zadnje točke na agendi, do geopolitičnih prizadevanj, tudi Slovenije. Če kje, je Evropska unija pokazala odgovornost in enotnost v primeru ruske agresije na Ukrajino. In zato sem hvaležen vsem institucijam, tudi Evropskemu svetu, ki je pokazal, res, da takrat, ko je potrebno, znamo biti enotni.

Znali smo bili enotni tudi na točki, ko smo uporabili najmočnejše orodje, ki ga ima Evropska unija, in to je širitveni proces. Pozdravljam odločitev vseh institucij, da smo tako Ukrajini kot Moldovi – Moldaviji – priznali status kandidatke za članstvo v Evropski uniji in pozdravljam vse napore, tudi Parlamenta, zato da se proces pridruževanja pospeši.

Kajti pridružitveni proces oziroma proces širitve Evropske unije je v resnici orodje, ki se ga v Sloveniji zelo močno zavedamo, ker smo sorazmerno nova članica. Zelo dobro se spomnim upanja, upanja v boljšo prihodnost, ki nam jo je dajal ravno ta širitveni proces. Zato zelo dobro razumem, kakšno upanje v boljšo prihodnost s tem dajemo državljanom in državljanom Ukrajine in Moldavije. In zato pozivam, da se na tem procesu ne zaustavljamo.

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Enako velja tudi za področje Zahodnega Balkana. Zahodni Balkan je od začetka ruske agresije izpostavljen velikim pritiskom s strani propagande. Pritiskom, s katerimi se želi razbiti enotnost Evrope kot celote v obsodbi ruske agresije in predvsem v podpori Ukrajini.

In ravno zato mora danes Evropska unija se zavedati, koliko lahko s tem političnim orodjem prispeva ne samo k stabilnosti regije, ampak prispeva tudi k temu, da bomo vsi skupaj ostali enotni pri podpori Ukrajini.

Ne gre samo za Bosno in Hercegovino, pa se bom vseeno navezal nanjo. Gre za celoten Zahodni Balkan. Ampak Bosna in Hercegovina je tista država, ki je bila v preteklosti žrtev agresije. In Bosni in Hercegovini smo ravno zato dolžni danes pokazati, da nismo pozabili nanjo. Tako kot ne želimo, da bi kdaj pozabili na Ukrajino ... čez leta.

Ker je ravno to zgodba, ki jo moramo pokazati, da ne dajemo signalov samo na začetku, ampak da smo v stanju zgodbe tudi zaključiti. In v Bosni moramo zaključevati zgodbo, zgodbo, ki se je začela pred dvajsetimi leti in ni še naredila nobenega koraka.

In vem, spraševali se boste, „Kdo naj naredi prvi korak?“. Ampak s tem, ko je Slovenija mlada članica, bi rad povedal naslednje. Efekt, ki ga ima vstop v Evropsko unijo, je transformativen. Mi smo se spremenili. Članstvo v Evropski uniji spremeni državo, spremeni pogled najprej ljudi, potem pa ljudje poskrbijo, da se spremeni tudi politika. Ne more biti drugače.

Računati, da se bodo politične strukture spremenile same od sebe, je iluzorno in ne daje rezultatov. Delati moramo ... Kot evropski državljani moramo delati na tem, da naše sodržavljanke iz Zahodnega Balkana prepričamo o tem, da je njihovo edino mesto v Evropi. In da potem oni poskrbijo za spremembo tudi v političnih strukturah, da bodo politične strukture to dejstvo sprejele kot nekaj, za kar se morajo boriti. In potem bodo sprejele tudi vladavino prava in demokracijo.

Sam ne verjamem v obratni vrstni red. Zato v Sloveniji vse politične strukture močno podpiramo, da se v Bosni in Hercegovini ta proces res prestavi v višjo prestavo in da damo Bosni, da damo predvsem prebivalcem in prebivalkam Bosne in Hercegovine priložnost, da postanejo enakopravni evropski državljani.

Čisto za konec. Slovenija je ponosna članica evropske družine in v veliko zadovoljstvo nam je, da bomo lahko skupaj gradili evropsko prihodnost ne samo z obstoječimi članicami Evropske unije, ampak s celotno Evropo.

In verjamemo, da je to tista pot, ki bo dejansko pripeljala ne samo do miru, ampak tudi do blaginje za vse državljanke, vse prebivalke in prebivalce Evrope. Naprej Evropa!

Paulo Rangel, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, dear Prime Minister Golob: let me warmly welcome you in such a bitter moment for this Parliament. Slovenia was the first country of former Yugoslavia to join the European Union.

This stands, and should stand, as an example and a role model for the Western Balkans. And I must congratulate Slovenia on its great integration process that you have just described as a great example for the whole region and for all Europe. Secondly, congratulations on your new president, the first female president, despite she is not from our political family. This is always a very positive and progressive step towards equality, and that should be here naturally, point of order.

We have all have some concerns, including on rule of law, which we must share and which is also the point of these debates. First, Slovenia itself has suffered from internal border checks before. But now we hear that you may consider introducing internal border checks of your own after Croatia joins Schengen. This would send the worst possible signals, especially after the council rejected the accession of Romania and Bulgaria.

If it happens, the European Parliament will be ready to scrutinise any individual violation of our freedom of movement in Slovenia or elsewhere in Europe. Second, there are some concerns regarding the rule of law. We are paying close attention to the changing of laws ruling the media landscape in Slovenia, in a rather unusual and urgent procedure. And let me tell you that the resignation of the interior minister after allegations of political pressure regarding the police is also troubling.

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We have so often criticised recent developments in Spain or even in my own country regarding concentration of the power of police. I have to mention this case here as well. Does this not trigger a rule-of-law alert when we speak about interference in police commands?

Finally, Slovenia is an example in the support to Ukraine in the current war in humanitarian, financial and military aid, as you have pointed out. However, it is concerning that the Members of a European Parliament that support your government did not support the resolution of this House recognising Russia as a regime sponsor of terrorism. How do you assess this reluctance to support Ukraine in all possible ways?

Your fellow Slovene Slavoj Žižek, famously satirised the geographical divisions in Europe by pointing out what separates the Balkans from *Mitteleuropa*. But those divisions must be behind us. The Sava or the Danube do not separate us. Just like that, the Dnipro does not divide Ukrainians.

Europe is large enough for us all. Europe is more than a continent; it is an idea. And it is also an idea in Slovene and loved by the Slovenians. Even though today we meet in Strasbourg, let me recall a small piece of Brussels: near the Schuman roundabout, not too far from the European Parliament stands a memorial with the first line of your national anthem, *Žive naj vsi narodi*. God's blessing on all nations.

In this difficult winter, in these difficult times, let these words, these Slovenian words, this anthem by the great France Prešeren echo throughout Europe. May all our nations thrive, *žive naj vsi narodi*.

Milan Brglez, *v imenu skupine S&D*. – Gospa predsedujoča, hvala za besedo predsednica. Spoštovani predsednik vlade, komisar, kolegice in kolegi. To je Evropa. Veseli me, da je Slovenija in vlada doktorja Roberta Goloba s to razpravo in svojim udejstvovanjem na evropskem parketu dokazujeta, da je Slovenija del jedrne Evrope in prizadevanj za bolj povezano ter bolj solidarno Evropsko unijo. Za Evropsko unijo v službi ljudem.

Iskrena zavezanost tem vrednotam se najlepše pokaže v času velikih preizkušenj, v času po pandemiji, vojne na našem pragu ter energetske krize. Slovenija se je aktivno vključila v iskanje skupnega evropskega izhoda iz energetske krize, kjer kot mala država še kako dobro razume, da je rešitev lahko le skupna, solidarna in evropska.

Spoštovani predsednik vlade, s tega mesta vas želim spodbuditi k nadaljevanju teh prizadevanj ter da se Slovenija doma in na evropski ravni pridruži dodatnim ukrepom za zniževanje stroškov gospodinjstev ter pomoči malim in srednjim podjetjem.

Hkrati pa je breme solidarnosti z najbolj ranljivih v tej krizi potrebno prenesti na vse sektorje, od energetike, farmacevtskih podjetij do bančnega sektorja, ki so jim ta in pretekle krize prinesle velike dobičke.

Prepričan sem, da skupaj zmoremo, pa tudi, da lahko državam, ki čakajo na vstop Unijo, pokažemo, da smo in kako smo na njihovi strani. V resni situaciji na Balkanu in vojni v Ukrajini mora biti naše sporočilo jasno. Evropa in s tem Evropska unija je in bo domovina vseh, ki želijo v njej živeti v demokraciji, svobodi in miru?

Stéphane Séjourné, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Premier Ministre, chers collègues, depuis mai la Slovénie a impressionné par son nouvel engagement européen. Elle est aussi devenue un modèle à suivre, y compris dans l'intégration, vous l'avez dit, Monsieur le Premier Ministre.

Nous sommes fiers de vous compter dans notre famille politique à Renew. La transformation écologique et la nouvelle attractivité économique sont au cœur de votre action et de votre gouvernement, en pleine adéquation avec les objectifs européens climatiques et de souveraineté. Vous avez remis en quelque sorte la Slovénie au cœur de l'Union européenne.

Terça-feira, 13 de dezembro de 2022

Votre bilan institutionnel est unanimement salué par la société civile et les organisations de droits civiques. Les dérives illibérales et autoritaires ont enfin cessé en Sloénie. La télévision publique redevient indépendante. La justice peut statuer dans un climat beaucoup plus apaisé, depuis ces quelques mois de gouvernance. Les Slovènes, vote après vote, ont confirmé que l'expérience populiste de votre prédécesseur, Janez Janša, a été un échec politique, sociétal et économique.

Monsieur Rangel, ce que vous venez de dire dans vos déclarations ne m'étonne pas. C'est dans la ligne droite, d'ailleurs, des quelques calomnies qu'a pu proférer le PPE sur la Sloénie depuis la défaite de mai. Vos eurodéputés PPE, pourtant officiellement pro-européens, ont en effet souvent soutenu et excusé toutes les insultes de M. Janša sur les réseaux sociaux contre les partenaires et les parlementaires que nous sommes – nous en avons profité assez largement. Vous avez également insinué que l'élection était sous influence étrangère. Pendant cette élection, vous avez aussi défendu le harcèlement d'un certain nombre de journalistes, qui ont été notamment vilipendés par le gouvernement en place.

Monsieur le Premier Ministre, je voudrais juste, au nom de mon groupe, vous assurer du soutien de la plus grande majorité des parlementaires ici à l'égard de votre détermination à soutenir et à encourager le débat démocratique serein dans votre pays. Mon groupe et tant d'autres espèrent d'ailleurs que la Sloénie soit au cœur de l'Europe et que cette voie qu'ont choisie les Slovènes puisse inspirer d'autres peuples – je pense notamment aux Polonais et aux Hongrois. Merci de votre intervention. Vous aurez toujours le soutien de Renew Europe.

Philippe Lamberts, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, welcome to the European Parliament, Prime Minister. It's good to hear sincere words of, I would say, a decent person who is in politics. We have at least two things in common. I started my career in the private sector as well for 22 years, and what made me enter politics was the fact that in my municipality, the same party, held a majority, an absolute majority for 65 years, they considered power as their property. And this is why I said, well, I need to step in because a former prime minister in Belgium once said, you know, in politics, once all the disgusted people will have left, only the disgusting ones will remain. And so we don't want this to happen. So welcome. And it's such a relief to see Slovenia under your leadership stopping the slippery slope and reversing the slippery slope on which it was. We are witnessing within the European Union enough of trampling on the rule of law and European values not to see it happen in one more Member State. And that was exactly what was happening in Slovenia. So for all this, thank you. I am really happy that you are there.

I have also been touched by the fact that you have been tearing down fences. You know, asylum and migration are serious challenges, but you understand that indeed it is beyond the capabilities of any single Member State to find a solution, certainly not with barbed wire, and that we need a common response to that in solidarity with each other. And again, for that, thank you.

Now, you said a lot about energy and about the green transition. And of course, there is a lot with which we agree. You are remarkable because you are the first head of government that I hear asserting that there is speculation on the energy market. You know, when I engage with the Commission on that, their answer is no, no, no, no. the price reflects market fundamentals and only market fundamentals. And yes, we have to go after that. I totally agree with that. No. Is the price cap the best way? Well, maybe there are other financial regulation instruments like position limits and curbing the entry into market of some players that we need to activate. And there we are totally your allies on this. Now, on the green transition, I know that you feel that this is absolutely crucial to our future. You do not present that just as a defensive thing, but also an ambitious thing. And I agree with that. But I might have some questions for you because, well, my friends in Slovenia tell me, for instance, that the red tape to install solar panels on roofs in a country where basically most people have their own house, that all these red tape has not been cut yet. Also that you want to prolong the extinction of this fossil-based power plant, three more years until 2033. And then there's the issue of nuclear. Now we can have a debate about nuclear energy. But again, this is presented in Slovenia as the silver bullet that will solve all problems in energy. Really? I mean, if the business case for nuclear is so good, it shouldn't be afraid of a fair and square competition in the public debate with other forms of energy. And indeed, you mentioned renewables, and there we would like a more balanced public debate on that.

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Another thing that you didn't mention, but where Slovenia is strong, I think your country is probably the European champion of biodiversity. I understand that, per capita, your country has the most beekeepers in Europe. So I don't understand why Slovenia is not more proactive in supporting the sustainable use of pesticides regulation, because you know that there is a lot of resistance and we need support, including in the Council, not just in the Parliament, to make it happen. So, Prime Minister, a lot to agree with. Frankly, we want to work with you and well, let us hope that indeed what you are doing in Slovenia is not just a parenthesis, but the beginning of a new future. So I'm glad to work with you.

France Jamet, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Madame la Présidente, un Français sur trois qui renonce à des soins médicaux, une classe moyenne qui s'effondre, laminée et déclassée, une précarité de plus en plus violente qui touche plus de 11 millions de mes compatriotes, nos entreprises délocalisées, un dumping social institutionnalisé par le travail détaché, une réforme de la retraite à 65 ans imposée par Bruxelles, une hausse vertigineuse des faillites de nos PME, de nos TPE et de nos artisans, accélérée par la crise énergétique, un suicide d'agriculteur tous les deux jours, nos pêcheurs sacrifiés, des Français dans le noir et le froid cet hiver, après le sabotage de notre filière nucléaire, dans laquelle nous avions su investir, qui a été sacrifiée par Bruxelles et qui nous assurait l'indépendance énergétique, une inflation à deux chiffres, un climat de récession dans un contexte d'ensauvagement et d'immigration massive: c'est cela, l'Europe dans laquelle vivent mes compatriotes. Monsieur Séjourné, c'est votre Europe, c'est celle de Bruxelles, de la technocratie et du mondialisme. C'est *votre* Europe, on vous la laisse!

Notre Europe, c'est le génie des peuples, collègues. C'est le lieu d'émergence de nations qui nous ont permis à travers les siècles, par l'émulation, la diversité et le progrès, de rayonner dans le monde entier. Voilà, c'est cette Europe que nous défendons et que nous chérissons, avec notamment le patriotisme économique et le respect de la souveraineté des nations. Vous l'aurez compris, notre Europe n'est pas votre Union européenne. Elles sont non seulement fondamentalement opposées, mais aussi inconciliables. Mais rassurez-vous, c'est notre Europe qui vous survivra.

President. – Thank you very much, Ms Jamet. It is truly a pity, however, when you have a Prime Minister of a country that you could engage with that you don't use this opportunity to do exactly that.

Ladislav Ilčić, *u ime kluba ECR*. – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, poštovani premijeru. Hrvatska i Slovenija su susjedne i vrlo prijateljske zemlje. Nadam se da će Slovenci večeras navijati za Hrvatsku u polufinalu Svjetskog prvenstva. No, imam nekoliko pitanja.

Prvo je vezano za temu koje se niste dotakli u svojem uvodnom izlaganju, a to je pitanje sigurnosti i vladavine prava u kontekstu ilegalnih migracija. Europska unija je u ovim godinama na jednoj prekretnici u kojoj postoje oni unutar Europske unije koji zagovaraju odgovoran pristup, čvrsto čuvanje granica koje ujedno daje poruku migrantima da niti ne pokušavaju prelaziti tu granicu ilegalno jer neće uspjeti pa onda migranti takve stvari izbjegavaju i imamo puno manje humanitarnih katastrofa, a imamo i one koji zagovaraju tzv. mekan pristup u kojem šalju poruku migrantima: samo dođite, ovako ili onako, uspjete prijeći tu granicu. Zapravo, oni ne samo da šalju tu poruku, nego kažu ne samo da je moguće ilegalno preći granicu, nego mi ćemo vam u tome pomoći.

Pa sad u zadnje vrijeme imamo i pokazatelj, recimo kao Ocean Viking brod u Italiji, da postoji aktivna suradnja tih nevladinih organizacija i krijumčara ljudi. Zanima me koji je vaš stav? Hoćete li podržati Hrvatsku u odgovornom čuvanju vanjskih granica Schengena i kakav će biti slovenski doprinos čuvanju zajedničke vanjske granice, pogotovo u kontekstu koji je već spomenut – nedavne ostavke vaše ministricе unutarnjih poslova Tatjane Bobnar. Možemo li očekivati učinkovitost i stabilnost vaše vlade po tom pitanju?

Drugo pitanje. Govorili ste dosta o energiji i o pomanjkanju energije. Mislim da je više manje jasno da je do tog pomanjkanja došlo već i prije ruske agresije na Ukrajinu. Dakle, mi imamo u Europskom parlamentu jedan pristup koji se naziva zelenim i koji se naziva ambicioznim, iako on to nije, on je vrlo često nerealan, nerazuman, pa čak i kontraproduktivan koji ide isključivo za zabranama. Zabranili bi ugljen, zabranili bi plin, zabranili bi nuklearnu (riječ je nerazgovjetna), a onda bi promovirali dizalice topline, ali bi zabranili fluorirane F-plinove u dizalicama i tako dalje, jel.

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Vi ste uložili ogroman novac, 500 milijuna eura u dokapitalizaciju Holdinga u kojem nije točno jasno što ćete podržavati. I to bi me zanimalo. U tom holdingu je i Termoelektrana Šoštanj i Nuklearna elektrana Krško i jako me zanima što će se događati s Krškom. Naravno, tu je zajedničko vlasništvo Hrvatske i Slovenije. Zanima me kako vidite tu tranziciju? Naravno da nam je zelena tranzicija potrebna, samo trebamo vidjeti koliko je ona realna, kojim tempom može ići i zanima me kako vidite uključenost Hrvatske u nove projekte u Krškom?

Marc Botenga, *au nom du groupe The Left*. – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Premier Ministre, bienvenue à un PDG, à un patron d'entreprise qui devient directement Premier ministre. C'est évidemment quelque chose! De ce fait, je vais aborder avec vous un élément qui a été absent de votre intervention, c'est la question du dumping social.

Mijnheer de eerste minister, kent u het concept van sociale dumping? Dat gaat over werknemers, vakmensen, die – vaak via ellenlange onderaannemingsketens, via detachering, interimagentschappen, nepbedrijven – naar een ander land gestuurd worden om daar vaak aan slechtere voorwaarden, minder brutoloon, tewerkgesteld te worden. Dat kadert allemaal in wat men in de Europese Unie het «vrij verkeer van diensten» noemt.

Et ce dumping social, aujourd'hui, passe notamment par des différences de cotisations sociales et de salaire brut. Les cotisations sociales sont alors payées dans le pays où le contrat a été signé, plutôt que dans le pays où le travail est effectué.

Voor bedrijven is dat vaak interessant, want zij krijgen veel hogere winsten en ze betalen lagere socialezekerheidsbijdragen. Voor werknemers is dat een drama. Het Borealis-schandaal in Antwerpen toont dat dit ook steeds vaker gaat over niet-Europese werknemers, werkrachten die schaamteloos worden uitgebuit, die dan via Hongarije naar Portugal worden gestuurd om in Antwerpen of België terecht te komen.

Il y a du dumping social, vous le savez, dans différents secteurs: transports, construction... Beaucoup trop de secteurs.

En uw land speelt daar vaak een grote rol in, zodanig zelfs dat een Europese vakbondsfederatie klacht indiende tegen Slovenië. Misschien gebeurt dat onder druk van grotere landen of andere landen die de Sloveense regering daartoe aanzetten, maar toch.

J'ai regardé les chiffres. Près d'un tiers des travailleurs de la construction en Slovénie sont envoyés à l'étranger, pourcentage le plus élevé de l'Union européenne. Six travailleurs détachés de Slovénie sur dix sont des ressortissants de pays non européens, ou pour le moins non membres de l'Union européenne. C'est-à-dire que les entreprises établies en Slovénie vont chercher des travailleurs à l'étranger, non pas parce qu'elles en ont besoin, mais pour les envoyer tout de suite dans d'autres États membres, les exploiter à fond et faire plus de profit, tout simplement – et au passage, détruire le droit du travail. Ce système exonère un montant de 128 millions d'euros de cotisations sociales. C'est un véritable hold-up sur la sécurité sociale, soyons honnêtes, et on ne parle encore que d'un pays.

Ik was in uw land, in Slovenië, ongeveer een jaar geleden, onder de vorige regering. Ik had daar een ontmoeting met Sloveense vakbonden en zij toonden mij iets dat mij serieus geschokt heeft. In een gebouw van een ministerie – hetzelfde gebouw als een ministerie – had je een lijst met postbusbedrijven. Dat wou zeggen dat je dus één postbus hebt met een ellenlange lijst van bedrijven die daar officieel gevestigd zijn, maar die natuurlijk niet daar werken, maar wel elders hun activiteiten ontwikkelen. Dus in het gebouw van een ministerie!

Alors, Monsieur le Premier Ministre, le dumping social, que ce soit par le détachement ou par la sous-traitance, est un problème aujourd'hui en Europe. Les solutions existent, nous le savons. Il s'agit notamment de conditionner la libre circulation des services à des garanties sur les conditions de travail, au principe «à travail égal, salaire égal», au refus de toute discrimination entre salariés selon l'endroit où a été signé le contrat, et, je pense aussi, à l'élaboration d'une directive européenne sur la limitation des chaînes de sous-traitance, qui ne servent qu'au dumping social.

Alors une question, Monsieur le Premier Ministre: que va faire votre gouvernement pour changer le rôle fondamental que joue la Slovénie dans le dumping social?

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Mislav Kolakušić (NI). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, poštovani kolege, poštovani premijeru susjedne nam i prijateljske Republike Slovenije, u ime našeg prijateljstva zamolio bih vas dvije stvari: jednu, da nam date savjet - kako ste uspjeli u Revozu proizvesti 45 milijuna vozila... Četiri i pol milijuna, ispričavam se. Proizvodite 45 vozila na sat. A mi u Republici Hrvatskoj s milijardama javnog novca uspjeli smo proizvesti svega par komada. Iskreno vas molim za taj savjet.

Drugo! Molim vas, kao i sve građane Europske unije, kolege, da večeras navijamo za Hrvatsku. Da imamo u nedjelju finale Europske unije i da se napokon svi zajedno malo veselimo i neka pobijedi bolji. Živjela Europska unija, živjeli mi.

Romana Tomc (PPE). – Gospa predsjednica, spoštovani predsjednik vlade doktor Robert Golob. Z zanimanjem sem prisluhnila vašemu govoru, kjer ste izpostavili energetska krizo, zeleni prehod in širitev Evropske unije na Balkan.

Veseli me, da imate predloge, kako se lotiti vseh teh izzivov. Še bolj pa bi me veselilo, če bi imeli rešitve tudi za Slovenijo, kjer so razmere zares zaskrbljujoče.

Poleg vprašanj, povezanih z vse večjo draginjo, je ogrožena tudi pravna država in svoboda medijev. Na tisoče ljudi v Sloveniji je samo v pol leta vaše vlade ostalo brez zdravnika. Vrstijo se kadrovske čistke, državljani plačujejo eno najvišjih cen elektrike v Evropi. Skrbi jih, kako bodo ob visoki inflaciji preživeli zimo. Gospodarstvo opozarja, da so vaši ukrepi prepočasni, prezapleteni in premalo učinkoviti.

Pred nekaj dnevi, kot je bilo že omenjeno, je odstopila vaša ministrica za notranje zadeve in vas obtožila direktnega poseganja v policijo, ker naj bi vi osebno zahtevali odpustitev določenih oseb. V nacionalnem parlamentu ste se poslanecem zlagali.

Vaša pretekla in sedanja vloga v povezavi z energetskimi posli je polna neodgovornih vprašanj. Predsednica parlamenta, vaša tesna strankarska sopotnica, mimo pravil določa, kaj izvoljeni poslanci lahko in česa ne smejo vprašati in vodilne policiste primerja z Eichmannom.

Novinarji, ki odkrivajo afele in neučinkovitost vaše vlade, so dnevno podvrženi grožnjam in pritiskom. Očitno je, da pri vodenju uporabljate zelo avtorske prijeme.

Včeraj je zaradi tega iz vaše stranke odstopila, izstopila tudi ena od soustanoviteljic, ki se ne strinja z vašo politiko, in vse bolj postaja jasno, da poskušate vzpostaviti popolno oblast v vseh institucijah in hkrati utišati še tistih nekaj manjših medijev, ki so do vas kritični.

Žal vaša dejanja doma v Sloveniji ne odsevajo tega, kar govorite. Do javnosti pa mnoge informacije o zdrsih vašega vladanja težko pridejo, saj vas ščitijo glavni mediji in politični aktivisti. To, kar počnete, je daleč od demokracije. To ni v skladu z evropskimi vrednotami.

Vse to bomo sicer najbolj občutili državljani Slovenije, a uničevanje demokracije in brutalni posegi v medijski prostor bi morali skrbeti tudi evropske institucije.

Če se vrnem k vašemu govoru, potem bi si seveda najbolj želeli, da se vse, kar ste povedali evropski javnosti, uresniči tudi v Sloveniji. Vendar besede niso dovolj, ljudje pričakujejo ukrepe, ki jim bodo zagotovili učinkovito zdravstvo in pomoč pri spopadanju z visokimi cenami. Namesto tega pa so dobili višje davke.

Pričakujejo, da boste vzpostavili okolje, ki je prostor za svobodo medijev in misli. Gospodarstvo pričakuje ukrepe takoj, ne naslednjo zimo. In mi vsi pričakujemo, da boste spoštovali vladavino prava in se odrekli rušenju demokracije in vzpostavljanju avtoritarnega sistema v Sloveniji.

Matjaž Nemec (S&D). – Gospa predsedujoča, spoštovani predsednik vlade Republike Slovenije, doktor Robert Golob, spoštovani sokrajan, dobrodošli v Strasbourgu, dobrodošli v Evropskem parlamentu in dobrodošli med nami. Lepo je slišati slovenski glas tukaj.

Zahvaljujem se vam za velik angažma za čimprejšnjo podelitev statusa kandidatke Bosni in Hercegovini. Verjamem, da so prizadevanja slovenske politike v tej smeri ključno in vključno z naporimi predsednika republike, ministrice za zunanje zadeve ter nas v Evropskem parlamentu obrodile prve sadove.

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Na predsednico Evropskega parlamenta Roberto Metsolo smo na mojo pobudo tudi evropski poslanci že junija meseca naslovili pismo s pozivom, da se tudi Evropski parlament zavzame za podelitev statusa kandidatke Bosni in Hercegovini.

V obziru današnjega časa in grozovite vojne v Evropi gre za izjemno pomemben, če ne že odločilen korak za celotno regijo Zahodnega Balkana, za regijo, ki ji nemalokrat upeha zagon in moč za približevanje Evropski uniji. In za regijo, kateri je Evropska unija obljubila evropsko perspektivo pred skoraj dvajsetimi leti v Solunu, a smo od nove širitve še kot kaže zelo daleč.

Ne samo med Slovenijo ter Bosno in Hercegovino, ampak tudi z ostalimi državami Zahodnega Balkana obstajajo močne vezi. Slovenija je in ostaja zaveznik državam v regiji – brez pogojevanj, brez zahrbtnih iger, brez škodljivih interesov.

Danes, dva dni pred decembrskim srečanjem, ko ima država tudi zeleno luč od Komisije, pa pozivam evropske voditelje, da zeleno luč prižgete tudi na Evropskem svetu. Naj se sliši jasen glas – Evropska unija de facto živi svoje poslanstvo združene in povezane Evrope, katere enakopraven partner mora postati regija Zahodnega Balkana.

Zato vas spoštovani predsednik vlade Republike Slovenije doktor Robert Golob sprašujem, kako ocenjujete možnost za pozitivno odločitev konec tedna za Bosno in Hercegovino? Katera država je najtrši oreh in ali kompromis je še možen in kakšno sporočilo želite EU poslati ... državam v regiji?

VORSITZ: OTHMAR KARAS

Vizepräsident

Katalin Cseh (Renew). – Mr President, dear Prime Minister Golob, dear colleagues, thank you very much, Prime Minister, for addressing this Chamber today and sharing your vision for the future of Europe, a vision that I was so pleased to hear in this Chamber.

Protecting our European values, standing up for the rule of law, facing the climate emergency with courage and ambition: our group, Renew Europe, is wholeheartedly behind you in the fight for these issues. It's so important. But also, as a representative of the Hungarian Momentum Movement – the youngest opposition party fighting Viktor Orbán's illiberal populism – I also wanted to talk briefly about what I believe this year's election in Slovenia means for us and also for Europe as a whole.

The government of former Prime Minister Janez Janša alarmed Europe, and rightfully so. It has shown that no country is immune to democratic backsliding. Mr Janša issued *ad hominem* attacks at Members of this Parliament and against members of our group in particular. At home he attacked civil liberties and undermined judicial independence. Media freedom was very severely curtailed as Hungarian media tycoons showed up in Slovenia, interfering with press freedom and exporting the Orbán model.

So in short, what we saw is the Orbanisation of Slovenia. The playbook was just so remarkably similar. And this is why the election victory of the Freedom Movement has such a broad Europe-wide importance. First and foremost, it gave us hope – hope that the global democratic backsliding trend can be stopped and it can be reversed, that the values of liberal democracy and environmentalism can prevail against illiberal populism, also electorally.

But, colleagues, the steady erosion of our European values and the trend of democratic backsliding did not stop. And we also still hear talking points of one of the autocrats echoed by major political groups in this House. There is so much work to be done for the European Union as a whole to defend our values.

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So I believe that the new government in Slovenia has a very deep understanding, but also strong credibility to stand up for European values. One key priority must be media freedom and a strong EU-wide regulation for media markets. We are looking forward to your leadership on these issues, Prime Minister.

Thomas Waitz (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, dear Commissioner, dear Prime Minister Robert Golob. First, a short comment to our Conservative colleagues. Geographically, Slovenia is an Alpine republic, and the former speaker from your party, it was your government leaving a devastated health care system to your successor. So don't blame the new government for your failures.

But now, coming to my actual speech, thank you so much for coming to the European Parliament and congrats once again for securing a progressive, a pro-European, a liberal-democracy-oriented majority in my so dear to my heart neighbouring and also partly living country, Slovenia. Thank you so much for that. And also I want to personally thank you for your strong support for the integration of Western Balkan countries towards European Union. It's very important to have you as one of the pillars of further negotiations. We need to accelerate. We need to keep our promises. It's important for the citizens, but it's also important in terms of security, economy and environment. So thank you very much for that.

Indeed, I also have a critical question that I would like to ask you, and this is especially towards you as an energy expert. You know that nuclear energy takes a long time to be built. You know that it is causing harm to environment. You know that Krško is built on an earthquake line, on a geological instable region. And you know that renewable energy is much cheaper and much more effective than nuclear energy. Please explain to us why do you want to build the second block, while Slovenia has all the options on the table to go for solar? And please also tell us how you will enable households to also deliver electricity to the system and not just supply themselves.

Joachim Stanisław Brudziński (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Premierze! Chciałbym podziękować za te słowa skierowane do nas w tej izbie. Jest niezwykle ważne, aby w debacie o przyszłości Europy w Parlamencie Europejskim był obecny i słyszalny głos przedstawicieli państw Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej. Zbyt często niestety można było tutaj odczuć i usłyszeć ze strony przedstawicieli tzw. starej Unii, że państwa takie jak Słowenia, Węgry, Czechy, Słowacja, czy w końcu mój kraj, Polska, to państwa, którym wolno mniej, gdyż rzekomo nasze demokracje są niedojrzałe. W przeciwieństwie do rzekomo dojrzałych demokracji państw takich jak Niemcy, Francja czy Holandia.

Jakie skutki przyniosła taka polityka, pokazuje dzisiaj wojna w Ukrainie. Nie słuchano głosów płynących z Polski, Litwy, Łotwy czy innych państw, które doświadczały w swojej historii dobrodziejstw płynących ze strony Rosji, czy to Rosji carskiej, czy bolszewickiej, czy w ostatnich latach Rosji Putina. I na szczęście dziś z ust przedstawicieli również instytucji unijnych można usłyszeć - źle, że nie słuchaliśmy Polski.

Panie Premierze, w Pana wystąpieniu były wątki, z którymi zgadzam się całkowicie. Mam na myśli tutaj chociażby kwestie obecności w Unii Europejskiej państw Bałkanów Zachodnich. Jest oczywiste, że jeżeli odwrócili się plecami do Bośni i Hercegowiny, to państwo to prędzej czy później będzie w strefie wpływów Rosji, a nawet saudyjskich wahabitów. Ale proszę pozwolić, że wobec niektórych z Pańskich tez wygłoszonych tutaj pozostanę sceptyczny. Jako żywo nie jest mi dana wiara, że wegetarianizm albo nowa świecka religia w odniesieniu do spraw klimatycznych to droga do powszechnej szczęśliwości ludzkości.

Niestety przy okazji Pańskiego wystąpienia wybrzmiały ze strony moich niektórych przedmówców pełne hipokryzji słowa. Jesteś z naszej rodziny politycznej, to jesteś praworządny i godzien pełnego poparcia. Jeżeli jesteś spoza tej rodziny, to jesteś zagrożeniem dla praworządności i demokracji. A wiecie Państwo, że najciemniej jest pod latarnią, co pokazuje ostatnia afera związana z wiceprzewodniczącą Parlamentu Europejskiego.

Carles Puigdemont i Casamajó (NI). – Mr President, Prime Minister, thank you for your inspiring vision on energy, food, freedom, for what it represents for Europe. Slovenia has made an extraordinary journey since it became an independent state, and especially since it joined the European Union. Today it is a model in many ways, and I believe it can help the Union as a whole at a time of very high risks which have been aggravated by the Russian aggression against Ukraine.

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Slovenia can help make people understand that Europe's strength lies in the diversity of its people, and that the more diverse we are, the more efficient we are; that we can ensure the well-being of citizens in a more effective and sustainable way; and that we can better ensure fundamental rights. Respect for this diversity is the key of the future of the Union, and in this sense Slovenia, as you mentioned, has a very important role to play.

Seán Kelly (PPE). – *A Uachtaráin*, thank you, Prime Minister, for joining us today to share your views on the future of Europe. I welcome you to this timely debate. We are currently at a critical juncture for Europe and for European democracy, facing significant challenges both internally and externally.

Looking internally, events within the European Parliament over the recent days have shaken our trust in our institution. Allegations that have come to light of possible corruption cases involving MEPs and Parliament staff are deeply troubling. There is no place for corruption in European democracy, and these developments will warrant a period of deep reflection and reform.

Beyond our plenary Chamber we are facing unprecedented challenges in Europe. War in Ukraine and the ensuing energy and cost-of-living crisis pose new tests for the EU and call for further cooperation between Member States. As citizens and businesses worry this Christmas about keeping the lights and heating on, we must ensure that the EU continues to deliver for its citizens. Unity is more important than ever.

As leader of a small European Member State I am confident that you understand this, Prime Minister. Ireland and Slovenia are alike in this regard. As small Member States we share a common understanding that together we are stronger than apart. Indeed, Slovenia joined the European Union during Ireland's Council Presidency in 2004. Having witnessed the enormous benefits that European Union membership has delivered for my country in terms of economic, social and cultural opportunities, it was a pleasure to hear that Ireland played this small role in Slovenia's journey.

Looking forward, the shared challenges we now face are significant: no single country can handle these alone. There is huge strength in unity and I hope to continue to see Slovenia and Ireland grow together within the EU.

Miapetra Kumpula-Natri (S&D). – Mr President, and welcome to the European Parliament. I appreciate this opportunity to have a dialogue and I saw you spoke from your heart. We all know the greetings of the past government, Janša's government, and we are so happy that only in 5 months and 12 days you have delivered. Not everything can be changed, but you see the government building the common Europe and showing that the small country can play an active role on the way forward on the transition that is so important even in the time of the crisis.

Your greetings on the energy systems I could not agree with more. It needs to be a clean transition and we need to get rid of the speculators on the markets. And this day, when the people are seeing the prices of energy, also your government will put a lot of help for their citizens.

Dear colleagues, I think what we heard today also on the importance of rule of law, it may not be unanswered that we can send greetings to the Slovenian Parliament. Thank you for giving same-sex marriage rights also to citizens in Slovenia, as we have worked here for the rule of law, it is important the national government is doing the very same thing.

PRESIDENZA: ROBERTA METSOLA

President

Irena Joveva (Renew). – *Gospa predsedujoča*, spoštovani predsednik vlade, spoštovane kolegice, spoštovani kolegi, Evropska unija je v sedmih desetletjih iz mirovnega političnega projekta prerasla v resnično politično skupnost.

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Skupaj postavljamo globalne standarde za ljudi pri podnebni politiki, digitalnih pravicah, zdravih hrani, demokratičnih vrednotah. Je vse popolno? Ni. Med to politično evolucijo se je razrasel tudi prekompleksen birokratski aparat, ki se stežka prilagaja na nenehne nove izzive ali krize našega časa.

V zadnjih letih smo naredili velike korake. To seveda drži. Že omenjena podnebna politika, konkretno recimo tudi sklad za okrevanje in odpornost. Super, ampak kje smo danes? V tokratni danosti, ki nam jo prinašata zločinska vojna v Ukrajini in energetska kriza, kljub vsem naporom in dosežkom pogrešam več ambicioznosti na ravni Unije, tudi na drugih področjih.

Enotnosti bi si želela tudi pri skupnih odzivih pri blaženju te krize in skupnem okviru pri potrebnih investicijah za zeleno od vseh avtoritarnih držav energetske neodvisno Evropo. RePowerEU, skupne nabave plina, omejitve cen elektrike so dobra zasnova in v teh dneh, ko razpravljamo o do Evropske unije nepoštenem ameriškem antiinflacijskem aktu, bi morali najti tudi politično voljo za evropski odziv, denimo vzpostavitev novega fleksibilnega sklada za soočanje s krizami.

Veto v Svetu sili v nedopustne kompromise. Korupcija na sistemski ravni v državah članicah, da ne govorim o očitno individualnih, tudi tukaj v tej hiši – to zažira v našo kredibilnost. Tudi zato, predvsem pa za omogočanje fleksibilnosti s širitvijo fiskalne kapacitete Unije, so nujne institucionalne reforme, z odpiranjem temeljnih pogodb, ukinitvijo soglasnosti, demokratizacijo naših procesov in vzpostavitev resničnega evropskega javnega diskurza.

Ravno zato so pomembni takšni dogovori in razprave sploh tako vsebinske, če izvzamem nekatere ... *(govornici se izteče čas za govor)*

Mikuláš Peksa (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, dear Prime Minister Golob, last year I had the opportunity to visit Slovenia on a mission as a member of the Budgetary Control Committee. Under your predecessor Janez Janša, Slovenia was suffering multiple rule of law crises. The issue that resonated with me mostly was the intimidation of the controlling authorities, as well as the lack of media freedom. Budgets were cut and critical investigative journalists were victims of organised attacks. And of course, we can't forget his efforts to politicise your radio broadcasts at Radiotelevizija Slovenija.

But you are the head of a new government and I hear that the situation has improved already. And your legislative initiative to restructure the governing bodies of Radiotelevizija Slovenija is a welcome one. I hope that that will indeed lead to a less hostile public media landscape. However, it appears that there are some branches of the government where the political influence is still creeping back in. So recently we have witnessed your Interior Minister resigned over the ...

(The President cut off the speaker)

Laura Huhtasaari (ID). – Arvoisa puhemies, Eurooppa on vakavassa kriisissä. Edes Ukrainan sota ei pysäytä vihertäviä demareita ja punakkaa viheroikeistoa toteuttamasta päättömiä päätöksiä. Miksi päästökauppaa ei voida jäädyttää? Se olisi oiva tapa laskea sähkön hintaa. Suomi ajoi vimmalla turpeen käytön alas ja nyt voivottelee, kun kaukolämpö on kallista. Haluatteko te, että sähkö on kallista vai halpaa? Jos haluatte, että se on halpaa, olisiko aika vaihtaa konseptia?

Vihreä fanatismi on levinnyt kaikkialle. Valtamedian toimittajat ovat suurimmaksi osaksi vihreitä, ja siksi suurin osa median liikevaihdosta tulee valehtelusta. Vihreät puolueet päättivät, että puut eivät kasva vuoden 2030 jälkeen.

Eikä tämä hulluus siihen lopu. Nykyään meille myös kerrotaan totena, että sukupuoliakin on 72 ja muuta hölynpölyä. EU:ssa ei kuule puolustuspuheenvuoroja vainottujen kristittyjen puolesta, vaikka kristityt ovat maailman vainoituin ryhmä. Olen huolissani lännestä. Se on vaarassa upota.

Nicolas Bay (NI). – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Premier Ministre, certains de nos collègues ne sont pas parmi nous ce matin parce qu'ils dorment en prison. Des fonctionnaires et, surtout, plusieurs députés européens sont soupçonnés de corruption et d'avoir reçu de l'argent du Qatar pour infléchir la politique de l'Union européenne. Tous viennent des rangs de la gauche morale. Tous sont des acteurs ou des relais de ces ONG qui prétendent dicter le bien et le juste aux peuples et aux gouvernements légitimement élus.

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Député européen depuis huit ans, j'ai subi, session après session, rapport après rapport, leurs leçons. Je les ai vus se parer de toutes les vertus, se poser en grands défenseurs des droits de l'homme, et nous apprenons, donc, que ceux qui ont prétendu pourchasser les homophobes aux quatre coins de l'Europe ont reçu des sacs de billets de l'État le plus homophobe au monde.

Oui, cette hypocrisie, cette duplicité pourrait faire sourire, mais cette affaire de corruption nous pousse à nous interroger: combien d'interventions ont été téléguidées par l'argent du Qatar? Combien de textes votés ici, dans cet hémicycle, pas plus tard que le mois dernier, par l'ensemble des élus du groupe socialiste, servaient les intérêts de ce pays islamiste? Quand une campagne européenne fait la promotion du voile, est-ce une initiative de Bruxelles ou de Doha?

Finissons-en avec la naïveté et la faiblesse face à l'offensive islamique en Europe. Affirmons nos valeurs de civilisation face à cette haute trahison.

Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D). – Madam President, Prime Minister, let me say that I am totally with you, and welcome back on the right track. You said we must be decisive: unity and more – I understood – power and European methodology, and I am totally with you. Renewable energy is own resources using waste, biomass, sun, wind, new jobs, cheaper energy and energy independence. Rule of law: I come from Poland. I am totally with you. The rule of law is not to be negotiated; it is to be enforced.

And thank you for your words concerning Ukraine. Supporting Ukraine means we are preserving our freedom and peace. And at the end, I am keeping my fingers crossed for your game against Argentina tonight.

Clara Ponsatí Obiols (NI). – Madam President, Minister, in 1991 US Secretary of State James Baker solemnly declared that neither the United States nor the European Community would ever recognise an independent Slovenia. Less than a year later, both were among the first to recognise the new country.

The lesson is simple: self-determination must be pursued regardless of the opposition of world powers, that always will protect the status quo. This also means that states only recognise the exercise of these rights when it suits them geopolitically, or when they think that rejecting it causes more trouble than accepting it. And that's why it often becomes a mess and a source of instability.

The EU should change in stance on self-determination and grant a safe and clear path for minorities to exercise it within the Union and for viewing it with the rest of the world. Slovenia should lead the effort to redefine this right. And we Catalans will help you in this endeavour.

Robert Hajšel (S&D). – Vážená pani predsedajúca, Slovensko je určite inšpirujúcim príkladom pre všetky krajiny západného Balkánu, ktoré sa chcú stať členmi Európskej únie, ako postupovať na tejto ceste a aké reformy treba realizovať. Je dobré, že venujete toľko energie tomuto regiónu. Ten je blízky aj mojej krajine a mne osobne, lebo som Slovák. Ruská invázia na Ukrajinu a zmeny súčasnej geopolitickej situácie nás prinútili uvedomiť si, že strategickým záujmom Európskej únie je stabilné a bezpečné prostredie v jej blízkom susedstve, a to bez ohľadu na to, ktorá z týchto krajín nakoniec bude alebo nebude členským štátom Európskej únie. Západný Balkán už dlho čaká v čakárni na členstvo v Európskej únii, či už ide o Srbsko, alebo Čiernu Horu, alebo aj ďalšie krajiny. Ale dnes v súčasnej situácii aj v dôsledku samitu v Tirane dochádza k istej zmene vnímania celého procesu a frustrácia týchto krajín sa mení na trpezlivosť a optimizmus. A Európska únia sa tiež preberá z akejsi únavy z rozširovania a odhodláva sa na to, aby naozaj postupovala s týmito krajinami seriózne. Bolo by dobré, aby sme v tom pokračovali a vzájomne si musíme v tom pomáhať.

Elena Yoncheva (S&D). – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur Golob, nous sommes honorés d'être dans cette salle aujourd'hui et d'avoir l'occasion de mener ce débat. Il y a seulement un an, la Slovaquie s'était engagée dans une voie destructive, et le Premier ministre de l'époque contrôlait les médias et le système judiciaire avec une grande arrogance.

Je suis heureuse de voir que la Slovaquie s'est très vite débarrassée de ce modèle. Je vous félicite d'avoir entrepris des réformes décisives pour garantir que les médias du pays seront à l'abri de toute ingérence politique. Ce que vous avez fait pour restaurer la liberté des médias est une inspiration pour toute l'Europe.

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Monsieur Golob, merci d'avoir remis la Slovénie au cœur de l'Union européenne et, surtout, d'avoir prouvé que les pays d'Europe du sud-est peuvent proposer des réformes qui inspirent toute l'Union européenne.

Robert Golob, *Prime Minister of Slovenia*. – Madam President, dear Members of the Parliament, I'm glad to be here again now. I have a bigger audience now. You obviously enjoyed my previous speech so much, you came to listen, all of you.

Let me reiterate certain things that are so important that I don't want you to miss. First, let me pledge our full, not just support, but commitment to implementation of the rule of law in Slovenia, but also our support for the rule of law within the other Member States of the European Union. And the rule of law is not subject to interpretation by political partisans. It is something that you either have or you don't. Because it's not just a political system. It is our responsibility to implement, but it's being lived by other subsystems such as the media, the judicial system and so forth.

The other commitment that I would like to pledge fully is our commitment to support the Ukrainian people. We've done everything possible and everything that we could or even did not plan to do under the previous government. We are supporting Ukraine in all possible ways, and we do it promptly. We are not just promising aid; we are delivering aid promptly. And that's something that's easy, very easy to prove.

We are also very committed to supporting the enlargement of the European Union in the Western Balkans. This is one of the first topics on our government agenda when it comes to foreign policy. We want to see the region stable and the only way to stabilise the region is by bringing it closer to integrate it into the European Union. It's not a matter of which mechanism is being used. It's about integration, and as fast as possible and as strong as possible. That's the only way we can transform the region at its core.

And third, we come to energy. I believe that no single nation can face the energy crisis alone. It doesn't matter how big you are. It doesn't matter how rich you are. The cost you will pay if you want to tackle it alone is going to be exorbitant and you will not be able to take it. Maybe for a year, yes, but not in the longer run. The only way forward is through a united and coordinated effort.

And for this particular reason I urge again, not just you, but my colleagues: forget about national egotistical moves, thinking that you can solve your problems and leave the others behind. It's not doable. The only way forward is by being united and decisive. It is truly the only way forward. And that is also the only possible message that the speculative traders who are ruling the energy markets of Europe right now will understand. And let's leave the floor with that.

President. – Thank you very much Prime Minister. That concludes the debate.

(The sitting was suspended briefly.)

7. Reinício da sessão

(The sitting resumed at 12:14)

President. – I understand there is a point of order to be made by Hynek Blaško. Please state the Rule under which you are making it.

Hynek Blaško (ID). – Paní předsedkyně, kolegové, kolegyně, s využitím článku 195 jednacího řádu mi dovoluňte pronést několik slov. Kdosi z vás vylepil nebo zařídil vylepení odporného obrázku na dveře mé kanceláře. Považuji to za zbabělý a bezprecedentní útok na moje práva poslance. Naprosto nepřijatelný nátlak. Mezi vámi jsou dokonce jedinci, kteří na sociálních sítích vyzývají občany k udávání těch, kteří mají jiný názor. Vyzývají ke zpracování seznamů takových občanů a požadují jejich internaci. To je pojetí demokracie? To jsou ty evropské hodnoty? Styďte se!

8. Período de votação

President. – We will now proceed to the vote.

(For the results and other details on the vote: see Minutes)

8.1. Cessação antecipada do mandato de uma vice-presidente (Eva Kaili)

— *Before the vote:*

President. – First of all, we will vote on a proposal from the Conference of Presidents, for the early termination of the office of our Vice-President of the European Parliament, Ms Eva Kaili. In accordance with Rule 21, the proposal requires for adoption a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast, constituting a majority of Parliament's component Members. Only votes for and against constitute votes cast for the purposes of calculating whether the necessary two-thirds majority has been obtained, in accordance with Rule 187(3). Please note that the total displayed at the top of the screen will include abstentions and that the votes taken into account are only the votes for and against.

8.2. Instrumento de Assistência Macrofinanceira+ para prestar apoio à Ucrânia em 2023 (C9-0373/2022) (votação)

8.3. Notificação ao abrigo do Regime de Compensação e Redução das Emissões de Carbono da Aviação Internacional (CORSIA) (A9-0145/2022 - Sunčana Glavak) (votação)

8.4. Transportes: revogação do Regulamento (CEE) n.º 1108/70 do Conselho e do Regulamento (CE) n.º 851/2006 da Comissão (A9-0286/2022 - Roman Haider) (votação)

8.5. Aviação civil: revogação da Diretiva 89/629/CEE do Conselho (A9-0287/2022 - Karima Delli) (votação)

8.6. Cooperação administrativa no domínio dos impostos especiais de consumo (A9-0276/2022 - Irene Tinagli) (votação)

8.7. Aplicação dos artigos 93.º, 107.º e 108.º do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia a determinadas categorias de auxílios estatais nos setores do transporte ferroviário, por via navegável e multimodal (A9-0285/2022 - Eva Maria Poptcheva) (votação)

8.8. Objeção nos termos do artigo 112.º, n.ºs 2 e 3: soja geneticamente modificada A5547-127 (ACS-GMØØ6-4) (B9-0548/2022) (votação)

8.9. Objeção nos termos do artigo 112.º, n.ºs 2 e 3: A família de produtos biocidas à base de solventes CMIT/MIT (B9-0549/2022) (votação)

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8.10. Rumo à igualdade de direitos para as pessoas com deficiência (A9-0284/2022 - Anne-Sophie Pelletier) (votação)

8.11. Uma visão a longo prazo para as zonas rurais da UE (A9-0269/2022 - Isabel Carvalhais) (votação)

— *After the vote:*

President. – Now colleagues, before we go to the last two votes, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank Klaus Welle, who after nearly 14 years will retire as Secretary-General in the new year.

Klaus, I am sure you would have preferred a smoother last few weeks but I wanted to thank you on behalf of this House, on behalf of myself, my predecessors and those who come after me, for all you have done for this European project.

Your vision, your steady hand on the wheel meant that this Parliament was able to get ever closer to the people it represents and is a position to stand up for the values we all cherish, and you have given us the tools to put Parliament on the map.

From the bottom of my heart, and, as you have seen, from the bottom of all our colleagues' hearts, thank you.

(The House rose and accorded Mr Welle a standing ovation.)

8.12. Plano de ação para impulsionar o transporte ferroviário de passageiros transfronteiriço e de longo curso (A9-0242/2022 - Annalisa Tardino) (votação)

8.13. Fosso digital: disparidades sociais causadas pela digitalização (B9-0550/2022) (votação)

President. – That concludes the vote.

(The sitting was suspended briefly.)

PRESIDÊNCIA: PEDRO SILVA PEREIRA

Vice-Presidente

9. Reinício da sessão

(A sessão é reiniciada às 12h27.)

10. Aplicação da Nova Agenda Europeia para a Cultura e da estratégia da UE no domínio das relações culturais internacionais (debate)

Presidente. – O próximo ponto da ordem do dia é o relatório da Deputada Salima Yenbou, em nome da Comissão da Cultura e da Educação, sobre a aplicação da Nova Agenda Europeia para a Cultura e da estratégia da UE no domínio das relações culturais internacionais (2022/2047(INI)) (A9-0279/2022).

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Salima Yenbou, rapporteure. – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Commissaire, chers collègues: «Si c'était à refaire, je recommencerais par la culture.» Cette phrase apocryphe de Jean Monnet résume parfaitement l'esprit de mon rapport. La culture est, et doit continuer à être, au fondement de notre projet européen. La culture nous permet de communiquer, de nous exprimer et de comprendre les autres. Elle est un vecteur d'émotions authentiques et permet de se connaître et de célébrer ensemble nos différences, tant à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur de nos frontières.

Après six ans, il était grand temps d'évaluer le succès des politiques culturelles de l'Union, d'évaluer la mise en œuvre de deux axes qui constituent le pilier de ces politiques. Un long travail, qui aboutit aujourd'hui non seulement à une évaluation de ce qui a été fait jusqu'à maintenant, mais aussi à des recommandations fortes et ambitieuses pour relancer et soutenir les politiques culturelles européennes, et surtout pour répondre concrètement aux besoins des acteurs culturels. Il est primordial que nous soyons beaucoup plus attentifs aux besoins des bénéficiaires de nos politiques.

L'heure n'est plus à la mise en œuvre d'une politique culturelle de l'urgence, de réponse aux crises ou de gestion de crise. Un seul exemple résume parfaitement cette situation: les conditions de travail et les statuts des employés du secteur culturel, qui restent profondément précaires. Combien de fois devons nous rappeler que les secteurs créatif et culturel ont souffert de manière insupportable de la crise de la COVID-19? Que devons-nous faire pour vous convaincre ?

Je m'adresse spécialement aux membres du Conseil, dont je salue la présence aujourd'hui. Cette pandémie n'a fait que rendre encore plus visibles les problèmes du secteur culturel déjà existants, dont nous avons toutes et tous connaissance depuis des années. Les artistes et les travailleurs du secteur attendent depuis trop longtemps que les États membres prennent des mesures concrètes et législatives pour réguler leurs conditions de travail. À travers ma voix, le Parlement ne fait que répéter son appel à la création d'un vrai et digne statut des artistes.

C'est également l'occasion de mettre en lumière le fait suivant: les problématiques du secteur culturel ne s'appliquent pas seulement aux citoyens de l'Union européenne, et il est très important de le rappeler. Nous parlons constamment du besoin de cohérence entre nos politiques internes et externes. C'est bien, mais les politiques culturelles ne doivent pas constituer une exception. Il n'est plus à démontrer que les approches se fondant sur la culture et la communication interculturelle sont d'une efficacité inégalée pour tisser des liens et pour renforcer nos relations et notre coopération internationales.

C'est pour cela que les relations culturelles doivent être au cœur de nos efforts de diplomatie. Qu'il s'agisse des liens indéniables avec la durabilité environnementale, de la protection des monuments et du patrimoine culturel dans les zones de conflits, ou de la lutte contre le trafic illégal d'objets d'art, la dimension internationale de la culture et son rôle sur la scène planétaire ne sont pas à sous-estimer, bien au contraire. Au commencement de ces liens, il est primordial d'accentuer et d'accélérer la restitution des œuvres spoliées. Nous le devons. D'ailleurs, Madame la Commissaire, nous sommes encore en attente de la proposition de la Commission pour le plan d'action de l'Union européenne sur le trafic de biens culturels, pourtant prévue avant la fin de cette année – c'est-à-dire dans dix-huit jours.

Un dernier mot sur le plan de travail du Conseil pour la période 2023-2026: nous avons travaillé de façon étroite avec la présidence tchèque, et je me réjouis de voir que les thèmes et les priorités recensés dans mon rapport sont mentionnés dans le plan de travail. Mais je reste encore sur ma faim, désolée. Certes, vous recommandez des démarches pour affronter le problème – échange de bonnes pratiques, partage d'expériences, mise au point des initiatives existantes, etc. – mais à quand les actions? À quand le concret?

Je conclurai en soulignant une fois encore l'importance de ce rapport, qui définit et renforce la philosophie et l'approche globale de l'Union européenne et de ses États membres vis-à-vis des politiques culturelles. Cette approche nécessite une forte implication politique et une coordination entre tous les acteurs impliqués, dans nos institutions, et surtout avec nos partenaires sur le terrain: les artistes, les travailleurs du secteur, les instituts culturels, la société civile, les communautés et les populations locales. Investissons davantage dans cette direction. Investissons en matière de moyens financiers et de ressources humaines plus spécialisées et qualifiées. Surtout, engageons-nous politiquement!

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L'héritage du dernier mandat de la Commission se ressent encore fortement dans le milieu des relations culturelles de l'Union. Je suis sûre, Madame la Commissaire, que je peux compter sur vous pour passer ce message à M. Borrell également. Les secteurs culturel et créatif ne méritent rien de moins que ce que la Commission, le SEAE, les États membres et nous, au Parlement, savons et pouvons faire, si – et seulement si – nous le voulons vraiment. À nous de jouer.

Nacho Sánchez Amor, *ponente de opinión de la Comisión de Asuntos Exteriores*. – Señor presidente, gracias, Sra. Yenbou por su liderazgo en este informe. Ha sido un placer trabajar con usted.

Me corresponde emitir la opinión de la Comisión AFET y, por tanto, inevitablemente, el asunto es nuestra diplomacia cultural europea, los aspectos de exterior del informe. La cierta debilidad de nuestra diplomacia cultural europea es un déficit que corregir. La identidad europea cultural en el mundo no puede ser una acumulación inarticulada de lo que hagan nuestras grandes instituciones culturales nacionales —el Instituto Cervantes, el Goethe, la Alianza Francesa...—. ¿Cuál es nuestra etiqueta común en el mundo? ¿Cuál es la cara unida que ofrecemos cuando presumimos de nuestro estilo de vida europeo?

Por supuesto que nuestra cultura europea está formada por un conjunto de culturas nacionales vibrantes y fuertes. Pero igual que hemos construido elementos simbólicos comunes que no han desplazado a los elementos simbólicos nacionales, podemos hacer lo mismo con nuestra cultura y nuestra presencia cultural en el mundo, que tienen que ser también vehículo de nuestros valores y principios.

Por lo tanto, aprobemos una nueva caja de instrumentos para la diplomacia cultural que se base en el apoyo a los sectores culturales de los países con los que nos relacionamos.

Vladimír Balaš, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, Madam Commissioner, honourable Members of Parliament, thank you for putting this important topic on the agenda and for holding this policy debate.

Let me start by congratulating the rapporteur, Ms Salima Yenbou, as well as the Culture and Education Committee for their excellent work on the very comprehensive report. Culture and cultural diversity are a vital part of our society and should therefore be considered essential dimensions of the European project. In the last two years, and as the European Parliament correctly highlighted, culture and cultural and creative sectors have been under particular stress due to a number of factors.

Against this background, I would like to underline that the 2018 new European Agenda for Culture and the 2016 Joint Communication of the European Commission, 'Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations', still reflect the EU political priorities in the cultural fields and with regard to both the internal and the external dimensions of cultural policies.

Furthermore, the Council welcomes the special focus that the European Parliament report has on a number of elements and, in particular, the accessibility of culture, EU funding opportunities, the engagement of civil society, as well as the contribution of culture to social cohesion, sustainable development and the fight against climate change.

I would like also to recall that the Council has been operating on the basis of multiannual work plans for culture prepared by Member States since 2002 and implemented in coordination with the European Commission and with the support of the Creative Europe programme. These work plans serve the purpose of providing joint solutions to common challenges, as well as more structured procedures for cooperation in the area of culture at European level.

The EU Work Plan for Culture for the period 2023 to 2026 was approved by the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council on 29 November 2022 in the form of a Council resolution. This plan addresses new priorities and challenges such as the current energy crisis.

Furthermore, the external dimension of culture has been significantly strengthened including, inter alia, through specific support to Ukrainian artists and the protection of Ukrainian cultural heritage. The synergies with other relevant policy fields have been discussed for many years, and we can still see a lot of barriers and challenges when trying to communicate with different sectors. Thinking out of the box, it's still a great challenge.

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Let me conclude by stressing that the European Union, in its complexity, has at its disposal a significant number of initiatives and instruments in the area of cultural policy. And we should now focus not only on implementation but also on its complementarity. We should aim not only at the efficient use of those instruments, but mainly at efficient outcomes of cooperation between different policy fields. We count on the support of the European Parliament in this endeavour.

Dear Mr President, Madam Commissioner, honourable Members of Parliament, thank you very much for your attention.

Mariya Gabriel, *membre de la Commission*. – Monsieur le Président. Monsieur le Ministre, Mesdames et Messieurs les Députés, pour commencer, permettez-moi de féliciter la rapporteure, M^{me} Salima Yenbou, pour son travail, son engagement et sa vision. Merci également aux rapporteurs fictifs, aux membres de la commission CULT et aux députés au Parlement européen. Merci pour votre travail d'évaluation et de réflexion sur tout ce qui a été accompli ces dernières années dans le cadre du nouvel agenda européen de la culture.

Oui, quatre années se sont écoulées depuis l'adoption par la Commission de cet agenda, en 2018. Cela avait été précédé en 2016 de la communication conjointe de la Commission et de la haute représentante intitulée «Vers une stratégie de l'Union européenne dans le domaine des relations culturelles internationales». Maintenant, en accord avec le cadre stratégique défini par cet agenda, j'aimerais présenter notre action en matière culturelle selon trois axes. Premièrement, la dimension sociale, ensuite la dimension économique, et enfin la dimension extérieure du patrimoine culturel.

Je commencerai en attirant l'attention sur la dimension sociale, je dirais même sociétale. Il s'agit d'employer la force de la culture au service de ce qui permet à chacun de se sentir inclus. En un mot, ce qui nous rassemble. Nous avons soutenu la recherche, le travail d'experts sur la culture, l'inclusion sociale, la santé mentale, l'égalité hommes-femmes, l'engagement civique et les conditions de travail des artistes. Nous avons travaillé en étroite collaboration avec les États membres. Nous avons développé des recommandations ciblées et des échanges de bonnes pratiques.

Cependant, il ne s'agit pas de prendre prétexte de ce que nous avons déjà fait pour nous arrêter là. Au contraire, notre mobilisation doit être totale. Le travail continue. Par exemple, nous avons réussi à mettre au sommet de l'agenda de la Commission la contribution de la culture au service de la santé mentale, comme cela ressortait du discours sur l'état de l'Union prononcé par la présidente von der Leyen cette année. Un groupe interservices a été créé à la Commission, et nous avons coorganisé un événement avec le Parlement européen à ce sujet, avec le soutien de la présidente de la commission CULT, Sabine Verheyen. En ce sens, la grille de lecture de l'agenda a permis de faire bouger les choses, tant en matière de procédure que sur le fond de notre soutien.

En matière de procédure de sélection des projets, le nouveau règlement du programme «Europe créative» 2021-2027 est bien plus incisif sur son encouragement à l'inclusion. Désormais, aucun projet ne peut être soutenu sans avoir présenté une stratégie d'égalité hommes-femmes, d'inclusion et de diversité.

Sur le fond, on voit aussi l'adaptation de nos dispositifs. C'est le cas avec notre soutien à la mobilité artistique. Vous rappelez-vous le projet pilote i-Portunus, maintenant devenu «Culture Moves Europe»? Doté d'un budget de 21 millions d'euros jusqu'en 2025, il permettra à environ 7 000 artistes, créateurs et professionnels de la culture de partir à l'étranger, de cocréer et de présenter leurs œuvres à de nouveaux publics.

Enfin, la dimension sociale, c'est aussi penser nos actions pour la jeune génération, en cette Année européenne de la jeunesse et au-delà. Dans cette perspective, je lancerai une Journée des auteurs européens le 27 mars prochain, pour mettre les talents de nos auteurs à l'honneur et partager l'amour de la lecture et la puissance des œuvres. Je compte ici sur votre soutien.

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J'aimerais à présent mentionner la dimension économique de nos actions en matière de culture. Vous avez raison, Madame la Rapporteuse: face aux effets dévastateurs de la pandémie de COVID-19, qui a touché les secteurs culturel et créatif avec une sévérité particulière, la flexibilité maximale dans la mise en œuvre de nos programmes de soutien, couplée au mécanisme pour la relance et la résilience, fut une réponse pour soutenir la reprise. Ici, je voudrais le rappeler, ce sont plus de 10 milliards d'euros, soit une moyenne de 2 % du budget global au niveau européen, qui seront consacrés aux secteurs de la culture et de la création, et je voudrais remercier le Parlement européen pour son soutien infaillible.

Au-delà des fermetures liées aux restrictions sanitaires, la pandémie a mis en évidence la situation fragile des professionnels de la culture. À cet égard, le travail sur le statut et les conditions de travail des artistes et des professionnels de la culture est une priorité. En 2020, nous avons publié une étude d'experts qui rassemble différents cas observés dans les États membres et qui propose des recommandations importantes. Je me réjouis de voir le sujet repris dans le programme de travail du Conseil en matière de culture adopté fin novembre. Maintenant, comptez sur mes efforts pour maintenir ce sujet au sommet de l'agenda européen.

Je suis convaincue que, face aux grands défis de notre temps, nous avons besoin de déployer toute la créativité des secteurs culturel et créatif. Pour ce faire, nous avons besoin d'un secteur fort et capable de travailler en écosystème. À ce titre, la communauté de la connaissance et de l'innovation «Culture et créativité» de l'Institut européen de l'innovation et de la technologie est une avancée majeure. Cette nouvelle CCI permettra de créer un effet d'entraînement destiné à créer des débouchés immédiats. Un consortium de 50 partenaires issus de 20 pays donne le coup d'envoi de cet ambitieux projet, grâce à une subvention de démarrage de 6 millions d'euros accordée par Horizon Europe. Nous avons aussi lancé des projets concrets autour desquels j'entends unir le secteur. C'est le cas avec notre projet «European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage», un nuage européen pour le patrimoine culturel. Cet outil, consacré aux institutions culturelles, permettra d'avancer dans la numérisation des œuvres culturelles et, par là même, ouvrira de nouvelles possibilités de valorisation de notre patrimoine.

J'en arrive maintenant au dernier axe: le renforcement des relations culturelles internationales, illustré notamment par notre action préparatoire «Espace européen de la culture». Les Balkans occidentaux, l'Afrique et l'Ukraine font partie de nos zones de coopération prioritaires, et des exemples concrets en témoignent: une plateforme ministérielle avec les Balkans occidentaux lancée en juin dernier, le soutien à l'Ukraine avec une véritable flexibilité d'action et, notamment, un appel de 5 millions d'euros destiné aux professionnels du secteur culturel et créatif dans le programme de travail d'«Europe créative», ou encore un soutien efficace sous l'égide du programme «Culture moves Europe», notre coopération culturelle avec les pays ACP, avec des actions culturelles spécifiques et des initiatives, comme celle de «Togo créatif», soit 6 millions d'euros attribués pour renforcer la capacité créative des acteurs locaux. Évidemment, l'enjeu reste le suivant: «Est-ce que l'on donne de la visibilité aux bonnes pratiques? Est-ce qu'on arrive à avoir une masse critique qui permette encore une fois de montrer la force unique de la culture dans la promotion de nos valeurs, dans ce qui nous rassemble et ce qui fait que nos sociétés sont plus résilientes?»

Enfin, Madame la rapporteure, une bonne nouvelle: aujourd'hui au collège est prévue l'adoption du plan d'action pour combattre le trafic des biens culturels. Bien évidemment, je me réjouis de continuer à travailler avec vous tous sur ces différents sujets. Merci beaucoup de votre attention. Je suivrai avec intérêt vos recommandations et vos réactions.

Isabella Adinolfi, a nome del gruppo PPE. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, stiamo riscrivendo le priorità dell'agenda culturale europea. Come potete immaginare, gli argomenti sono tanti e diversi. Il COVID ha lasciato senza lavoro migliaia di persone e di artisti.

È per questo che abbiamo voluto tutelare gli imprenditori del settore, quasi sempre i titolari di piccole e medie imprese, chiedendo che sia garantito un agevole accesso al credito; i lavoratori, che spesso hanno contratti atipici e frammentati; e le iniziative culturali europee, che devono essere supportate adeguatamente da fondi e da progetti.

Dato che dal settore artistico-culturale nascono opportunità di crescita, di apprendimento e di sviluppo, credo che sia nostro dovere avere un occhio di riguardo anche per l'imprenditoria femminile in questo campo.

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È quindi nostro compito accertarci che la cultura diventi sempre più un settore trasversale, che entri nella nostra quotidianità. È nostro compito proteggerla e con essa proteggere il nostro patrimonio artistico europeo.

A questo fine, spero che questa camera domani voti il nostro emendamento per la tutela del patrimonio artistico e culturale, che prevede, ove necessario, esenzioni per il settore culturale dai divieti sull'utilizzo di alcuni materiali.

Potrebbe sembrare un cavillo legislativo, ma ne dipendono non solo l'integrità delle nostre cattedrali storiche, dei nostri vetri colorati di Murano, delle nostre ceramiche campane dipinte a mano e che sono rinomate in tutto il mondo, ma ne dipendono anche le famiglie degli artigiani e dei restauratori, ai quali sempre più spesso e con indifferenza viene proibito l'utilizzo degli strumenti del loro lavoro.

In questo periodo di guerre e di catastrofi non possiamo permetterci di mettere a rischio il nostro patrimonio culturale europeo, parte della nostra identità e che, una volta perso, sarà perso per sempre.

Massimiliano Smeriglio, a nome del gruppo S&D. – Signor Presidente, signora Commissaria, onorevoli colleghi, il lavoro che abbiamo svolto su questa relazione, grazie anche alla relatrice Salima Yenbou, è stato importante e ha visto la commissione CULT impegnata a valutare tanto la nuova agenda europea per la cultura del 2018, quanto la strategia UE per le relazioni culturali internazionali, due documenti strategici che definiscono le nostre priorità culturali.

L'Europa è cambiata profondamente nel corso di questi anni. Tra le sfide più grandi, prima la pandemia, ora il conflitto che non conosce fine. Queste sfide e i cambiamenti che ne sono derivati impongono all'Unione di rivedere il suo quadro strategico in ambito culturale e delle relazioni culturali internazionali con obiettivi più mirati e ambiziosi. Ricordando a tutti noi che la cultura è sempre un ponte, anche e soprattutto quando parlano le armi.

Mi rincuora vedere che tra le priorità del piano di lavoro per la cultura 2023-2026, appena approvato, spicca la volontà di rafforzare il ruolo degli artisti e dei professionisti nel mondo culturale, lavorando affinché questo ecosistema così dinamico possa crescere ancora di più.

Nel mondo culturale e creativo, più di un terzo di tutti i lavoratori sono autonomi o freelance. Molto spesso il salario minimo non si applica e molti lavoratori, se licenziati, non hanno fonti alternative di reddito.

Inoltre, le differenze legislative esistenti tra gli Stati membri sullo status giuridico degli artisti ostacolano la collaborazione e il lavoro transfrontaliero.

Le arti e la cultura non sono una merce, ci tengono in vita, portano la speranza di emancipazione, danno senso alla solidarietà e all'esercizio della nostra libertà.

Infine il nuovo piano di lavoro per la cultura rappresenta sicuramente un'opportunità. Tuttavia, ci tengo a sottolineare come questa ambizione richiede finanziamenti adeguati. Le buone intenzioni non bastano, dobbiamo investire di più nella cultura, tanto a livello UE, rafforzando programmi come Europa Creativa nel prossimo bilancio pluriennale, quanto a livello nazionale, dove gli Stati dovrebbero sviluppare nuove fonti di finanziamento alternative e stabili per i settori culturali e creativi che ad oggi recuperano solo una minima parte del valore economico che generano.

Vlad-Marius Botoș, în numele grupului Renew. – Domnule președinte, stimată doamnă comisar, domnule ministru Balaș, stimați colegi, cultura stă la baza identității noastre. Ne definește ca oameni, ca națiuni, ca europeni. Avem o diversitate culturală deosebită, fie că vorbim despre România, țara mea, sau de Franța, Bulgaria, Cehia.

Fiecare țară din Uniunea Europeană și-a adus contribuția la cultura și identitatea noastră europeană. Tocmai de aceea este important ca toți cetățenii europeni să aibă acces la cultură și, în același timp, ca cei care creează această cultură ce ne caracterizează, ne deosebește, să fie susținuți, să fie promovați și mai ales să fie răsplătiți pentru munca deosebită pe care o fac.

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Când vorbim de o strategie culturală a Uniunii Europene, trebuie să ținem cont de crearea și sprijinul unui ecosistem cultural mai puțin fragmentat, axat pe echilibru, decât pe protejarea drepturilor de autor și importanța pe care o are accesul la cultură pentru toți cetățenii.

De asemenea, cel mai bun ambasador al Uniunii Europene în toate colțurile lumii este cultura și trebuie să ne asigurăm că industriile culturale și creatorii au suficiente fonduri pentru a-și face cunoscută munca și totodată, valorile europene peste tot în lume.

Relațiile culturale internaționale sunt cea mai bună modalitate de a promova valorile, diversitatea europeană și o oportunitate deosebită pentru a înțelege diversitatea globală, experiențele și modul de viață ale altor popoare. Trebuie subliniat faptul că toată această bogăție, fie că vorbim despre cultura europeană, fie despre cultura altor state, nu au nicio valoare dacă nu ne asigurăm că toate acestea ajung la cât mai mulți cetățeni.

Și tocmai de aceea, doamnă comisar, domnule ministru, stimați colegi, sunteți cu toții invitați anul viitor în Timișoara, viitoarea Capitală Culturală Europeană.

Romeo Franz, im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion. – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Wir fordern mit diesem Bericht nachdrücklich die Kommission und die Mitgliedstaaten auf, die Einbeziehung der am stärksten ausgegrenzten und unterrepräsentiertesten Gruppen in kulturelle Aktivitäten und Initiativen sicherzustellen, nicht nur als passive Empfänger, sondern auch als aktive Gestalter, das heißt auf Augenhöhe.

Ich habe letzte Woche eine Delegation von Abgeordneten des kosovarischen Menschenrechtsausschusses nach Berlin eingeladen – da sie mich darum gebeten haben –, um ihre Menschenrechtsstandards zu stärken und um sich zu effektiven *Best-Practice*-Maßnahmen marginalisierter Gruppen, insbesondere von *Romani people*, auszutauschen.

Unser Austausch fand auf Augenhöhe statt. Auch der Austausch mit den Vertreterinnen und Vertretern der deutschen Bundesregierung und der Ministerien fand auf Augenhöhe statt. Zentrale Bedeutung hatte auch der Staatsvertrag des Landes Baden-Württemberg mit der Minderheit der Sinti und Roma, der zu den ersten in Deutschland und effektivsten in der EU zählt. Wir haben aber auch gemeinsam die unterschiedlichen Denkmäler von Minderheiten in Berlin besucht, um uns darüber auszutauschen, welche Formen der Erinnerungskultur auch möglich sind.

Eine Kommunikation auf Augenhöhe auf allen Ebenen ist essenziell. Daher freut es mich sehr, dass wir es einerseits geschafft haben, den enormen Beitrag, den Kunst und Kultur leisten, um das Bewusstsein für Umwelt, Klima und Nachhaltigkeitsfragen und ihre soziale Dimension auch in diesem Bericht zu verankern. Für die Kultur ist es wichtig, insbesondere für diejenigen, die häufig Opfer von Diskriminierungen sind, beispielsweise Frauen, ethnische Minderheiten, Menschen mit Behinderung und Mitglieder der LGBTIQ einzubeziehen und damit die Bekämpfung von Hass und Rassismus auch in diesem Bericht nachdrücklich zu unterstreichen.

Elżbieta Kruk, w imieniu grupy ECR. – Panie Przewodniczący! Europejska Agenda Kultury ustanowiona została w 2007 r. dla określenia priorytetów w tej dziedzinie. Kultura ma zasadnicze znaczenie dla gospodarki i spójności społecznej, to oczywiste, choć zdaję sobie sprawę, że nie wszyscy to zauważają. Truizmem jest też, że należy kulturę i kreatywność chronić i wspierać. Pamiętamy jednak, że art. 167 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej stanowi, że to państwa członkowskie decydują o swojej polityce w dziedzinie kultury i równocześnie podkreśla znaczenie wspólnego dziedzictwa kulturowego.

W przedłużonym sprawozdaniu niepokoi natomiast wskazanie, że fundamentalną istotą kultury jest budowanie tożsamości zestawione z wezwaniem do wsparcia środowisk LGBT jako ofiar dyskryminacji. Czy zadaniem instytucji unijnych jest promocja tej tożsamości? Czy wspomniana grupa rzeczywiście jest dziś dyskryminowana i potrzebuje wsparcia? Program tych środowisk jest szeroko obecny w mainstreamie po obu stronach Atlantyku, a ich aktywność to nie spontaniczne akcje obywatelskie, lecz działania finansowane milionowymi dotacjami od wielkich koncernów międzynarodowych, niektórych rządów i samorządów, oraz poprzez granty naukowe.

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Ruchy LGBT mają określoną ideologię i polityczne cele. To jest zburzenie istniejących stosunków społecznych oraz całokształtu kultury właśnie. Nie jest to ideologia obojętna politycznie. To partie lewicowe włączają ją do swojej agendy programowej. Środowiska dążące do zniszczenia Starego Świata nie są zainteresowane ochroną dziedzictwa kulturowego, a kulturową rewolucją.

Αλέξης Γεωργιάδης, εξ ονόματος της ομάδας *The Left*. – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, κύριε Επίτροπε, αυτό το ψήφισμα είναι σημαντικό γιατί υποστηρίζουμε και υπογραμμίζουμε την καταλυτική δυναμική του πολιτισμού οριζόντια στις πολιτικές και στις προτεραιότητες της Ευρώπης, όπως είναι η πράσινη και η ψηφιακή μετάβαση. Βέβαια, αυτό σημαίνει ένα ενιαίο ευρωπαϊκό πλαίσιο που θα διασφαλίσει τις εργασιακές συνθήκες, ένα μίνιμουμ στάνταρ εισόδημα, κοινωνική ασφάλιση και δικαιώματα για όλους τους καλλιτέχνες και όλους τους εργαζομένους στον πολιτισμό. Στην πολιτιστική μας κληρονομιά, αυτό το ψήφισμα αναδιαρθρώνει τις βάσεις για ένα δίκαιο και δημοκρατικό πλαίσιο, γιατί η διατήρηση και η ανάδειξη της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς αποτελείται τόσο από τα απτά αντικείμενα που διασώζονται και σωστά πρέπει να βρίσκονται στον τόπο που δημιουργήθηκαν και έλαμψαν, όσο και από τα μηνύματα και τις μνήμες που διατηρούν στο πέρασμα του χρόνου. Τόσο λοιπόν η πολιτιστική κληρονομιά, όσο και η σύγχρονη πολιτιστική δημιουργία είναι αναφαίρετο κομμάτι της ευρωπαϊκής κοινωνίας. Θα ήθελα, τέλος, να ευχαριστήσω τη συνάδελφο και εισηγήτρια Salima Yenbou για την εξαιρετική μας συνεργασία.

Chiara Gemma (NI). – Signor Presidente, signora Commissaria, onorevoli colleghi, promuovere la dimensione interna ed esterna delle politiche culturali non è solo uno dei caposaldi per la creazione di uno spazio europeo dell'istruzione, così come rafforzare l'identità europea e fornire ai cittadini, in particolare ai giovani, i mezzi per agire nella società in autonomia e responsabilità non è sufficiente, se non riusciremo a trasmettere una reale dimensione sociale inclusiva.

Occorre allora realizzare politiche coerenti, globali e inclusive, che coinvolgano profondamente i lavoratori del settore, ancora alle prese con le conseguenze della pandemia e per i quali è necessaria una strategia mirata per la loro ripresa.

Credo, allora, che promuovendo la partecipazione attiva e passiva delle persone e delle attività culturali e artistiche riusciremo a innescare un volano positivo, utile ad individuare e rimuovere alla radice gli ostacoli per i gruppi di emarginati, svantaggiati e vulnerabili.

Le politiche a favore dell'istruzione, della cultura e dei giovani hanno un ruolo centrale nella costruzione di un'Europa resiliente, competitiva e solidale per il futuro. Con forza e convinzione, spetta a noi portarle avanti.

Tomasz Frankowski (PPE). – Panie Przewodniczący! Pani Komisarz! Jako Komisja Kultury i Edukacji pozytywnie oceniamy wdrożenie Nowego europejskiego programu na rzecz kultury i strategii Unii Europejskiej w dziedzinie międzynarodowych stosunków kulturalnych. Należy podkreślić, że Komisja i państwa członkowskie poczyniły postępy w realizacji większości celów, głównie polegające na stworzeniu platform dla osób zawodowo związanych z sektorem kultury, sektorem kreatywnym, a także z wymianą najlepszych praktyk.

Chciałbym również docenić stronę internetową CultureEU, która jest bardzo przydatnym narzędziem do mapowania możliwości unijnego finansowania dla sektora kultury i kreatywnego. Obszarem wymagającym poprawy jest dostępność finansowania dla kultury. Pomimo zwiększenia budżetu program Kreatywna Europa jest nadal w znacznym stopniu niedofinansowany. Dlatego podczas kolejnego przeglądu wieloletnich ram finansowych musimy odpowiednio zwiększyć jego budżet.

Chciałbym również zwrócić uwagę na bardzo konkretną kwestię, a mianowicie możliwość wyłączenia, w razie potrzeby, sektora kultury i dziedzictwa kulturowego z rozporządzenia w zakresie chemikaliów REACH. To wyłączenie jest szczególnie ważne dla możliwości utrzymywania i konserwowania naszego dziedzictwa kulturowego i zabytków w Unii Europejskiej, jak na przykład odbudowa słynnej katedry Notre Dame w Paryżu. Stąd poprawka, którą naszą grupa polityczna złożyła w tej kwestii.

Heléne Fritzson (S&D). – Herr talman! Kommissionär! Den europeiska kulturdagordningen formades 2016. Men det var ju en tid innan kulturarbetare behövde utstå en pandemi, en tid före klimatomställningens omfattande renoveringsvåg och en tid före kriget som utplånade vackra kulturarv.

Den nya uppdaterade kulturpolitiken måste formas ur ett barn- och ungdomsperspektiv. Det är ju unga vuxna som efter pandemin tvivlar på en framtid inom kulturen. Det är barn som har drabbats allra värst av klimatkrisen, och det är för kommande generationer som vi måste bevara våra kulturarv. Våra unga har förväntningar på EU:s arbete med hälsa och hållbarhet och därför ska vi inte urholka kemikalielagar ens för att renovera vacker konst, utan låt oss bejaka forskning och innovation för att säkert bevara kulturarv från generation till generation.

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Gianantonio Da Re (ID). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, nel settore della cultura l'Unione europea ha competenze per azioni intese a sostenere e coordinare le azioni degli Stati membri.

Ben vengano le iniziative per lo sviluppo delle relazioni culturali internazionali, senza dimenticare però quanto stabilito dall'articolo 167 del trattato, ovvero «l'Unione contribuisce al pieno sviluppo delle culture degli Stati membri nel rispetto delle loro diversità nazionali», con lo scopo di migliorare la conoscenza e la diffusione della cultura e della storia dei popoli europei.

Non vogliamo un'Europa delle nazioni, ma dei popoli. Ricordo il grande popolo veneto, il friulano, il bavarese, il catalano, il basco, il bretone e così via. Non ci può essere un'Unione europea senza la salvaguardia e la promozione della storia, delle tradizioni e delle singole identità locali e senza il rispetto della volontà popolare, anche se questa risulta scomoda all'alta finanza o all'élite europea.

Εμμανουήλ Φράγκος (ECR). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, χρειαζόμαστε μια ηθική ευρωπαϊκή αντίληψη για τον πολιτισμό βασιζόμενη στο δίκαιο. Η οδηγία 60 του 2014 δομήθηκε περιοριστικά ώστε να μην υποχρεούνται τα κράτη μέλη να επιστρέψουν τα προ του 1993 κλαπέντα πολιτιστικά αγαθά. Έτσι εξασφαλίζεται ότι οι ελληνικοί πολιτιστικοί θησαυροί παραμένουν σε ξένα μουσεία. Βεβαίως, η Επιτροπή αναφέρει ότι η οδηγία μπορεί να εφαρμοστεί εθελοντικά. Επιχείρημα άνευ πειδούς, δυστυχώς. Με σεβασμό στο άρθρο 167 της Συνθήκης απαιτείται ένα σύστημα αναγνώρισης και ανταμοιβής από την Επιτροπή προς κάθε κράτος που επιδεικνύει μεταμέλεια και επιστρέφει πολιτιστικούς θησαυρούς. Ας ονομάσουμε το 2023 έτος πολιτιστικής δικαιοσύνης, με πρώτο βήμα τη συγγνώμη των ευρωπαϊκών κρατών προς τα κράτη που αδίκησαν κλέβοντας τους θησαυρούς τους. Έτσι, οι σχέσεις με την Ινδία και την Αίγυπτο ενδεικτικά, αλλά και ενδοευρωπαϊκά, με την Ελλάδα, θα δομηθούν σε μια βάση δικαιοσύνης.

Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana (Verts/ALE). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, ce rapport marque une étape importante dans nos relations culturelles, car il prend en compte la dimension extérieure et salue les efforts entrepris par certains États membres pour restituer les biens culturels spoliés. Le processus de négociation doit être entrepris dans une approche respectant les positions des pays dont les biens culturels ont été spoliés. Il doit également soutenir activement les efforts de tous les États membres en matière de protection et de réparation de leur patrimoine culturel et historique.

Nous notons également qu'il est nécessaire de veiller à ce que les fonds européens destinés à la restauration des sites du patrimoine culturel détruits lors des conflits ne profitent pas à ceux qui violent les droits de l'homme ou normalisent les régimes dictatoriaux. La culture et les relations culturelles sont un domaine trop souvent négligé; il est pourtant essentiel, car il permet de tisser des liens forts. Nous devons travailler à l'intégration des échanges culturels afin d'améliorer nos relations internationales et de renforcer l'authenticité des liens qui nous unissent.

Maxette Pirbakas (NI). – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Rapporteuse, chers collègues, Madame la Commissaire, l'agenda culturel européen fondé sur la promotion de la diversité et de l'inclusivité constitue un moyen revendiqué d'éduquer les masses européennes, à défaut d'être un moyen d'européaniser certaines populations habitant notre continent. Sur le volet diversitaire, je constate que Netflix a un impact infiniment supérieur à tout ce que la Commission pourra produire, quitte à intégrer une bouillie inclusive. Au moins, avec les GAFAM, c'est esthétique.

La rapporteure prend soin de préciser qu'elle n'adhère pas à la théorie de la guerre des cultures. Pourtant, nous y sommes. C'est bien une guerre culturelle qui est menée par la Commission et ses amis éveillés contre les peuples européens, pour leur imposer au forceps une certaine vision du monde. L'objectif réel n'est pas la célébration du génie culturel européen, mais de faire de l'Europe le meilleur élève de la culture mondialisée et de l'idéologie qu'elle promeut.

Loin de valoriser notre exception culturelle, l'agenda nous abaisse au rang d'éponge de la culture des autres, ce qu'illustre l'exposé des motifs, qui cite George Floyd et la réévaluation des relations culturelles et de pouvoir entre le Nord et le Sud. La vision culturelle de la Commission sous-jacente à l'agenda culturel européen est aussi creuse et verbeuse qu'une série Disney. Moi qui suis guadeloupéenne, antillaise, ultramarine et enracinée dans une culture caribéenne, mais aussi une Européenne qui revendique ses héritages multiples et culturels et qui défends ses spécificités, je ne partage en rien votre vision.

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Michaela Šojdrová (PPE). – Pane předsedající, paní komisařko, pane ministře, dovolu, bych poděkovala paní zpravodajce Adinolfiové a ostatním kolegům za tuto iniciativní zprávu, která říká jasně, že Evropský parlament podporuje kulturu a vidí ji jako velmi důležitou, nepostradatelnou součást našeho života. Jak v naší zprávě uvádíme, kultura pomáhá zlepšovat duševní zdraví, kultura pomáhá zlepšovat výsledky ve vzdělávání. My jsme mohli ocenit spolu s panem ministrem Balašem minulý týden, jak kultura spojuje. Hudebnímu vystoupení žáků základních uměleckých škol tleskal vestoje Evropský parlament, sedm set účastníků konference o Evropském roku mládeže.

Kultura spojuje. Již v průběhu COVID-19 Evropský parlament vyzval k tomu, aby členské státy investovaly ze svého plánu investic minimálně dvě procenta do kultury. A jsem ráda, že Česká republika je mezi těmi šestnácti zeměmi, které skutečně budou investovat více než dvě procenta.

Evropská unie nemusí kulturu řídit. Kultura potřebuje svobodu a podporu. Evropská unie ale musí chránit své kulturní kořeny a pečovat o své kulturní dědictví. Proto máme kohezní politiku, proto máme Kreativní Evropu, a proto máme také označení evropského kulturního dědictví a já věřím, že je budeme dál společně rozvíjet.

Hannes Heide (S&D). – Herr Präsident, Frau Kommissarin, Herr Minister! 3,8 % aller europäischen Beschäftigten sind im Kultur- und Kreativsektor tätig und tragen beachtliche 4,2 % zur europäischen Wirtschaftsleistung bei. Es ist daher höchste Zeit, den strategischen Rahmen der europäischen Kulturpolitik den Herausforderungen anzupassen und ehrgeizige Ziele zu verfolgen. Kultur als Motor für nachhaltige Entwicklung und soziale Gerechtigkeit muss im Ratsarbeitsplan bis 2026 angesichts hoher Inflation, Teuerung, Krieg und horrender Energiepreise absolute Priorität genießen.

Die Nachwirkungen der Pandemie sind ohnehin deutlich spürbar, und die vollständige Erholung dauert noch Jahre. Die Professionalisierung des Kultur- und Kreativsektors ist ein Beitrag, prekären Arbeitsverhältnissen entgegenzuwirken. Realisieren wir einen gemeinsamen Rechtsrahmen für faire Arbeitsbedingungen, gemeinsame Mindeststandards für alle Mitgliedstaaten mit einer angemessenen Vergütung. Das Europäische Parlament hat diesen *European Status of the Artist* bereits letztes Jahr eingefordert. Bislang haben sich weder Rat noch Kommission bewegt. Aber es ist die Kultur, für die es sich lohnt zu kämpfen.

Georgios Kyrtos (Renew). – Mr President, it is a very good report of Salima Yenbou, it highlights the last couple of years have been full of crisis and challenges. The EU is going through a period of uncertainty and instability. Illiberal and authoritarian regimes attempt to redefine international rules and values while violating artistic and academic freedom. There is a competition between cultures in order to influence public opinion at the global level.

We can send the right messages by developing, promoting, projecting European culture. Therefore, this report is both timely and appropriate. International cultural cooperation and cultural diplomacy can play a strategic role in promoting EU's democratic values, in conflict prevention, in countering disinformation and foreign interference.

The EU should therefore mainstream culture as a strategic pillar through all EU's external action policy areas. Finally, it is also important that the EU, we ourselves, try to speak with one voice on issues that have an impact on international cultural relations.

Diana Riba i Giner (Verts/ALE). – Señor presidente, señora comisaria, las prioridades políticas de la Unión Europea en el ámbito cultural deben pasar primero por dar a la cultura la centralidad que se merece. En este sentido, celebramos que tengamos este debate en concreto, y que lo que tengamos ahora y no en el último punto de la agenda, como frecuentemente pasa cuando hablamos de cultura en este hemisferio.

En materia de políticas culturales, tenemos mucho trabajo por delante. Es prioritario un estatuto del artista, que contribuya a las mejores condiciones de trabajo y remuneración para todas las trabajadoras culturales. Y también lo es impulsar un modelo de cultura que reconozca que mujeres, migrantes, personas racializadas, LGTBIQ+ no son únicamente receptoras, sino también creadoras activas de cultura.

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Pero las políticas culturales deben ser abiertas y democráticas, no solo en Europa sino también en su proyecto exterior. La Unión Europea no puede relacionarse con el mundo desde un modelo eurocéntrico o neocolonial, porque la cultura es justamente lo contrario: es construir puentes, transformar relaciones de poder y contribuir a formas creativas de abordar desafíos colectivos.

Vincenzo Sofo (ECR). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, il grande errore dell'Unione europea sta nel pensare che i popoli si uniscano in nome di una moneta, dimenticando che l'unico collante in grado di forgiarli è l'identità.

Se abbiamo un destino comune da perseguire, questo non è infatti semplicemente un mercato comune, bensì quella civiltà europea millenaria creata dai nostri avi, che è stata faro per il mondo intero.

Per rianimare questo destino serve un programma europeo di valorizzazione del nostro patrimonio storico e culturale, che coinvolga monumenti e opere d'arte, così come lingue locali, usi e tradizioni. Una fonte identitaria che però in questi anni le istituzioni europee hanno ignorato e anzi ostacolato, preferendo importare dall'estero pseudoculture che non hanno fatto altro che distruggerla pezzo per pezzo.

La nuova agenda europea per la cultura è l'occasione per correggere il tiro. Ecco perché, piuttosto che invaderla di ideologia gender, LGBT o woke, bisogna far sì che in essa ritrovino spazio i santi, i re, gli eroi, le battaglie, le arti e le filosofie che hanno scolpito la nostra tradizione.

Un patrimonio inestimabile, adorato e imitato in tutto il mondo, che la sinistra vuole invece incenerire a colpi di *cancel culture*, ben conscia che la solidità delle nostre radici è l'argine all'imposizione della propria ideologia.

François-Xavier Bellamy (PPE). – Monsieur le Président, ce texte sur la culture est l'occasion de parler d'une menace qui, je crois, à travers un règlement purement technique, pourrait toucher directement le patrimoine européen, parce que la Commission s'apprête à publier une révision des règlements REACH et CLP sur les substances chimiques. À travers cela, il y a un risque majeur: celui de nouvelles normes qui interdiraient des productions pourtant vitales pour notre patrimoine.

Prenez la lavande, par exemple. Improbable, mais vrai: la Commission pourrait traiter comme un produit chimique à proscrire l'extrait de cette plante, merveille provençale avec laquelle les hommes parfument et soignent depuis l'empire romain. Je pense aussi au plomb, qui est explicitement menacé. Si le plomb était concerné demain, il deviendrait impossible de travailler le vitrail, par exemple. Quand il faudra des dizaines de milliers d'euros de dossiers pour une simple autorisation temporaire, quel artisan pourra continuer de travailler? Des métiers d'art ont déjà disparu, non par manque d'ouvrage, mais par excès de normes. «*Deux mille ans*», écrivait Péguy dans sa prière à la cathédrale de Chartres,

«Deux mille ans de labeur ont fait de cette terre

Un réservoir sans fin pour les âges nouveaux

Mille ans de votre grâce ont fait de ces travaux

Un reposoir sans fin pour l'âme solitaire.»

Après ces siècles d'efforts, nous allons menacer la restauration de Notre-Dame-de-Paris à coups de formulaires administratifs, de même que l'entretien de la moindre chapelle de village.

La fierté de nos prédécesseurs, ce qui a fait l'Europe, c'est la grandeur des œuvres qu'ils ont laissées. Nous ne pouvons pas la défaire aujourd'hui par la hauteur des murs administratifs que nous érigeons contre tous ceux qui essaient désespérément de créer, de transmettre et d'entretenir ce que nous avons reçu.

Chers amis, chers collègues, c'est le même sujet, au fond: on ne sauvera pas la nature en fragilisant la culture. Avec notre groupe, Madame la Commissaire, nous déposons un amendement pour rétablir ce principe simple: la Commission doit prévoir une exemption – en prenant en compte, bien sûr, la santé et l'environnement – à chaque fois qu'une nouvelle norme mettrait en danger une filière culturelle ou patrimoniale. Nous comptons sur vous.

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Peter Pollák (PPE). – Vážení pán predsedajúci, oba strategické rámce, o ktorých diskutujeme, boli prijaté v období, keď sme ani len netušili o výzvach, ktorým dnes čelíme. Počas pandémie COVID-u bola práve kultúra jednou z oblastí, ktorá najviac utrpela. Ešte sme sa nestačili spamätať z pandémie a už tu máme vojnu a s ňou spojené výzvy, ktoré prepisujú novodobé dejiny Európy. Európa musí na tieto výzvy, samozrejme, reagovať aj v oblasti kultúry. Prehlbuje sa sociálna nerovnosť a rastie nespokojnosť, narastá populizmus a, samozrejme, aj extrémizmus. Paralelne Európa prechádza na nové digitálne technológie. Čoraz viac sa využíva, samozrejme, umelá inteligencia. Všetky tieto zmeny sa dejú veľmi rýchlym tempom a práve v týchto neľahkých a rýchlo meniacich sa časoch je to práve kultúra, ktorá má obrovský potenciál povzniesť ducha, spájať ľudí, posilňovať ich vzájomnú identitu a súdržnosť. Financovanie kultúry zo strany členských štátov je stále však výrazne poddimenzované. A aj keď nám v Európskom parlamente sa podarilo navýšiť rozpočet programu Kreatívna Európa, stále je to nepostačujúce. Optimálnym riešením by mohlo byť využívanie financií pre podporu kultúry v synergii s ostatnými programami, ako sú Horizont, Európa či Erasmus+. Dosiahla by sa tak nielen finančná, ale aj medzisektorová prepojenosť najmä s oblasťou vzdelávania, ktorú považujem za veľmi kľúčovú, ako aj v sfére nášho kultúrneho dedičstva. Tá totiž tvorí neoddeliteľnú súčasť identity každého jedného z nás.

Intervenções «catch the eye»

Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE). – Señor presidente, la cultura es un elemento muy importante de la política exterior de la Unión Europea. Celebro que la Resolución que mañana votaremos reconozca el papel del programa de rutas culturales del Consejo de Europa, que tiene un grandísimo potencial a la hora de fortalecer nuestras relaciones con el resto del continente y también con nuestra vecindad.

Acojo con especial satisfacción que la Resolución pida a la Comisión Europea que, sobre la base del éxito de la iniciativa de Interrail gratuito para jóvenes DiscoverEU, estudie la creación de una acción en el marco del programa Erasmus+ para que los jóvenes europeos obtengan un bono de viaje para visitar y descubrir los caminos de Santiago y otras rutas culturales europeas.

Como presidente del Intergrupo sobre Patrimonio Cultural Europeo, Camino de Santiago y Otras Rutas Culturales, también me gustaría que la Comisión y los Estados miembros continuasen la labor de identificar y cartografiar estos itinerarios, también en formato digital. En particular, y termino, deberían señalizarse las rutas a Santiago que recorren todo el continente europeo utilizando los símbolos sugeridos por el Consejo de Europa, como la concha amarilla.

(Fim das intervenções «catch the eye»)

Mariya Gabriel, membre de la Commission. – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Rapporteure, chers Députés au Parlement européen, je voudrais tout d'abord vous remercier. Merci d'avoir partagé de nouveau vos considérations, mais aussi vos idées, non pas seulement sur l'accomplissement du nouvel agenda européen de la culture et les avancées, mais aussi sur ce qui nous attend. Merci encore une fois d'avoir insisté sur des sujets clés, sur lesquels je l'espère nous allons continuer à coopérer étroitement.

Le statut des artistes est une priorité, je le confirme. Encore une fois, vous pouvez vraiment compter sur mes efforts pour essayer de le porter au sommet de l'agenda européen. Maintenant que l'analyse qui a été demandée par la Commission européenne a été faite, en sachant que de telles pratiques existent seulement dans certains États membres, je pense que nous pouvons unir nos forces et essayer de porter ce sujet au sommet de l'agenda européen.

Merci beaucoup d'avoir aussi attiré l'attention sur l'écosystème des secteurs culturel et créatif, mais aussi et surtout d'avoir proposé des mesures qui ciblent sa fragmentation. Il est vrai qu'aujourd'hui il y a un énorme potentiel, ici, dont nous devons permettre le développement. L'année prochaine, nous prendrons aussi des mesures ciblées.

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Merci d'avoir insisté sur la dimension sociale et l'inclusion que permet la culture, y compris l'inclusion des groupes marginalisés. Ici, je voudrais vous remercier également d'avoir attiré l'attention sur les jeunes. Il est vrai qu'aujourd'hui nous avons besoin de davantage de mesures culturelles pour donner envie à nos jeunes de s'engager dans ce secteur. Cela passe par l'innovation, pour que l'on puisse préserver la diversité de leurs talents, mais aussi leur permettre d'avoir de belles possibilités. Il faut attirer l'attention sur la mobilité et pouvoir soutenir cette jeunesse pour qu'elle noue des contacts, participe à des projets et accède à de nouveaux publics.

Merci aussi d'avoir attiré l'attention de nouveau sur la plateforme CulturEU. Je rappelle qu'en seulement trois clics vous pouvez trouver plus de 75 sources de financement. Cependant, le défi des synergies persiste, parce que quand on parle du budget de la culture, je le rappelle, ce n'est pas que le programme «Europe Créative»; c'est aussi le nouveau volet Culture dans le programme «Horizon Europe», avec un sujet plus ou moins proche de celui du programme «Europe Créative», et la nouvelle communauté de l'innovation. De même, nous nous sommes battus à vos côtés pour obtenir dans les plans de relance les fameux 2 %, qui sont maintenant là.

Je voudrais finir en vous remerciant d'avoir attiré mon attention sur un des règlements qui se prépare et qui pourrait nuire au secteur de la culture. Je pense que nous avons tous à cœur cette cause noble: soutenir et ne pas entraver, donner des occasions et ne pas créer des obstacles ensuite, si les belles paroles ne débouchent pas sur de belles actions.

Merci, parce que, encore une fois, vous avez souligné les avancées. Je tiens à dire que nous avons obtenu ces avancées parce que nous avons agi ensemble. C'est le résultat d'un effort collectif qui a associé la Commission, le Service européen pour l'action extérieure, les États membres, les parties prenantes et, évidemment, le Parlement européen.

Le monde a changé depuis 2018, et la brutale invasion de l'Ukraine a ramené la guerre en Europe. Cela nous rappelle chaque jour l'importance de la culture en tant qu'expression de nos valeurs européennes. À ce titre, je finirai avec le prochain travail qui s'annonce. Au moment de notre réunion du Conseil a été adoptée une résolution sur un nouveau plan de travail pour la culture 2023-2026. Le Conseil a fait appel à la Commission pour proposer une approche européenne encore plus cohérente en matière de culture. Évidemment, comptez sur moi, mais je compte aussi sur vous pour relever ensemble ce défi.

Vladimír Balaš, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, Madam Commissioner, honourable Members, thank you for a very important debate on this topic.

Definitely, culture is a source of inspiration and innovation to all of us and is a reflection of humanity and aesthetics. It is our shared language and heritage and it is a fundamental part of our identities and communities. And of course, it's also a central part of our educational system and vice versa, our education and educational system are also part of our culture.

A number of you have underlined that the recent global challenges such as COVID-19 pandemic, but also the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and the energy crisis, hit the sector hard. And these challenges only highlight how important culture is for individuals and the whole community, and hence adaptation and new policy measures at all levels are required.

Culture is also an integral element of sustainable development and an excellent vehicle to transmit and promote our shared European values, including freedom of expression and creation. And the culture sector makes a significant contribution to employment, to the sustainable growth of the European economy, and to the education and wellbeing of all citizens.

And yes, I very much agree that culture, and in particular cultural diplomacy, when based on the partnership approach, is indeed a very effective instrument in external relations. We must enhance its role in our relations and cooperation with other countries and international bodies. That is why we should really provide the whole cultural sector in its diversity, our versatile support. And it also includes some financing. So I'm quite glad that I heard from Madam Commissioner that the European Commission is ready to deal with it and to support also culture. And I also am quite glad that Madam Commissioner mentioned also culture and science. And it's also quite an interesting contribution to education and to science. So it's really quite important. So now thank you very much once again and for your attention.

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Salima Yenbou, *rapporteure*. – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Commissaire, bien sûr, nous serons à vos côtés, vous le savez. Nous serons à vos côtés pour encourager, pour travailler, mais aussi pour émettre des critiques constructives, vous le savez, et pour assurer un suivi des actions concrètes. Vous pouvez donc compter sur nous.

Pour revenir sur la question, il est évident que nous avons à cœur la protection de l'héritage culturel. Les instruments ne sont pas interdits, ils sont soumis à autorisation en raison de leur caractère potentiellement dangereux. La santé, je crois, vaut bien quelques formulaires. Nous voulons de beaux vitraux, mais en même temps, nous voulons aussi combattre le cancer. L'amendement de Renew répond à deux objectifs, Monsieur Bellamy – ah, il n'est plus là! Il répond à la protection et à la promotion de l'héritage culturel d'un côté, mais il répond aussi à la protection de la santé humaine et de l'environnement de l'autre. Ces deux versants ne sont pas en conflit. Nous pouvons justement avoir l'un et l'autre, alors pourquoi se priver?

Quant à nos racines, l'anthropologie et l'histoire le disent: elles sont à trouver en Mésopotamie. Dans l'Antiquité, les Grecs comme les Romains ont construit leur culture grâce aux échanges commerciaux et culturels avec les Phéniciens. Est-ce de ces racines que la droite parle? Je lui pose la question, bien évidemment.

Je voudrais par ailleurs rappeler que l'inclusion n'est plus à discuter, elle est une valeur européenne non négociable et n'appartient pas plus à un parti qu'à un groupe politique.

Cela me fait sourire, parce que personne au sein du groupe ECR n'a jamais participé aux réunions ni envoyé de commentaires, et, aujourd'hui, leurs préoccupations restent des mots vides d'action – juste une petite vidéo à utiliser... Vous ne faites que critiquer ceux qui travaillent depuis neuf mois sur ce rapport pour faire avancer et exister la question culturelle. Je crois donc que tout est dit dans ce commentaire.

Je voudrais finir par remercier toutes celles et tous ceux qui ont participé à ce beau travail exhaustif et ambitieux: tous les rapporteurs fictifs, tous les membres du personnel, toutes les parties prenantes, tous les collègues de la DG EAC et du SEAE, ainsi que la présidence tchèque.

Presidente. – O debate está encerrado. A votação realizar-se-á amanhã.

11. A necessidade de um orçamento dedicado a transformar a Garantia para a Infância numa realidade - uma urgência em tempos de crise energética e alimentar (debate)

Presidente. – O próximo ponto da ordem do dia são as declarações do Conselho e da Comissão sobre a necessidade de um orçamento dedicado a transformar a Garantia para a Infância numa realidade - uma urgência em tempos de crise energética e alimentar (2022/2996(RSP)).

Dou as boas-vindas ao Comissário Nicolas Schmit.

Vladimír Balaš, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, Mr Commissioner, honourable Members, thank you for this opportunity to exchange views on the European child guarantee. The child guarantee is something that we can all be proud of. It is one of the first deliverables of the European pillar of social rights and it is the first EU level policy instrument that addresses directly disadvantage and exclusion in childhood. In Europe of the 21st century no child should be left behind, and yet the challenge of child poverty still exists and persists.

One out of four children in the Union is at risk of poverty or social exclusion. This is a shocking number and we should make every possible effort to invest in children and break the cycle of disadvantage and poverty. The successful implementation of the European child guarantee is a matter of priority for the Council.

Let me recall that the recommendation on the European child guarantee was adopted by the Council unanimously and in record time. In June 2022 the Council also adopted conclusions on the strategy on the rights of the child, which is closely linked to the child guarantee. The Czech Presidency has kept the focus on the fight against child poverty, namely through the high-level conference on child support in the context of the child guarantee. This enabled a useful exchange of views on how to best ensure the protection and social inclusion of children.

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The Council is also well aware of the great interest the Parliament shows in this respect, with initiatives such as the recent hearing on the analysis of the national action plans which took place this November. And national plans are essential to address the root causes of this phenomenon. As of today, all Member States have nominated a National Child Guarantee Coordinator and 18 Member States have already submitted to the Commission their national action plans for the implementation of the child guarantee.

But as we all know, policy must go hand-in-hand with adequate funding. And for the purposes of today's debate, the most important message to keep in mind is the following: there are several existing Union funds that can support the implementation of measures under the European child guarantee. The European Social Fund Plus regulation requires all Member States to dedicate an appropriate amount to tackle child poverty or social exclusion. For Member States in which the rate of children at risk of poverty or social exclusion is above the Union average, that amount is to be at least 5% of the national ESF allocation. In addition, to European Social Fund Plus funding other sources of European Union funding are available. The European regional development fund, the recovery and resilience facility, the EU school fruit, vegetables and milk scheme, funded by the common agricultural policy, the Erasmus+ programme and the asylum migration and integration fund.

There is therefore no lack of budget or Union funding instruments to support the child guarantee. So we must ensure complementarity and avoid ineffective spending or overlapping between the different funds, and the Commission is working closely with the Member States to make this a reality.

Nicolas Schmit, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, today's debate on the Child Guarantee takes place in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and its social and economic consequences. Allow me to say a few words about Ukrainian children because it was now recalled that no child should be left behind.

Today, at least four million Ukrainian children are prevented from having a normal life by this criminal war. Thousands have been killed or injured. Millions have either been displaced internally or had to cross the borders. And thousands have been abducted against all international rules and against all the principles of a civilised world.

Offering Ukrainian child refugees housing, social services and education has to be considered as combating child poverty and child exclusion. This war has not only caused destruction and a humanitarian crisis. Together with the energy crisis, it has also fuelled spiralling energy and food prices, leading to increased costs of living.

In quarter two of 2022, real household income contracted for the first time since the COVID-19 shock. High food and energy prices made access, in particular, to healthy meals and adequate housing more difficult. Families are forced to make impossible choices between feeding their children and paying their bills.

Let's recall that the share of children at risk of poverty and social exclusion in 2021 remained at 24.4% – higher than that of the general population, at 21.7%. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are most at risk. We cannot allow the current crisis to result in a new cycle of child poverty. To support vulnerable children in these difficult times, we need to protect household incomes, providing a consistent response, which should also include adequate wage policies and minimum income schemes.

I want to underline the commitments taken by the Member States and the EU institutions at the Porto summit. We have jointly set three ambitious targets to be achieved by 2030, and among them are reducing the number of poor people or people at risk of poverty by 15 million, and at least 5 million should be children.

I'm glad that all Member States committed to their national targets, and most of these national targets include specific commitments to reduce child poverty. What we jointly need to do now is to mobilise to achieve these targets by helping vulnerable families to break the cycle of disadvantage. So far, 18 Member States have submitted to the Commission their national action plans implementing the European Child Guarantee. The level of ambition of the plans varies depending on the starting point of a given country.

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The Commission keeps urging the national Child Guarantee Coordinators to speed up the submission of the action plans. We also monitor very closely the implementation of the adopted plans and hold regular meetings with the national Child Guarantee Coordinators. Progress in implementing the child guarantee will also be regularly monitored through the relevant social scoreboard indicators in the context of the European Semester.

EU funds provide an important contribution towards the implementation of the European Child Guarantee. In particular, the European Social Fund Plus already provides funding dedicated to supporting children and young people.

As this Parliament will know, the ESF+ already includes an obligation that all Member States should programme an appropriate amount of their resources of the ESF+ strand under shared management for the implementation of the Child Guarantee for activities addressing child poverty. For these Member States with a significant problem, there is a minimum allocation of 5%.

I will recall the important role played by Parliament to ensure the prevalence of the Child Guarantee during the ESF negotiations. I am pleased to see that in a great majority of the Member States, the 5% threshold to combat child poverty has been exceeded. Overall, Member States are planning to programme almost EUR 6.1 billion under the ESF+ for measures directly addressing child poverty. With national contributions included, this amounts to almost EUR 8.9 billion. Of course, Member States can also provide indirect support to help children in poverty through social integration measures. You can count on the Commission to monitor that the budget allocated to the Child Guarantee under the ESF+ is used to its full extent.

The European Regional Development Fund can also finance measures to promote social inclusion and combat poverty. Here, the allocation is to be spent on inclusive growth, amounting to EUR 24.2 billion. And together with Commissioner Ferreira, we want to develop real synergies to allocate a maximum of funding also to combat child poverty. And I can tell you, we are focusing especially on Roma children, a majority of whom are suffering from incredible poverty.

Under the Recovery and Resilience Facility, most Member States plan infrastructure investments in education at all stages, starting with early childhood and care. And here also, EUR 7.6 billion are tagged for early childhood education and care. Obviously, EU funding is not sufficient; Member States, too, should mobilise their national budgets.

This is a social investment that will pay off, benefiting our young generation and in the longer run our economies and societies. And the Commission stays committed to combating child poverty and is ready to support the Member States in this task.

Dennis Radtke, *im Namen der PPE-Fraktion.* – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, Herr Minister, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ich finde, diese Debatte hätte eigentlich mehr Beteiligung verdient, weil die EU-Kindergarantie, so wie wir sie heute haben, ihre Ursprünge im Wesentlichen hier in diesem Haus hat. Wir waren der Treiber bei diesem wichtigen Projekt. Und mit Blick auf das, was Sie gesagt haben, will ich auch sehr klar sagen, dass ich von den Mitgliedstaaten mehr Ernsthaftigkeit bei der Umsetzung dieses wichtigen Projektes erwarte.

Wir haben im Ausschuss über die nationalen Aktionspläne, über die nationalen Umsetzungen und den aktuellen Stand gesprochen. Erschreckenderweise haben immer noch nicht alle Mitgliedstaaten ihre Pläne vorgelegt, und das in einer Situation, wo wir eigentlich sagen müssen: Eigentlich bräuchten wir, Stand heute, schon ein Update. Denn hier steht ja nun bei der Debatte auch angeschlagen: Es geht eben auch um Energiekrise, Lebensmittelkrise, Inflation und letztlich natürlich auch um die Herausforderungen, die die Flüchtlingsströme mit sich bringen. Nicolas Schmit hat auf die Situation der ukrainischen Kinder hingewiesen. Die von der Balkanroute kommen ja noch oben drauf.

Deswegen: Während einige Mitgliedstaaten in der nationalen Umsetzung nicht vorankommen, bräuchten wir eigentlich dringend ein Update. Ich bitte einfach den Rat dringend, an dieser Stelle auch den notwendigen Druck aufzubauen. Denn ich kann mich gut erinnern, wie vor einigen Wochen unsere Freundin Elżbieta Rafalska die Situation der vielen ukrainischen Kinder in Polen geschildert hat. Ich habe mir selber auch ein Bild der Lage gemacht. Man kann nur den Hut davor ziehen, was an einigen Stellen geleistet wird, um die ukrainischen Kinder zu unterstützen. Aber klar ist auch: Wir müssen hier als Europäische Union einen stärkeren Beitrag leisten als bisher. Dazu möchte ich ganz ausdrücklich aufrufen. Danke schön!

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Brando Benifei, *a nome del gruppo S&D*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, sono momenti drammatici per il Parlamento europeo, trascinato in uno scandalo di gravità senza precedenti. Come ha detto la Presidente Metsola, siamo sotto attacco da chi vuole influenzare la nostra democrazia e dobbiamo fare quadrato per punire corrotti e chi ha agito infangando la dignità della nostra istituzione e dell'Unione europea.

Faremo le nostre verifiche e faremo la nostra parte, ma oggi dobbiamo ancora, con più forza, portare avanti il nostro lavoro su tutti i temi che invece rendono onore al Parlamento europeo e senza dubbio la garanzia per l'infanzia è l'esempio perfetto.

Senza la spinta del Parlamento europeo non ci sarebbe stata una garanzia per l'infanzia; senza la spinta del Parlamento europeo oggi non ci sarebbe la richiesta politica di un suo aumento di bilancio da 20 miliardi di euro per far fronte alla tragedia umana causata dalla guerra di Putin in Ucraina, che si riversa su milioni di bambini e famiglie sfollati e in cerca di protezione, ma anche su milioni di famiglie in Europa che lottano per arrivare alla fine del mese per l'aumento delle bollette e dell'inflazione.

Questo Parlamento ha chiesto l'aumento di 20 miliardi già in quattro risoluzioni e giovedì voteremo un emendamento che ho presentato alla relazione sul quadro finanziario pluriennale, insieme a 80 colleghi di diversi gruppi politici, per ribadire ulteriormente questa posizione.

Cari colleghi, caro Commissario, faccio un appello affinché le nostre istituzioni sappiano dimostrare al mondo intero che il nostro lavoro, la nostra missione, è quella di essere al fianco di chi ha bisogno.

Rafforzare la garanzia per l'infanzia è non solo una necessità, ma una doverosa presa d'atto della realtà; rafforzare la garanzia per l'infanzia oggi, soprattutto in questo momento, rappresenterebbe uno scatto d'orgoglio per il Parlamento, per tutte le istituzioni, per l'Unione europea.

Dragoș Pîslaru, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, Minister Balaš, dear Commissioner Nicolas Schmit, we are all responsible for the sad reality in which now in Europe, Andre wakes up in the morning in a freezing home – if he is lucky to have one. Maria eats leftover breakfast, if she's lucky to have some food these days. Luis prepares for a 10 kilometre walk to school, if he's lucky to have the opportunity to study. Alice would like to play in the snow with her friends, but takes care of her brothers if she's lucky to have a parent that went early in the morning to work.

This is the sad reality for one out of four children in Europe. And for the first time in a long time our children risk having fewer opportunities than we did. And what parents are we to accept that? What are we if we don't do everything to prevent this from happening?

Our countries, our Member States, have now an opportunity like never before – the European child guarantee. This is one of the first documents of this type in the world. This is an unprecedented pledge to ensure vital access and opportunity to care and basic needs for the children who most need them.

However, the child guarantee looks like a blah blah still for too many European children. As 12 of the Member States still have not managed to come up with an action plan for its implementation and out of the ones that did, not all of them have presented quality measures with those plans. As wonderful as our initiatives might be, as optimistic as our words can sound, they amount to little in the behaviour of governments and political parties at national level who are consistently failing to prioritise the fight against child poverty.

We need strong commitment from the Member States, accompanied by quality action plans in entire Europe. We have allocated a dedicated budget and we are putting forward amendments to get EUR 20 billion for the 2021-2027 period and we would like to have that as part of the revised MMF.

The crisis of energy and food will worsen the already dramatic life of Andre, Maria, Luis and Alice unless they are lucky to have governments that care about them. Unless we choose to prioritise their present, their future, and to create opportunities for them.

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Rosa D'Amato, *a nome del gruppo Verts/ALE*. – Signor Presidente, signor Commissario, onorevoli colleghi, questo Natale milioni di bambini in Europa combatteranno il freddo e la fame. I loro genitori affronteranno un dilemma terribile: riscaldare casa o portare un piatto caldo a tavola?

Tutto ciò accade mentre multinazionali speculano indisturbate sui prezzi dell'energia e del cibo. Quelli che dovrebbero essere diritti essenziali, garantiti a tutti, sono invece diventati beni di lusso e, così, sempre più persone scivolano nella povertà.

La garanzia per l'infanzia è una richiesta di questo Parlamento per garantire un accesso equo e gratuito a servizi educativi della prima infanzia, un'istruzione di qualità, assistenza sanitaria, alimentazione sana e alloggi adeguati.

Abbiamo chiesto 20 miliardi in più per il periodo 2021-2027, però, dall'altro lato, abbiamo 18 stati su 27 che hanno consegnato i piani nazionali. Ne mancano ancora alcuni.

Affrontare la povertà infantile richiede un approccio sistemico. Quindi, nell'immediato noi proponiamo di vietare gli sfratti domestici e le disconnessioni energetiche; tassare gli extraprofitti di chi specula su cibo ed energia – mi riferisco alla grande distribuzione organizzata e alle compagnie energetiche – per supportare invece con questi soldi le famiglie e i minori in difficoltà; introdurre un salario minimo per combattere il fenomeno dei lavoratori poveri; concentrare le risorse del PNRR ma anche dei fondi europei e nazionali nelle aree più svantaggiate degli Stati membri.

Il rapporto UNICEF, ad esempio, lancia un grido d'allarme per il Sud Europa e, ad esempio, sull'Italia: il 46 % dei minori residenti nel mezzogiorno è a rischio di povertà ed esclusione sociale, a fronte invece del 19 % del centro Nord.

La garanzia per l'infanzia sia solo l'inizio di un vero e proprio «social deal europeo», per rifondare l'Europa sul concetto di dignità umana che molto spesso dimentichiamo.

Dominique Bilde, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, la fête du Nouvel An est l'occasion de prendre de bonnes résolutions. C'est une soirée où l'on fixe des objectifs pour l'année qui vient. Or, contrairement aux traditions, l'Union européenne n'a aucune gêne à nous faire le même numéro tout au long de l'année, du 1^{er} janvier au 31 décembre. Le problème, c'est que tout le monde sait que les bonnes résolutions sont prises pour ne pas être tenues. C'est exactement ce qui se passe ici.

Cette fois-ci, ce sont les enfants qui bénéficient de toute l'attention des autorités européennes. Nous vous l'accordons: lutter contre la pauvreté, garantir à nos jeunes une bonne éducation et assurer l'accueil des plus petits dans des structures abordables doivent être des priorités absolues. Le dire, c'est bien; le faire, c'est mieux. C'est bien le problème: l'Union ne le peut pas, puisque l'on parle ici d'une garantie pour l'enfance qui ne constitue que 5 % d'un fonds social européen lui-même déjà dérisoire.

Pourtant, les chiffres sur le terrain sont autrement plus inquiétants. Un enfant sur quatre dans l'Union européenne est menacé de pauvreté ou d'exclusion sociale. C'est encore plus vrai à l'heure où les prix grimpent et la température baisse. La situation se dégrade à vitesse grand V. Nous dénonçons depuis longtemps les mauvais choix politiques et énergétiques pris ici. Merci l'Europe pour le résultat désastreux que les Français subissent frontalement. Dix-neuf degrés dans les maisons: imaginez pour les personnes âgées et pour les enfants! Si les enfants sombrent dans la misère, c'est bien parce que leurs familles, particulièrement les familles monoparentales, peinent à joindre les deux bouts.

Il y a quelque chose d'indécent à parler de ce gadget qu'est cette garantie européenne, alors qu'elle ne garantit strictement rien. C'est encore plus triste, avec Noël qui approche, que les foyers n'aient pas de quoi se réchauffer les cœurs. La seule garantie qui vaille, c'est celle de l'emploi, de la réindustrialisation et du retour des services publics. Plus qu'une bonne résolution, c'est en réalité la seule solution.

Elżbieta Rafalska, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzu! Szanowni Państwo! Bieda dzieci jest największą porażką nieskutecznej polityki społecznej. Ona jest wstydem nie tylko danych krajów, ale wszystkich nas. Również polityków, że na to pozwalamy, że wzruszamy się tą biedą, mówimy w pełni emocji, ale ciągle mówimy o tym samym. Ja sama wielokrotnie powtarzam, że to są kompetencje państw członkowskich i te kompetencje trzeba szanować. Ale proszę państwa, trzeba coś zrobić, bo jest to możliwe. Jest możliwe zlikwidowanie bądź znaczące ograniczenie biedy dziecka wpychającej je w zakłęty krąg ubóstwa, który będzie się za nim ciągnął przez całe życie. My to w Polsce zrobiliśmy. Z 22 miejsca Polska, jeżeli chodzi o skalę ubóstwa, jest na drugim miejscu. To jest apel do państw. Żaden kryzys energetyczny, gospodarczy, żaden lockdown nie usprawiedliwia tych zaniechań, które są.

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Podpisuję się pod gwarancją dla dzieci. Wsparcie finansowe jest potrzebne. Potrzebna nam skuteczna, również europejska polityka na rzecz zlikwidowania ubóstwa dzieci.

PREDSEDÁ: MICHAL ŠIMEČKA

podpredseda

Eugenia Rodríguez Palop, *en nombre del Grupo The Left*. – Señor presidente, señor comisario, aunque la Garantía Infantil Europea se estableció en junio de 2021, no se ha aplicado íntegramente y su dotación presupuestaria no es la adecuada.

Tenemos casi 18 millones de niños y niñas pobres en Europa. El 22 % no desayuna antes de ir al cole y muchos comen solo porque van a la escuela. Se nos llena la boca defendiendo a la infancia, pero solo para los próximos cinco años nos faltarían, al menos, 20 mil millones de euros más. El dinero convierte las buenas intenciones en buenos hechos. Sin presupuesto, esas intenciones ni siquiera son creíbles.

España es uno de los cuatro países de la Unión con las tasas de pobreza y riesgo de exclusión social más elevadas y la pandemia ha agravado las desigualdades. Solo en la Cañada Real, en Madrid, por ejemplo, más de 1 800 niños y niñas viven sin luz eléctrica y llevan años pasando frío. Por eso es tan importante que nuestro Gobierno haya aprobado ya el Plan de Acción Estatal para la Implementación de la Garantía Infantil Europea, un plan que fija medidas para los niños y niñas y adolescentes, para que estos puedan acceder a seis derechos básicos: a la educación y el cuidado desde los primeros años de su vida, a la educación y a las actividades extraescolares, a al menos a una comida saludable por día lectivo, a la asistencia sanitaria, a una vivienda adecuada y a una alimentación saludable.

Nuestros niños no son solo garantías y herramientas de futuro; son personas reales y completas que viven su propio presente. Y así como nuestro futuro depende de ellos, su presente depende hoy de nosotros. Solamente tenemos que hacer bien nuestra parte.

Daniela Rondinelli (NI). – Signor Presidente, signor Commissario, signor ministro Balaš, onorevoli colleghi, l'azione insufficiente dell'Unione europea sta condannando 18 milioni di minori alla povertà e all'esclusione sociale permanente e tutto questo avviene nella quasi totale indifferenza di governi e istituzioni, che sottovalutano una situazione drammatica, senza avere presente le reali ricadute su famiglie e bambini.

Non è accettabile che, a fronte delle numerose crisi che stiamo vivendo, l'Unione non riesca a dotarsi di un bilancio e di strumenti adeguati per garantire condizioni di vita decenti ai minori che vivono nell'indigenza.

Lo slogan su cui la Presidente von der Leyen ha costruito il suo mandato, «nessuno deve rimanere indietro», dopo gli iniziali entusiasmi, sembra oggi aver lasciato spazio alla restaurazione di egoismi e austerità, in cui la vita di un bambino equivale a un costo e i suoi diritti futuri a un obiettivo trascurabile.

Per questo la garanzia per l'infanzia deve essere potenziata, portando il suo budget a 20 miliardi di euro per il periodo 2021-2027, offrendo al contempo meccanismi di accesso rapidi, immediati ed efficaci ai fondi.

Ogni singolo ritardo, ogni singola incertezza, non fa altro che aggravare la situazione e precludere ogni possibilità di riscatto umano e sociale.

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Cindy Franssen (PPE). – Voorzitter, geachte commissaris, minister, collega's, armoede en sociale uitsluiting treffen nog steeds 91 miljoen Europeanen, waaronder 18 miljoen kinderen. De coronacrisis en de oorlog in Oekraïne hebben de omstandigheden alleen maar verergerd. Door de stijgende prijzen kunnen mensen in armoede nauwelijks nog overleven.

Met de Europese kindergarantie moet elk kind toegang krijgen tot essentiële basisdiensten: opvang, onderwijs, huisvesting, gezondheidszorg en gezonde voeding. Enkel op deze manier kunnen we de cirkel van generatiearmoede doorbreken. Er zijn echter nog steeds lidstaten die geen nationaal actieplan hebben ingediend, en dit is onbegrijpelijk. ESF+ voorziet nochtans in financiële middelen om die acties te ondersteunen.

En ja, het is belangrijk om de implementatie hiervan goed op te volgen om zo een duidelijk zicht te hebben op het gebruik van de middelen. Maar uitzonderlijke omstandigheden vragen om uitzonderlijke maatregelen en indien bijkomende financiële middelen nodig zijn, mijnheer de commissaris, dan moeten we die voorzien. Want wie niet inzet op kinderen in armoede verliest een ganse generatie. We hebben onszelf tegen 2030 doelen opgelegd om 5 miljoen kinderen uit de armoede te halen. We moeten dit dan ook waarmaken.

Agnes Jongerius (S&D). – Mr President, dear Commissioner, dear Minister, one out of four children in the EU is at risk of poverty or social exclusion. And this means children going to school without a breakfast, lacking proper health care or even a safe roof above their heads, which also leads to much stress, often not performing very well at school. And there we are missing opportunities for these children and facing lifelong disadvantages.

With the rising inflation, with the energy crisis and the war on our continent, it will even get worse and therefore, we as Social Democrats, the European Parliament, have demanded over and over again that the Council and the Commission have to act and create a dedicated budget of at least 20 million to eradicate child poverty by establishing the child guarantee. It's now time to act.

Lucia Ďuriš Nicholsonová (Renew). – Vážená pani predsedajúca, budujeme sociálnu Európu, v ktorej nikto nemôže zostať pozadu. Napriek tomu máme 18 miliónov detí žijúcich v chudobe. Toto je stav núdze, na ktorý musíme reagovať ako na európskej úrovni, tak aj na národnej a regionálnej. Každá tretia rodina s deťmi je na Slovensku v dôsledku krízy a inflácie ohrozená chudobou. Najhoršie sú na tom jednorodičovské domácnosti, ktoré majú viac detí. Chudoba je rizikový faktor zvyšujúci pravdepodobnosť, že dieťa sa stretne s nedostatočnou výživou, slabou zdravotnou starostlivosťou, slabým vzdelaním, kriminalitou, násilím v rámci rodiny alebo inými patologickými javmi. Podľa vedcov chudoba znižuje šance dieťaťa naplniť svoj potenciál a žiť kvalitný život. Záruka pre deti je výborný inštrument na skvalitnenie života detí žijúcich v chudobe. Členské štáty na to vyčlenili peniaze z ESF+, Slovensko dokonca vyčlenilo viac ako 14 %. Teraz je najdôležitejšie ustriehnuť, aby sa zdroje naozaj dostali ku každému jednému dieťaťu v núdzi. Toto považujem za najdôležitejšiu úlohu, v ktorej európske inštitúcie musia zohrať kľúčovú rolu a nespoliehať sa len na politickú vôľu národných vlád a politikov, ktoré deti zvyknú prehliadať, pretože deti zatiaľ nedokážu voliť.

Mounir Satouri (Verts/ALE). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Ministre, Monsieur le Commissaire, un quart de notre jeunesse vit sous le seuil de pauvreté ou connaît un risque d'exclusion. Le chiffre est colossal, et le constat accablant. Nos États tardent pourtant à soumettre leurs plans d'action pour lutter contre la pauvreté infantile. Le Parlement doit renforcer les contrôles de cette mise en place.

Grandir dans la pauvreté marque à vie tous les enfants. Les enfants réfugiés aussi doivent bénéficier des fonds – les enfants ukrainiens, bien sûr, mais aussi afghans, syriens ou encore soudanais. Nous ne pouvons pas discriminer les enfants sur la base des guerres qu'ils fuient.

Avec la garantie enfance, l'Union européenne instaure un paquet minimal pour les droits de l'enfant: logement, santé, alimentation et éducation. Toutefois, ce n'est pas une baguette magique et la garantie enfance fait face à la crise. C'est pourquoi nous réclamons 20 milliards d'euros supplémentaires.

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Nous réclamons aussi des réformes structurelles et le renouvellement des politiques publiques sur des sujets comme l'accès à l'éducation et la garde d'enfants, ainsi que de réelles mesures de sécurité pour leurs parents: revenu minimal, salaire minimal, dignité en somme. Nous sommes l'une des zones les plus riches au monde. Mais que faisons-nous? Il est temps de prioriser nos choix pour nos enfants.

Guido Reil (ID). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Wir reden heute über die europäische Kindergarantie. Es geht also um die Bekämpfung von Kinderarmut, ein sehr wichtiges Thema. Kinderarmut kenne ich nicht aus Berichten, sondern ich habe Kinderarmut am eigenen Leib erlebt. Ich war arm, ich weiß, was es bedeutet, ausgegrenzt und gemobbt zu werden, weil man arm ist.

Nun reden wir aber schon sehr lange darüber, dass wir es bekämpfen wollen. Wir finden warme Worte, und wir verteilen Geld mit der Gießkanne. Gebracht hat das alles leider nichts: Die Probleme wurden in den letzten Jahren schlimmer und schlimmer.

In Rumänien gelten mittlerweile 40 % der Kinder als arm, in Bulgarien 36, im vermeintlich reichen Deutschland sind es 22, aber regional sehr unterschiedlich. In meiner Heimat in Gelsenkirchen sind 44 % der Kinder arm. Um die wirklichen Gründe will man sich nicht kümmern. Wie gesagt, es werden wieder warme Worte gefunden. Es wird aber nicht darüber gesprochen, dass die Hälfte aller armen Kinder aus Familien kommt, die mehr als drei Kinder haben, und es wird auch nicht darüber gesprochen, dass zwei Drittel der armen Kinder in Deutschland Migrationshintergrund haben.

Wir müssen an die Wurzeln der Probleme heran. Wir müssen den Eltern die Möglichkeit geben zu arbeiten. Wir müssen die Anreize schaffen, dass sie arbeiten. Wir müssen steuerlich fördern. Wir müssen die Kinder unterstützen. Nicht nur die Bildung muss kostenfrei sein: Sie müssen am gesellschaftlichen Leben teilhaben. Der Verein, das Erlernen des Instruments – all dies muss frei sein für diese Kinder.

Anna Zalewska (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzu! Panie Ministrze! Każdy z nas ma tutaj rację, ale liczby są bezwzględne. Eurostat podaje, że prawie 95 milionów Europejczyków zagrożonych jest ubóstwem, w tym ubóstwem energetycznym. Najczęściej są to kobiety, w 80 procentach kobiety wychowujące dzieci. Sytuacja dzieci staje się więc dramatyczna. Trzeba działać, bo sytuacja robi się coraz dramatyczniejsza.

Kryzys energetyczny, kryzys gospodarczy bezwzględnie odbijają się na dzieciach. Tak naprawdę na ich życiu, edukacji i na naszej przyszłości. Ale chcę, żebyśmy mówili Europejczykom, że my również jesteśmy za to odpowiedzialni.

Polityka energetyczna prowadzi nas do katastrofy. To my jeszcze przed wojną doprowadziliśmy do kryzysu energetycznego. Czas spojrzeć na nasze działania – Komisji Europejskiej, Unii Europejskiej, Parlamentu Europejskiego – holistycznie. Nie można z jednej strony mówić płać więcej, bo mamy takie ambicje, więcej za jedzenie, więcej za energię, a później deklarować, że trzeba pomagać tym zagrożonym ubóstwem energetycznym. Bądźmy uczciwi, bo naszym dzieciom się to należy.

José Gusmão (The Left). – Senhor Presidente, Senhor Comissário, a Garantia Infantil foi criada para responder à situação vergonhosa que é termos num dos territórios mais ricos do mundo, a Europa, milhões de crianças a viver em situação de pobreza, sem acesso a alimentação adequada e a serviços públicos fundamentais.

O programa é importante e está bem desenhado, mas não tem os recursos de que necessita. Não faz sentido, e não pode continuar a acontecer, a Comissão Europeia anunciar novos programas, por mais justos que sejam, exigir aos Estados-Membros que respondam a crises humanitárias, como a crise dos refugiados da Ucrânia e, já agora, também as outras crises dos outros refugiados que têm ficado esquecidos, sem apresentar recursos novos para essas prioridades.

Não podemos ter novas prioridades e responder a novas emergências com o mesmo dinheiro de sempre ou, no caso do Fundo Social Europeu +, com menos dinheiro do que aquele que existiu em ciclos anteriores. Portanto, se queremos de facto estar à altura desta exigência que nos é feita, desta exigência tão justa, precisamos de novos recursos, de recursos acrescidos.

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Krzysztof Hetman (PPE). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzu! Szanowni Państwo! Pierwsze wezwanie do ustanowienia gwarancji dla dzieci wyszło z Parlamentu Europejskiego w 2015 roku i wśród niektórych wzbudzało jeszcze sceptycyzm. Sześć lat później Komisja wyszła z propozycją rekomendacji. I dziś już chyba nikt nie ma wątpliwości, jak ważna jest to inicjatywa. Po prostu nie można przejść do porządku dziennego nad faktem, że wciąż w Europie są dzieci, które żyją w ubóstwie, wykluczeniu społecznym, nie mają dostępu do opieki zdrowotnej, ciepłych posiłków, edukacji i odpowiednich warunków mieszkaniowych.

Niestety, wiemy że takie sytuacje mają miejsce we wszystkich krajach członkowskich i zamiast ulegać poprawie, ta sytuacja uległa pogorszeniu w czasach pandemii Covid 19, a wiele wskazuje na to, że i obecny kryzys energetyczny, nie oszczędzi najmłodszych. Dlatego choć cel zmniejszenia ubóstwa dzieci o 5 milionów do 2030 roku może wydawać się odległy, osobiście uważam, że wdrażanie gwarancji dla dzieci to kwestia niecierpiąca zwłoki. Każdy rok, każdy miesiąc spędzony w ubóstwie utrudnia dobry start życiowy i wypycha dzieci w wykluczone społecznie w zakłęty krąg biedy, z którego potem trudno się wydostać.

Nawołuję więc do tego, aby państwa członkowskie, które jeszcze tego nie zrobiły, szybko przygotowały i przedłożyły swoje plany wdrożenia gwarancji. Popieram także stworzenie osobnej koperty budżetowej na ten cel, by wspierać realizację strategii.

Alex Agius Saliba (S&D). – Sur President, wiehed minn kull erbat itfal madwar l-Unjoni Ewropa kollha jinsab friskju tal-povertà, friskju ta' esklużjoni soċjali. Il-pandemija kompliet tiggrava s-sitwazzjoni u ziedet 150 miljun tifel u tifla ohra friskju tal-faqar. Il-gwerra ta' aggressjoni kontra l-Ukrajna kompliet titfa' aktar u aktar pressjoni - bit-tfal, bl-aktar persuni vulnerabbli, huma l-aktar persuni illi qeghdin jintlaqtu b'mod negattiv.

Dawn l-istatistiki huma xokkanti u ser ihallu effett fit-tul hafna fuq it-tfal taghna. U ghalhekk huwa importanti li nkomplu niggieldu ghall-garanzija taż-żghažagh. Huwa inutli, u nkunu ipokriti, jekk nibqghu nitkellmu fuq il-garanzija taż-żghažagh u mbaghad ma naghtux ir-riżorsi kollha li hemm bżonn sabiex din il-garanzija tkun tista' tithaddem kemm fuq livell Ewropew imma wkoll fuq livell tal-Istati Membri taghna.

Ma jagħmilx sens illi ghadna f'seduta wahda wara l-oħra, f'dibattitu wiehed wara l-iehor, nitkellmu fuq il-bżonn ta' dawn l-20 biljun euro biex din il-garanzija nkunu nistghu nistartjawha - tibda taħdem. Ghoxrin biljun euro li huma importanti hafna illi jiġu mill-Fond tal-MFF illi jerga' jithaddem mill-ġdid.

Атидже Алиева-Вели (Renew). – Г-н Председател, рязкото повишаване на цените на енергията и храните има особено тежко въздействие върху уязвимите семейства с деца, изправяйки ги пред особени лишения и затруднен достъп от основни услуги. Европейският съюз трябва да помага на децата, които са в неравностойно положение и имат нужда от подкрепа. И детската гаранция е един изключително полезен инструмент за това.

Днес повече от всякога трябва да инвестираме в децата и да се борим с детската бедност, за да гарантираме, че на фона на енергийната и продоволствената криза няма да се ограничат възможностите на най-голямото ни богатство, нашите деца и младежи. България с 33% е сред четирите държави, в които делът на децата в риск от бедност или социално изключване е най-висок при среден за Европейския съюз 24,4%. Финансовите затруднения представляват съществен фактор по отношение на ограничения достъп до образование, здравеопазване, здравословно хранене, жилищно настаняване. За това несъмнено е нужен специален бюджет за детската гаранция и аз заявявам силната си подкрепа за това.

Tilly Metz (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar! Garantien für Kinder sind seit 2021 auf der europäischen Ebene etabliert. Ein wichtiger Schritt, mit dem wir auch von Armut betroffenen Kindern den Zugang zu qualitativer Gesundheitsversorgung, Bildung und würdigen Lebensbedingungen garantieren sollen. Jedoch heißt etablieren nicht direkt handeln, und wir müssen die momentane Krisenlage mit in Betracht ziehen. Während mehr Familien mit den hohen Preisen konfrontiert sind, müssen wir uns mit einer Frage konfrontieren: Wie können wir jedem Kind die gleichen Chancen geben, wenn für diese Ziele nicht genügend Gelder vorhanden sind?

Für Kindergarantien brauchen wir Garantien für mehr Investitionen, und das in die richtige Richtung. Auch jetzt noch spiegelt das Gesundheits- und Schulsystem in den Mitgliedstaaten soziale Ungerechtigkeiten wider. Private Krankenkassen und unausgeglichene Schulsysteme benachteiligen noch immer Kinder in schwierigen Situationen. Wie können wir hier über Garantien für Kinder reden, ohne die systematische Ausgrenzung und die Zwei-Drei-Klassen-Gesellschaft zu thematisieren? Wir brauchen mehr öffentliche Gelder von der EU und den Mitgliedstaaten, um Kindern im Schulsystem und in der Gesundheitsversorgung wirklich die gleichen Chancen zu geben.

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Jean-Lin Lacapelle (ID). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, protéger les enfants et améliorer leur sort, c'est bien entendu un objectif louable. L'accès à l'éducation, à l'alimentation et aux loisirs est fondamental, et je me suis moi-même engagé en faveur de la protection de l'enfance. En ces temps de disette énergétique et d'explosion du coût de la vie, il faut s'assurer que ces droits fondamentaux leur seront maintenus, en mettant en place les fonds nécessaires.

Cependant, en faisant cela, l'Union européenne ne fait en réalité que tenter hypocritement de réparer ce qu'elle a détruit. En effet, si la situation des enfants s'est dégradée, s'ils ont faim et s'ils ont froid, c'est votre faute. Ce sont vos sanctions aveugles, irrationnelles et insensées qui nous ont volontairement privés de pétrole et de gaz et qui ont fait flamber les prix.

Tout cela était prévisible. Notre groupe l'avait d'ailleurs annoncé, et vous n'avez rien écouté. Aujourd'hui, ce sont nos enfants qui paient le prix de vos mauvais choix. Savez-vous qu'en France certains établissements scolaires bloquent le chauffage à onze degrés et qu'il fait si froid dans les classes que les directeurs doivent renvoyer les élèves chez eux? Savez-vous que les familles, à cause de la hausse des prix, doivent limiter la durée des douches, le temps d'éclairage et la température de leur logement? La voilà, cette pénurie atroce qu'on ose qualifier de «sobriété heureuse».

L'Union européenne est vraiment la plus mal placée pour résoudre aujourd'hui le problème qu'elle a créé. Votre imprévoyance et votre incompétence sont la cause des malheurs des Européens. Les solutions, nous les avons: rétablir des sanctions ciblées, relancer l'industrie nucléaire et baisser les taxes sur les produits de première nécessité, notamment sur les énergies. Nous ne pouvons avoir confiance en ceux qui ont allumé l'incendie pour l'éteindre. Place à présent à ceux qui avaient vu juste et qui ont les solutions pour ramener demain la santé et l'espoir à nos compatriotes et à nos enfants.

Beata Kempa (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzu! Panie Ministrze! Dzieci są pierwszymi ofiarami wszystkich kryzysów i dlatego musimy o nie szczególnie dbać, szczególnie chronić. W moim kraju, w Polsce w ciągu ostatnich ośmiu lat grupa rodzin żyjących w stanie biedy zmniejszyła się do 4,9 proc. To jest najlepszy wynik od czasu odzyskania przez nas niepodległości w 89. roku. Dlaczego tak się stało? Dlaczego to są sukcesy Zjednoczonej Prawicy? Dlatego, że wydaliliśmy walkę mafiom watowskim, mlekowym, paliwowym i te środki przeznaczyliśmy na wsparcie dzieci, na wsparcie rodzin. Dzięki tym programom tysiące dzieci zostało wyrwanych ze szpon głodu i niedostatku.

Ale trzeba nam wiedzieć, że przede wszystkim wojna na Ukrainie, ale i też niestety niezbyt roztropne, ambitne cele, które są nakładane przez Fransa Timmermansa, przez Unię Europejską, powodują powrót do zubożenia. Musimy zrewidować tę politykę, szczególnie z uwagi na fakt, że mamy wojnę w Ukrainie i Putin eksportuje wszystkie kryzysy. Putin też eksportuje głód na cały świat. Mamy dzieci głodne w Libanie, w Syrii, w wielu innych miejscach, w Afryce, gdzie nie dotarło zboże z Ukrainy. I nad tym musimy się zastanowić. Tylko mądra i roztropna polityka, w tym momencie, Unii i zejście z pakietu klimatyczno-energetycznego, który niestety spowoduje potężne ubóstwo, jest i powinno być naszym celem działania.

Sandra Pereira (The Left). – Senhor Presidente, a Garantia para a Infância é um instrumento importante para respostas imediatas. Cerca de 25% das crianças da União Europeia vivem em risco de pobreza e exclusão social. A sua aplicação nos Estados-Membros já permite conclusões. Os seus meios não chegam sequer para compensar a perda de rendimentos familiares devido ao surto inflacionário, às consequências da guerra e da desastrosa política sancionatória da União Europeia.

Para que a Garantia para a Infância tenha impacto real, é essencial um aumento significativo do seu orçamento. Mas o combate à pobreza infantil faz-se com políticas estruturais, não com remendos.

A Garantia que vai além da aparência é a garantia de uma educação universal, gratuita e de qualidade, incluindo ao nível da primeira infância, a garantia de serviços de saúde universais, gratuitos e de qualidade, a garantia de que os pais e cuidadores têm um trabalho com direitos, remunerações dignas e tempo para as crianças, a garantia do direito a brincar, ao desporto, à cultura, à participação cívica, a garantia de viver num mundo de paz. Termino citando Nelson Mandela: «a História nos julgará pela diferença que fazemos no dia a dia das crianças».

Eugen Tomac (PPE). – Domnule președinte, domnule comisar, stimați colegi, pandemia, criza din energie, criza de securitate, criza refugiaților ne-au pus în față o nouă realitate și evident că acest instrument este unul extrem de important, pentru că ne oferă șansa de a-i ajuta mai mult pe copiii aflați în zonele vulnerabile și orice analiză serioasă spre care ne uităm ne demonstrează cum politicile pentru bunăstarea și dezvoltarea copiilor pot genera o rentabilitate de patru ori mai mare a investiției la nivelul societății. Tocmai de aceea este esențial să se aloce resurse consistente, astfel încât aceste obiective pe care și le propune garanția pentru copil să nu rămână doar simple enunțuri sau obiective idealiste.

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Statele membre au obligația să acționeze cu mult mai multă fermitate și determinare în a susține copiii care trebuie să beneficieze de o asistență medicală de bună calitate, de educație, de îngrijire, de locuințe decente și, evident, de nutriție adecvată. Tocmai de aceea cred că este extrem de important să nu rămânem doar în această zonă în care ne propunem o serie de obiective, iar ele nu sunt implementate de statele membre. Și aici cred că Comisia trebuie să fie mult mai fermă și, evident, statele să creeze condiții astfel încât garanția pentru copil să devină o realitate și să aducă mai multă bunăstare în rândul copiilor vulnerabili.

Heléne Fritzson (S&D). – Herr talman! Kommissionär! Ett av tre barn i världen hotas av både klimatkrisen och fattigdom. Det skriver Rädda Barnen i sin rapport. När vi hanterar kriser, oavsett vilken kris det rör, måste vi ha barns rättigheter i fokus. Det handlar om deras framtid.

Vi vet att familjer runtom i Europa har det otroligt tufft ekonomiskt i denna tid och det är något som drabbar barnen mycket hårt. Att växa upp i fattigdom har en negativ inverkan på barns skolgång, på barns rättigheter och möjligheter senare i livet. Om vi ska kunna avskaffa barnfattigdomen och få ett slut på klimatkrisen krävs politisk vilja och att vi prioriterar barnen. Barngarantin är ett viktigt verktyg för detta. Varje barn i EU ska kunna växa upp under trygga förhållanden och tillgodogöra sig sina rättigheter. Alla barn ska kunna känna hopp i EU.

Paola Ghidoni (ID). – Signor Presidente, signor Commissario, signor Ministro, onorevoli colleghi, i bambini sono il nostro presente e il nostro futuro, ve lo dico da madre e nonna.

Tanto rimane da fare per garantire un presente e un futuro dignitosi a molti bambini. In Italia un milione e trecentomila bambini vivono sotto la soglia di povertà; le famiglie con più figli sono quelle più a rischio di povertà.

Con le bollette e l'inflazione alle stelle, l'Europa deve fare di più per sostenere le famiglie più bisognose. Servono misure straordinarie per dare un futuro migliore a tanti bambini che oggi soffrono in situazioni di fragilità sociale ed economica.

L'Europa dimostri che c'è per i suoi cittadini più giovani e vulnerabili. Non c'è più tempo da perdere.

Margarita de la Pisa Carrión (ECR). – Señor presidente, señor comisario, señorías, lo importante es que los fondos lleguen a los niños. Y la realidad es que hoy todavía no están todos los planes nacionales presentados. Nos consta que muchas veces el dinero no está llegando a los niños. Siempre que se asigne dinero a un menor, por su vulnerabilidad, este es susceptible de usarlo indebidamente, precisamente por la facilidad de manipularle. Conocemos casos ya muy graves donde las instituciones no han sido vigilantes, no han velado por el bien de los niños que tutelan y se ha producido un daño irreparable. En España, ha sucedido en Baleares.

Es curioso ver cómo se desconfía de los padres y, en cambio no se desconfía de las instituciones. Sin transparencia no puede nacer la confianza. Los fondos siempre deberían estar destinados a la familia, a los padres, para que puedan apoyar a sus hijos. Solo entonces apoyaríamos que se destinen mayores presupuestos a la Garantía Infantil Europea.

Helmut Geuking (PPE). – Herr Präsident! Jedes vierte Kind in Europa ist arm, und das müssen wir uns mal auf der Zunge zergehen lassen. Jedes vierte Kind! Deswegen brauchen wir natürlich das Budget, das ist überhaupt, keine Frage. Das ist noch viel zu wenig. Und jetzt kommt natürlich zum Tragen, dass wir hier in diesem Hohen Hause oftmals eine Doppelzüngigkeit erleben. Ich erinnere daran, dass ich einen Bericht geschrieben habe, wo ich das Kinderkostengeld festgeschrieben habe, und über 300 Abgeordnete haben sich enthalten. Das heißt, wir hätten 30 Millionen Kinder direkt aus der Armut holen können. Aber nein, 300 Abgeordnete haben sich dabei enthalten, und dafür müssen sie sich verantworten.

Ich bin Bundesvorsitzender der Familienpartei Deutschlands, und ich weiß, wovon ich rede. Wir müssen alle unsere Maßnahmen überdenken. Wir sind es den nachkommenden Generationen schuldig. Wie wollen wir denn überleben, wenn wir der nachfolgenden Generation den Lebensinhalt entziehen, wenn wir sie in Armut aufwachsen lassen, wenn wir dadurch der Kriminalitätsrate Vorschub leisten, wenn wir hier keinen vernünftigen Ausgleich hinbekommen? Hier sind wir ganz speziell gefordert.

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Ich habe es ehrlich satt, nur darüber zu debattieren und zu reden, und am Ende des Tages ist wieder nichts gewesen. Deswegen fordere ich Sie auf: Lassen Sie uns endlich handeln! Das Budget ist sehr, sehr gering gefasst. Allerdings lassen Sie uns endlich handeln, indem wir alle Maßnahmen auf Kindgerechtigkeit überprüfen und hier wirklich die Kinderarmut bekämpfen.

Gabriele Bischoff (S&D). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, Herr Minister, wert Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Stellen Sie sich vor, dieser Block hier wäre wie der Rest des Hauses auch mit Kindern gefüllt. Dann würden auf dieser Seite lauter Kinder aus armen Familien sitzen, die in kalten Wohnungen sitzen, karges Frühstück kriegen, deren Schuhe kaputt sind, deren Talente nicht gefördert werden. Das wäre die Realität, weil Armut sich bis in die Mitte der Gesellschaft ausbreitet.

Deshalb ist es so wichtig, dass wir hier keine Sonntags-, keine Weihnachtsreden halten. Wir haben diese Woche die Chance, für einen Änderungsantrag zu stimmen, der endlich die Kindergarantie in einer besseren Form ausstattet. Wir haben es in der Finanzkrise mit der Jugendgarantie geschafft. Wir schaffen das auch mit der Kindergarantie. Aber das bedeutet, dass der Saal dann nicht so leer ist wie jetzt, dass wir mit allen in den Fraktionen sprechen und sicherstellen, dass dieser Antrag diese Woche unterstützt wird.

Das ist ihre Chance. Das ist unsere Chance, dafür zu sorgen, dass wir nachhaltige Investitionen in die Kinder haben, weil sie unsere Zukunft sind und weil wir tatsächlich mit relativ wenig Geld sehr viel erreichen können.

Lukas Mandl (PPE). – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Wir diskutieren heute die Garantie auf europäischer Ebene dafür, dass Kinder ohne Armut und in einer unbeschwerten Kindheit aufwachsen können.

Kinder zu haben, das gehört zu den größten glücklichen Dingen, die geschehen können. Gleichzeitig stimmt das alte Sprichwort, dass Kinder die Angriffsfläche des Schicksals vergrößern. Deshalb sind durch die aktuellen Krisen – die Inflation, das Steigen von Mieten, das Steigen von Kreditraten, das Steigen von Preisen insgesamt –, Familien mit Kindern besonders betroffen. Deshalb ist auch die sogenannte Europäische Kindergarantie besonders wichtig. Deshalb kann ich nur vollen Herzens dafür eintreten, dass das der falsche Ort wäre, zu sparen.

Kinder sollen in ihren Talenten unterstützt werden. Nächstes Jahr ist das Europäische Jahr der Fähigkeiten und Fertigkeiten – Kindern die Chance zu geben, etwas zu lernen und das dann als Beruf auszuüben, etwas zu können und das dann gerne zu tun – das ist auch so wichtig nach dem alten wichtigen Motto, dass das beste Sozialprogramm ein Arbeitsplatz sei.

Mein Heimatbundesland nennt sich Kinderösterreich, weil wir das schon lange machen, dass Kinder im Vordergrund stehen. In Österreich gibt es das Kinderbetreuungsgeld, den Familienbonus – ja, und auch auf europäischer Ebene möchte ich die Kindergarantie verwirklicht sehen. Kinderlärm ist Zukunftsmusik.

Rovana Plumb (S&D). – Mr President, dear Commissioner, Minister, the war in Ukraine and its consequences in Europe increased even further the need to support children in situations of poverty in Europe. Energy prices, food prices, all of those are affecting many children in Europe. Therefore, Europe must react.

ESF+ is based on national pre-allocated financial envelopes. Such envelopes can only be increased by modifying the MFF. We call on the Commission to come with a proposal for a dedicated budget to turn the child guarantee into reality. This supplementary programme with a dedicated budget will complement the ESF+ with additional support for tackling child poverty on top of the national pre-allocated financial envelopes. This is not a new policy that would duplicate the existing ones, but a key EU-wide boost that would be essential for providing support and assistance to children in situations of poverty. Children are our future and no child should be left behind.

Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE). – Señor presidente, el 21 % de los niños y de las niñas europeas están en riesgo de pobreza o de exclusión social, lo que representa casi 18 millones. Si sumamos la crisis energética, la guerra de Ucrania, la crisis alimentaria, la COVID-19, la inflación... nunca antes tantas familias se habían empobrecido tan rápido.

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Mi país, España, es el tercer país con más tasa de riesgo de pobreza y exclusión social infantil de la Unión Europea, por detrás de Rumanía y Bulgaria. Uno de cada tres niños en España está en riesgo de pobreza, un índice muy superior a la media europea. España es también el sexto país con más desigualdad infantil.

Esta garantía infantil es oportuna, necesaria y prioritaria. Pretende asegurar que todos los niños de Europa tengan unos servicios fundamentales: educación y sanidad gratuitas, una nutrición saludable y una vivienda digna. Los niños deben situarse en el centro de todas nuestras políticas. Es necesario romper el ciclo de transmisión de la pobreza y proteger, en este contexto, muy especialmente, a los niños más vulnerables: los niños y las niñas con discapacidad.

Alicia Homs Ginel (S&D). – Señor presidente, señor comisario Schmit, señor ministro, la pandemia, la guerra de Putin y lo que ha supuesto esta guerra para el aumento del coste de la vida están poniendo en entredicho la fortaleza de nuestros sistemas de protección social. Y ¿cuáles son las consecuencias más directas? Unos niveles de pobreza y desigualdad inaceptablemente altos en Europa y, especialmente, entre los niños y niñas que vienen de hogares más vulnerables.

Si queremos romper con el ciclo de pobreza intergeneracional —porque se trata un problema intergeneracional—, debemos reforzar la protección social de la infancia y de la adolescencia y universalizar los derechos sociales mediante el acceso a servicios esenciales de calidad inclusivos y su disfrute. Debemos universalizar servicios como la sanidad, que en algunas regiones se está desmantelando.

Pero esto no será posible si no contamos con un presupuesto adecuado para financiar esta Garantía Infantil Europea, bien sea aumentando los recursos del Fondo Social Europeo Plus, bien sea creando un programa específico, como ya se ha hecho en el pasado con otros programas, para encontrar una solución.

Los niños y niñas son el presente y el futuro. Es el momento de estar a la altura; la Europa de las oportunidades arranca en la infancia.

Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D). – Gerbiamas pirmininke, pone komisare, vaikų skurdas Europos Sąjungoje, viename turtinčiausių pasaulio regionų, yra nepriimtina ir jis vis dar auga. Covid pandemija, karas Ukrainoje parodė, kad sistemas, skirtos panaikinti vaikų skurdą, nėra tokios stiprios, kaip mes galvojome, kad jos veiks. Ir todėl tenka tik apgaleistauti ir prisiimti atsakomybę, kad net 18 mln. vaikų skursta. Ir vaiko garantija yra svarbi ne tik siekiant vaikus ištraukti ir skurdo, bet ir siekiant neleisti jiems patekti į tą skurdą. Todėl būtinas atskiras biudžetas vaiko garantijai įgyvendinti. Ne visos valstybės narės tikrai atsakingai žiūri į vaiko garantijos įgyvendinimą. Ir net devynios valstybės narės iki šiol nėra parengusios nacionalinių įgyvendinimo planų. Ir tai tik įrodo, kaip svarbus bendras europinis veikimas įveikiant vaikų skurdą. Ir iš tikrųjų reikalingas atskiras biudžetas, bet nemažiau yra reikalinga bendra politinė valia.

Monika Beňová (S&D). – Vážení pán predsedajúci, ambiciózný cieľ pozdvihnúť aspoň 5 miliónov detí v Európskej únii z chudoby alebo sociálneho vylúčenia je dobrý začiatok európskej záruky pre deti. Ale práca na tomto nástroji nekončí. Pokiaľ nebudú garantované základné životné podmienky všetkým deťom v Európskej únii, nemôžeme hovoriť o úspechu. Sociálne vylúčenie je zložitý a mnohorozmerný jav. Jeho kľúčovými faktormi sú nedostatočné zdroje a chudoba, ale aj nerovnaký prístup k službám v dôsledku rôznych foriem znevýhodnenia. Návrh európskej záruky pre deti je obzvlášť dôležitý v kontexte sociálno-ekonomických dôsledkov pandémie COVID-19 a tiež ekonomickej krízy, pod bremenom ktorej dodnes žijeme. Riešenia, ktoré členské štáty postupne a s oneskorením predstavujú, musia byť začlenené do širšieho politického rámca umožňujúceho riešiť viacerozmernú povahu sociálneho vylúčenia. Dnes je jasné, že tento problém bol dlhodobo podceňovaný, pretože k dohodnutému termínu odovzdania, ktorý bol 15. marca 2022, odovzdal iba jeden jediný členský štát národný akčný plán záruky pre deti. Zo strany vlád členských štátov potrebujeme viac nasadenia a predovšetkým uvoľnenie adekvátneho množstva finančných prostriedkov na dosiahnutie viacerozmerného systémového riešenia budúcnosti našich detí.

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Nicolas Schmit, *membre de la Commission*. – Monsieur le Président, Messieurs les Députés au Parlement européen, en effet, l'idée de la garantie de l'enfance est née ici. Aujourd'hui, vous avez fait preuve d'une volonté continue, puisque vous avez montré que ce Parlement se veut être le défenseur et le porte-parole des millions d'enfants qui, en Europe, n'ont pas de voix. La garantie pour l'enfance, c'est un bon départ, un encouragement et une invitation forte adressée aux États membres. Je souhaiterais d'ailleurs que dans les 27 parlements nationaux, il y ait le même débat sur la pauvreté des enfants au sein de chaque État membre.

La Commission est engagée; elle n'est nullement résignée, je peux vous le garantir. Elle est déterminée à travailler avec les États membres, avec les fonds dont elle dispose – ou, en fin de compte, dont les États membres disposent –, et je comprends très bien que les circonstances se soient encore aggravées. Le danger de voir la pauvreté des enfants en Europe augmenter est plus que réel depuis que l'inflation frappe de nombreux ménages et de nombreuses familles. Réfléchir à la manière d'affronter cette situation et de renforcer les moyens mis à disposition pour lutter contre la pauvreté des enfants, je crois que c'est une volonté tout à fait légitime, que je comprends et que la Commission peut absolument partager.

Je peux vous assurer que la Commission restera en dialogue permanent avec vous, pour faire en sorte que ce qui a été décidé et mis en œuvre sur les fonds existants soit effectivement exécuté et, au besoin, renforcé afin d'affronter une situation qui s'est dégradée.

Vladimír Balaš, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, honourable Members, Mr Commissioner, thank you for this important debate. I think that helping the most vulnerable children, investing in children's wellbeing and child-poverty eradication is not only investing in their future, it is investing in our future, in EU future. And I can just completely subscribe also to the words of Commissioner Schmit that regarded the desperate situation of children in Ukraine. As a Minister of Education, helping and integrating Ukrainian refugee children has become the most important part of my agenda, as there are around 70 000 Ukrainian children in the Czech Republic. So I would like to thank very much all other Member States who place help to Ukrainian children as one of their highest priorities.

The fight against child poverty and the protection of the rights of the child have been reaffirmed in numerous conclusions, resolutions and legislation adopted by the Council and the Parliament. The Union and national targets on poverty reduction attest to the European Union's and Member States commitment in the fight against child poverty. It is inspiring to see our common aspirations in this area materialise into concrete action in Member States, through the national action plans and the relevant reforms and investments.

In the challenging times we are facing, making the European Child Guarantee a success is not just a goal, it is a necessity. The Union is already supporting the Member States in their efforts to fight child poverty and reach their national targets with several funding instruments. Each fund serves a specific purpose and can contribute to the success of the European Child Guarantee in a targeted way. So let me also once again thank you for your attention and end my concluding remarks.

Predseda júci. – Rozprava sa týmto skončila.

Písomné vyhlásenia (článok 171)

Laura Ferrara (NI), *per iscritto*. – L'attuale crisi energetica ed alimentare si ripercuote negativamente sulla situazione dei minori a rischio povertà ed esclusione sociale, rendendo ancora più difficile il raggiungimento degli obiettivi della Garanzia europea per l'infanzia. Occorrono risorse aggiuntive per garantire ai minori bisognosi, compresi coloro che si trovano temporaneamente nel territorio dell'UE a causa della guerra in Ucraina, l'accesso effettivo e gratuito a servizi fondamentali come le attività educative e scolastiche, l'assistenza sanitaria, nonché l'accesso effettivo a un'alimentazione sana e a un alloggio adeguato.

Come altri colleghi eurodeputati, ritengo urgente una dotazione finanziaria specifica per l'European Child Guarantee e un aumento delle risorse ulteriori rispetto a quelle previste nel FSE+, ReactEU e Piani Nazionali di Ripresa e Resilienza. Prevenire e combattere la povertà infantile contribuisce alla difesa dei diritti dei minori, alle pari opportunità e a contrastare gli svantaggi nel futuro delle loro vite adulte.

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(Rokovanie bolo prerušené o 14.51 h.)

VORSITZ: OTHMAR KARAS

Vizepräsident

12. Reinício da sessão

(Die Sitzung wird um 15.03 Uhr wieder aufgenommen.)

13. Aprovação da acta da sessão anterior

Der Präsident. – Das Protokoll der gestrigen Sitzung und die angenommenen Texte sind verfügbar. Gibt es dazu Einwände? Das ist im Moment nicht der Fall. Das Protokoll ist damit genehmigt.

14. Período de perguntas (Comissão) - «Proteção de infraestruturas estratégicas da influência da China»

Der Präsident. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Fragestunde mit Anfragen an die Kommission. Ich begrüße besonders herzlich die Exekutiv-Vizepräsidentin, Frau Vestager, zu dieser Fragestunde. Schön, dass Sie bei uns sind. Das Thema dieser Fragestunde lautet: „Schutz von strategischer Infrastruktur vor dem Einfluss Chinas“.

Die Fragestunde wird je nach Anfragen ca. 90 Minuten dauern. Die Redezeiten sind Ihnen ja bekannt: eine Minute für die Fragestellung, zwei Minuten für die Antwort, 30 Sekunden für eine Zusatzfrage und zwei Minuten für die Antwort.

Ich möchte Sie darauf hinweisen, dass eine mögliche Zusatzfrage nur dann zulässig ist, wenn sie in einem engen Zusammenhang mit der ersten Frage steht und kein neues Thema oder keine neue Frage enthält.

Wenn Sie eine Frage stellen möchten, ersuche ich Sie, Ihren Antrag jetzt zu registrieren, indem Sie die Funktion Ihres Abstimmungsgeräts für spontane Wortmeldungen nutzen, nachdem Sie Ihre Stimmkarte eingeschoben haben oder diese noch enthalten ist.

Während der Fragestunde erfolgen Wortmeldungen von Ihrem Sitzplatz aus, und ich ersuche alle Redner, die ihnen zugewiesene Redezeit einzuhalten.

Die Kolleginnen und Kollegen benötigen möglicherweise einige Augenblicke, um ihren Antrag, eine Frage zu stellen, über ihr Abstimmungsgerät zu registrieren. Daher ersuche ich Sie erneut, Ihren Antrag jetzt zu stellen.

Miriam Lexmann (PPE). – Mr President, Commissioner, it is not long since some people in this House were still arguing that Nord Stream 2 is not a geopolitical weapon. It appears that we have not learned our lesson.

Just months ago we have passed an important directive on the protection of critical infrastructure. But yet today, Huawei covers nearly 60% of Germany's 5G network, Cosco owns 67% of Piraeus. Nuctech is bidding to provide technology for our external borders. As a result, the CCP can have access to incredible amount of information, including our biometric data.

All these companies are directly or indirectly linked to the totalitarian regime of the CCP. If we truly want to protect our critical infrastructure and our democracies from the influence of China and other authoritarian regimes, then quite simply, we need to keep them out. And the question is: are we doing enough to keep them out?

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Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Mr President, it's always difficult to say when you do enough. I think what can be said is that more is being done, and much more is being done.

Here of course there is a division of labour between Member States and Commission, the European democracy as such. But I'd say from the last Commission that I was part of, when Jean-Claude Juncker said that Nord Stream 2 was not part of European interest with an EU-China strategy, that clearly defined China as an economic competitor, a systemic rival and a partner.

When it comes to climate change a lot has changed and I really appreciate the work done by Parliament in order to create a legislative frame that puts a much stronger responsibility on Member States, on the different entities responsible for different part of essential infrastructure in order to risk assess, to mitigate risks, to report risks, and to make sure that, if something is happening, that it is being mitigated. And also, I think the ramping up of being able to do foreign direct investment screening is a very good sign of this awareness as to what we should be careful with today.

Europe is one of the most attractive destinations for foreign direct investments, but it's important that you come to Europe to do business and not to do surveillance or to steal data, or whatever purposes that are not in our common and our public interest.

I think now 18 Member States would have foreign direct screening mechanisms. Another eight are going to have it. The Commission has a say if there is a common interest and of course we stand ready to use it if necessary.

Miriam Lexmann (PPE). – I do understand. And thank you for the answer that the Member States have to do also their homework. But maybe I will focus on the question of Nuctech bidding for protection ... for providing technology to in order to protect our external borders. Because I believe that this is where exactly the EU can act. And if there is any attempts to do something about this bit and how we are going to resolve this issue.

Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Thank you very much for the follow-up. It's not my portfolio, I don't know the details of the tender, but I can say that one of the things that are of utmost importance is, of course, that tenders are safe.

We have been working with tendering in a number of different ways. We do that for the international purchasing instrument where we ask for reciprocity, so that you can only bid with us if European businesses can bid with them with the foreign subsidies instruments. We have an increasing awareness of the fact that you should not come and outbid European businesses if you have subsidies on your books. And last but not least, if bids are simply too cheap, they can be discarded in order not to be relevant. But I don't know the details of the exact tender that you're referring to.

Inma Rodríguez-Piñero (S&D). – Señor presidente, señora vicepresidenta ejecutiva, señora Vestager, me gustaría que nos pudiera informar de si cree que los dieciocho Estados miembros que ya han aplicado sus propias normativas sobre el control de inversiones —para, precisamente, poder proteger las infraestructuras estratégicas de la Unión de la influencia de aquellas inversiones procedentes de países como China, que defienden sus intereses, poco compatibles con los nuestros— se han coordinado y han compatibilizado lo que hace cada uno de ellos. Entiendo que todavía ha pasado poco tiempo, pero creo que es importante poder contar con análisis que se puedan ir actualizando periódicamente.

Creo que se han tomado importantes medidas: el control de inversiones, las subvenciones extranjeras, el EPI..., pero se han tomado sobre todo como respuesta a situaciones de crisis. Lo mismo ocurre con el mecanismo que permite ampliar las ayudas de Estado. Fuera de los períodos de crisis, ¿qué va a quedar? ¿Vamos a poder seguir defendiendo los intereses de la industria europea frente a las injerencias de países como China?

Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Unfortunately, I don't think that this is just a crisis moment. I think this is the beginning of an increased awareness that we need to take better care of ourselves. And we have seen sort of the ramping up over the last couple of years actually to build a system that can be responsive if there is something that should not be as it were supposed to be. And this is why, of course, the foreign direct screening investment is very, very important.

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Now, as I said, we are still in the process of every Member State to establish this. We have seen it into effect quite a couple of times. It is not public what is in these screening mechanisms for business confidentiality reasons. What is important is to avoid loopholes in our protection. And this is, of course, why for the Commission it is real important that all Member States get on board and establish with themselves the screening mechanism when it comes to foreign direct investment.

We do what I think the Commission should do. We provide our opinions. We can both do that when asked, but we can also do that sort of if we find that there is a need to do so. And we do think that it is a Commission role to have a pan-European approach to foreign direct investment in a specific Member State if we think that there is a risk to the physical security of infrastructure or the cybersecurity of infrastructure if an investment does happen.

Inma Rodríguez-Piñero (S&D). – Señora vicepresidenta, muchísimas gracias por su respuesta. Tiene razón, se han ido tomando medidas progresivamente, pero las crisis nos hacen ponernos más ante el espejo.

En ese sentido, la normativa de ayudas de Estado y la facilidad que se ha dado para que las empresas se puedan proteger ante situaciones de crisis, como la crisis de la COVID-19 y la crisis energética, han permitido dar más ayudas.

Creo que esto también es una manera de defendernos de la competencia desleal que ejercen países como China, y, no solo, también los Estados Unidos: su Ley de Reducción de la inflación permite una inyección de una cantidad de dinero en ayudas que no podemos igualar la Unión Europea. A eso me refería antes —quizás no lo expliqué bien—, a si se podría considerar adoptar, fuera de períodos de crisis, la normativa para ayudas de Estado para sectores a fin de permitirles competir en mejores condiciones con otros países que tienen unas reglas diferentes.

Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Well I think there are a different number of ways because situations develop. The geopolitics have changed dramatically over the last five to seven years. Of course, things are then accelerating, both with having war in Europe, the aggressive, unjustified invasion by Russia and the different stance of China, not only within China but also with the many countries on this planet where China is doing business. And a number of things are necessary in order for Europe to be more assertive, which we should be, because we have more to offer ourselves and more to offer the world.

As of today, I have sent a survey to Member States in order to ask if they find that it is necessary to transform our crisis temporary framework to a temporary crisis and transition framework because we might need to help our businesses to bridge a situation where we can offer much more renewable energy at low, affordable prices, because that is basically what they are being offered in other parts of the world.

So to ask if we need rules that can accelerate the green transition, the establishment of more renewables, if we need clearer rules as to how to enable decarbonisation of businesses, which is absolutely essential for green transition and for big companies that are very carbon-intensive, and last but not least, what kind of bridging subsidies that can somehow mirror or sort of balance what businesses have been offered in other jurisdictions. I think that is important. And of course, as well as we are doing within the framework of the Trade and Technology Council, to discuss how to create transparency in subsidies. We have done so when it comes to semiconductors in order to avoid a subsidy race between partners, because we see that it is important that Europe and the US have a much heavier footprint when it comes to semiconductors, but it should not be at a subsidy race. Subsidies are important, but we should not outbid each other when we basically ought to be partners in a quite challenging world.

Catharina Rinzema (Renew). – Dear Commissioner, for our security we need to prevent Chinese companies from investing in our critical infrastructure for strategic purposes. Look at the recent investment in the port of Hamburg, Huawei, 5G or Nuctech and the scanners at our airports. It's all about security. Do we really understand that?

As Europe, we need to close our back door for such Chinese strategic investments. My question to the Commissioner would be, will the Commission propose a European list of strategic sectors so that we have a clear, straightforward path to counter China?

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Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Well I'd say that, to a very large degree, the European Parliament and Council has already done a lot of that work because when we look at the revision of the Network and Information Security Directive and also the cybersecurity of entities' resilience, so the physical security, we are of course trying to align both the physical security and the cybersecurity and the sectors they are quite many.

Let me see if I can find them because I don't know them by heart, because there are 11: energy, transport, banking, financial market, infrastructure, health, drinking water, wastewater, digital infrastructure, public administration, space and food. Of course, these sectors are very, very different. But for all of them, there is a call to assess the risks, to make sure that you can tell citizens that this is safe, and if risks are found, that they can be mitigated.

I think also it's really important that we have the reporting obligations so that authorities can step in. And if there is a cross-border issue that authorities in another Member State can be alerted so that together things can be addressed.

This is important because one thing is to prevent, with foreign direct screening tools, new investment that may be critical, dangerous if we find it to be so, but there is already investment within the Union where we need Member States to enforce these new directives approved by this Parliament and the Council in order to really make sure that we live up to what I think is an obvious promise to citizens, that important, critical infrastructure is being looked after in the most careful manner.

Tom Berendsen (PPE). – Madam Commissioner, at a time in which we are blackmailed through our dependence on an autocratic third country on energy, we have to make sure that this will not happen again in the future.

Unfortunately, the reality is different, because if we look at the recent decision of the German Government to accept the Chinese investment in the port of Hamburg, we see that we are facilitating this Chinese influence on European soil in European ports. There are at least 22 European ports currently where there is Chinese influence, and this influence over the European ports is problematic because it has the potential to undermine our security, the economic independence and resilience of the Union.

Now the ports themselves they point to each other if you ask them why they accept these investments; they say we need to do it, if we do not accept them, our competitor in another European country will. We played against each other in a time where we should stand side by side.

And my question to the Commissioner is how do we make sure that our ports remain competitive without being dependent on foreign investment?

Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Well, first things first. If there is foreign investment in ports, it's really important that the ports are still safe. And this is why the implementation of the needs to directive is really, really important and the implementation of the critical infrastructure, critical entities resilience is all being implemented because then you need to make the risk assessment to mitigate the risk, to report on incidents and to do a follow up. And Member States need to enforce those directives because no matter if you have partly foreign ownership, of course you still need to do these things to make sure that you cannot be compromised. As support looking at the future. I think it's really important that we get this assessment of a foreign direct investment up and running. And as said previously, the Commission will do its job. We don't only have to give our opinion if we're being asked. We can also give our opinion if we hear about an investment that is going to happen. So, as more and more Member States get sort of their legislation in place, I think we will be in a better situation.

When it comes to ports competitiveness, I think that is a difficult question to answer sort of broadly. I think that is a very specific question. One of the things that seems to be really important is how smooth the administration is running with what is a port and welcomes the different ships. One of the things we saw when there was all this sort of clogging in in the global shipping business, we saw that European ports in general were very competitive because they basically work 24/7, which is what you saw caused a lot of delays in in cargo getting off the ships. For instance, in the US. So I think one should not be too defensive with the ports competitiveness in Europe, but see too how also the digitisation of them can lift their competitiveness.

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Tom Berendsen (PPE). – Thank you, Commissioner, for the answer but for the EPP, this is not enough. I would really call for the European Commission to come forward with a European port strategy.

We really need to stop the sell-out of our European ports; national intelligence services have already been warning about the risk of espionage, of sabotage, of economic dependence. But definitely for the future, we should stop making sure that the Chinese Government has control points in our critical infrastructure.

And we would really like to ask the Commission to come forward with a specific strategy for European ports.

Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Unfortunately, I do not know what all my colleagues are doing in detail. This will be my colleague, Adina Vălean who is responsible for transport who will assess this. So I do not know what her plans are when it comes to an all-port strategy?

I think it's important also to learn from the past because I think basically everyone agreed back in the days that it was a good idea to sell port infrastructure, in particular in Greece. That was part of the demands on Greece. And I think it must be appreciated that it was done, that the Piraeus port is competitive, as long as – and that I find to be really, really important – one can vouch for the fact that it is safe, no matter the ownership, because we cannot roll back history to say, well, we want a change in ownership in every port in Europe. We need to make sure that what is now European law – thanks to the European Parliament and the European Council – is being implemented in full, no matter the ownership.

I will, of course bring the idea of a common European port strategy to my colleague. But I do not hope that that in any way will impede for this important risk assessment to be done and for Member States to fully implement and enforce the Directive passed by the European Parliament.

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Domnule președinte, mulțumesc, doamnă comisar, pentru răspunsurile pe care le-ați dat până acum.

Sigur, spuneți că sunt 11 sectoare strategice. Evident că nu răspundeți dumneavoastră de toate, dar întrebarea mea era legată chiar de ceea ce ați spus: că trebuie să existe o evaluare a riscurilor. Acum, când vorbim pentru cele 11 sectoare, cunoașteți dacă există un studiu de impact?

Este pregătită Europa să își protejeze toată infrastructura strategică fără a avea ca investitor China sau altă țară terță ? Pentru că este important să știm.

Da, ne apărăm, să zicem, de infrastructura și de investițiile Chinei, dar suntem în stare, avem complet competiție pe acest lucru, avem inovare, avem ce ne trebuie, tehnologie ca să putem să nu rămânem cu acea infrastructură în urma celorlalte țări, pentru că nu mai suntem competitivi atunci.

Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Thank you very much also for this question. I think it's a very good way of putting it. On the one hand, we need to make sure that these essential sectors are safe. At the same time, we need competition for these sectors to keep being innovative.

For instance, when it comes to wastewater treatment, I don't think that we have reached the all-time perfect when it comes to wastewater treatment. I think it's important that there is continuous competition to drive innovation in this sector.

So my point would be to say that we can have both. We can have competition between and within these sectors – well, maybe not so much between, because drinking water and wastewater, you don't want competition between the two, but that's another story – no, that you can have secure ownership and that you can have innovation and competition within these sectors.

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Of course, I cannot say if we have every tool in the toolbox that we need, but I think that, thanks to the swiftness of the discussions here in Parliament and the Council, I think we have reached quite a package that can vouch for different elements when we are looking at this. As I said, we have the NIS2 Directive that looks at cybersecurity issues when it comes to these essential sectors. We have the Critical Entities Resilience Directive that looks at the physical side of infrastructure being safe. We have the foreign direct investment screening that will make sure that it cannot be taken over by foreign investors, if we find that this is not safe.

And we have the Foreign Subsidy Regulation that will make sure that we can prevent a takeover if that is subsidised by a foreign state, which makes it so difficult for other potential buyers – some of them maybe European – actually to acquire the assets and make the best of them without any concerns about the security.

And I do appreciate your way of asking because that really shows that you need to have a horizontal or a round-the-clock assessment in order to make sure that these sectors serve us well.

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Doamnă comisar, voiam să întreb: nu considerați că investițiile din China sau din altă țară terță, dacă răspund standardelor de mediu, sociale, de calitate, am putea să le acceptăm, pentru că totuși avem o economie globală și s-ar putea ca acele investiții să meargă, iată, în America sau în altă parte și să devenim, să fim într-o competiție, să zic, inegală. Nu credeți că dacă noi am impune în standardele de calitate de produs, de mediu, sociale și așa mai departe, am putea să păstrăm anumite investiții din China și din alte țări terțe?

Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Well, I think it's very important not to judge a book by the cover – otherwise I would read very few books – because the thing is, Europe is probably the most preferred jurisdiction for third-country investment. But the important thing is that you should come to Europe and invest because you want to do business, not because you want to steal our data or do covert surveillance of people or steal industrial secrets or do just common espionage. You should come with the right intentions.

And this is why I find that the screening instrument is so important, so that we are direct and specific and saying, Well, this will do, but that will not do. And also that we distinguish between different sectors. And this is why I find that it's really good that this legislation has been politically agreed; that we say, well, these are many sectors, but these are also essential sectors. And there will be other sectors where investment is welcome. Without all these safeguards that have been needed. And I think in the world that we live in, it is important to be specific, to say, well, this is what we want, this is what we don't want, and make sure that Member States, of course, assess that specifically.

I think the approach to 5G is a very good example to this. First, we made the common assessment of the risk with 5G. Then with Member States the Commission developed the toolbox. Now, every Member State is in the process of using that toolbox. From the Commission side, we do as much as we can for Member States actively to use the toolbox to make sure that when 5G is being deployed, that every Member State can tell its citizens this infrastructure is safe: you can enjoy the benefits of 5G without having a risk of being the victim of having data stolen or being exposed to surveillance. So the push of that, of course, is important.

Eugen Tomac (PPE). – Criza Covid a scos la suprafață o parte din vulnerabilitățile cooperării noastre economice cu China. Aceste vulnerabilități, însă, s-au accentuat odată cu declanșarea războiului în Europa, război declanșat de Rusia, care a șantajat Europa și, evident, a atacat în mod direct o parte din infrastructura noastră critică.

Pe lângă instrumentele pe care le-ați amintit până acum, pe care le recomandați statelor membre, precum Mecanismul de monitorizare a investițiilor directe, ce alte recomandări mai aveți pentru statele membre, astfel încât să ne putem păzi mult mai bine infrastructura critică, infrastructura strategică, astfel încât economia noastră să fie și sigură, și ferită de oricare provocări pe viitor ?

Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – First and foremost, I really appreciate your analysis. I think you're perfectly right. We are in a situation where Russia has weaponised first our energy market and then, basically, winter.

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Obviously, a gazillion times harder on the Ukrainians themselves but the rest of Europe is taking a toll as well. We have seen the disturbance in the rail industry and trains being disrupted. There are many cyberattacks on Europe on a daily basis.

No surprise, what I would recommend Member States, next to making sure that they fully implements and enforce the legislation passed by this House, is, of course, to cooperate more, to work with each other, to exchange best practices. I would hope that they would also pool resources, that we to a still larger degree could make sure that we help each other out when it comes to cybersecurity.

I have a coordinating responsibility for European defence – that, of course, is completely within a NATO strategy. But I think here it's an important consideration to say, well, now when all Member States will invest more in defence, that we also do that not just to invest more in the defence capabilities that we had, but also look at what are the kind of threats that we are faced with because they are different threats. We see how this war is so much hybrid on Ukraine and we see the fallout also on European Member States.

So I think the core is still, no matter how trivial it may sound, that Europe is stronger when we work together. We have a very long history and there are good reasons as to why security is a national competence. But I think there are efficiencies, there are security to harvest, if we work more together.

We have something, for instance, in the NIS2 Directive that makes Member States come together but I do think that we could do still more if Member States would want to work together more than they do today.

Eugen Tomac (PPE). – A doua întrebare vizează *Cyber security*, dacă sunteți mulțumită de modul cum implementează statele membre toate recomandările pe care le faceți dumneavoastră?

Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Well as just suggested to one of your colleagues in this House, it's very important to be quite fast. It was in the last mandate under my colleague Julian King, that there was made the risk assessments of 5G and where the toolbox was developed. Now, we're three years into the next Commission and not every Member State had made full use of the 5G toolbox. I would encourage every Member State to speedily do this. I think it's really important that you can vouch for your 5G network, to tell citizens, and businesses in particular for whom 5G network is absolutely essential for their digitisation, that this is safe.

I am absolutely comfortable that eventually they will do that, but I would like that eventually to be tomorrow rather than in months or years time to come. Because it's now we need a safe 5G deployment.

Viola von Cramon-Taubadel (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident! Was tut ein unbeaufsichtigtes Kind im Süßwarenladen? Es bedient sich ganz ungeniert. Und genau das tut China im Moment hier in der Europäischen Union: Es stopft sich seit Jahren gierig die Taschen voll. Hier der Hafen von Piräus, dort die portugiesischen Anteile der nationalen Übertragungsnetzbetreiber und dann noch einen finnischen Antikörperhersteller.

Da heißt es heute: *the same procedure as last year*. 2021 hat das Parlament über die Abhängigkeit von russischem Gas debattiert. Russisches Gas schien zu dem Zeitpunkt alternativlos. Haben wir daraus gelernt? Kaum. Und das ist fatal. Chinas Einfluss ist ungemein größer. Er erstreckt sich auf viel mehr als nur einen einzigen Bereich der europäischen Infrastruktur. Spionage, Erpressbarkeit und Verlust von Unabhängigkeit sind die neue Realität von morgen. Dagegen ist die schärfste Waffe der EU im Moment der *screening mechanism* für ausländische Direktinvestitionen – ein stumpfes Schwert, denn gerade einmal 1 % an Investitionen sind letztes Jahr blockiert worden. Künstliche Intelligenz und Robotik sind unter den Bestsellern.

Meine Frage: Wie kann die Kommission gewährleisten, dass der *FDI screening mechanism* von allen Mitgliedstaaten wirklich auch einheitlich und effektiver angewandt wird?

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Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – I think it's I think it's too early, at least for me, to call on the foreign direct investment screening mechanism not to work. As said, 18 Member States have adopted such screening mechanisms, 8 are in the process of doing so. As far as I can count, that doesn't amount to 27. So we still need to push for this to happen everywhere. I think this is a good tool because it's a specific tool. So it's not just a sort of all out ban on investment from a certain source.

I really do see what you mean when you start your question by referring to the gas dependence that we had, that we more or less sort of sleepwalked into, because the European business model is, of course built on research, innovation, excellent people, highly skilled workers, high productivity, but also on cheap energy, cheap raw materials and cheap labour in the value chain or the supply chain. And now all of that is changing because we cannot rely on cheap energy because we realise the security risks that come with it, because now they have materialised with the war in Europe. And this is why we are really pushing for raw materials diversification. It started already in the last mandate with the raw materials strategy under the leadership of my great colleague Maroš Šefčovič. Now, when you look at how much we are going to need, for instance, lithium, the demand is going to skyrocket in the next 15-20 years. It's really important that we diversify because it's not sustainable that lithium is mined, for instance, in Chile and then processed in China and then coming back to Europe. So we need to find many more ways to go.

So we have this raw material alliance. I just recently had a meeting with a Canadian minister, Mr Champagne, who is so eager for Europeans to work with the Canadians, not only for lithium, but for many raw materials. And I think that is part of the answer.

Viola von Cramon-Taubadel (Verts/ALE). – Welche Berücksichtigung finden denn neue Technologien, die noch nicht in die Kategorie sensibler Forschung fallen? Vielleicht können Sie dazu bitte noch einmal Stellung nehmen.

Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Maybe first a follow-up on the foreign direct screening investment mechanism. There will, of course, be an evaluation. So, of course, the Commission will come back to Parliament when we have that assessment in due course.

On the second question, when you look at the Horizon Europe provisions, we have an article, I think it's 22.5, which allows us to close certain calls for entities where we think that there might be a risk. And so far, when you look at emerging technologies, that could be, for instance, quantum, I think No Chinese or Chinese control directly or indirectly have been part of those calls.

The Chinese are, I think, world-leading when it comes to quantum. Europe is also very far ahead. But because of that, we found that it's important that funding in specific strategic sectors goes to entities where we know for sure that we can vouch for how they are working with it. So I think that is a good example of how we have a general provision that can be used specifically on different areas where we find that things may be at risk.

These are few areas, because the openness of research also increases the level and the resilience of the research community. But there are areas where it is important to say 'thank you but no thank you' to entities participating in the calls.

Anna Bonfrisco (ID). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, ringrazio la Vicepresidente Vestager per aver risposto in maniera ampia e completa alle tante domande.

La mia domanda si aggiunge a quella dei colleghi per chiederle conto di un'intera grande politica di liberalizzazioni e di competitività che lei ha rappresentato nell'Unione europea negli ultimi anni, una politica di qualche decennio che però, alla luce dei fatti e soprattutto alla luce del mutamento geopolitico avvenuto attorno a noi e così vicino all'Europa, rischia di mostrare tutta la sua debolezza.

Interi comparti dell'industria europea, penso per esempio all'industria navale, sono diventati molto più deboli e competono nel mondo con maggiori difficoltà, in virtù del nostro impianto regolatorio europeo, che lei ha così fortemente favorito tra gli Stati membri. Questo ha riguardato le infrastrutture dei servizi finanziari, come le banche, ma anche quello della produzione meccanica industriale dell'Unione europea.

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Oggi tutto questo è così fragile che non solo non può competere più con gli altri attori, ma addirittura rischia di non essere più nemmeno autonomo e di assistere all'invasione da parte della Cina in Europa.

Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – You will excuse me if I don't give you a direct answer because you focused on a number of different things in your intervention.

What we have been building in Europe is a social market economy, which means that democratic bodies – national and in particular European – have set a legislative framework as to how things should work; what should be the environmental standards for us to breathe the air, for us to drink the water; how to make sure that when we fight climate change, that our Green Deal is now a growth strategy. I think that has made Europe one of the continents with the best possible living conditions on this planet.

At the same time, within this framework democratically set up, businesses have been competing and there are many world-leading businesses right now. Unfortunately, we haven't necessarily provided a single market in all sectors that could give them the strength at home to strongly compete abroad. I think that the digital sector is an obvious one of them. We never provided a digital single market, we didn't provide a capital market that was sufficiently prone to take risks, to invest for businesses to scale.

Now, when we enter the next chapter of digitalisation, I think it's really important that we push for this digital single market to be a reality, for the capital market to be a reality, so that when we enter this chapter of digitalisation, where it's much more business-to-business, much more deep tech, much more industrial digitalisation, that Europe gets to play its full role.

Of course, that takes a lot of courage, that takes a lot of investment needs to materialise and maybe we can do more to support that. But I think we have prepared the ground while at the same time taking into consideration the concerns of European citizens when it comes to environmental issues, climate change and workers' protection.

Anna Bonfrisco (ID). – La ringrazio, signora Vestager, Lei prima ha parlato del tema della difesa, dell'industria della difesa.

Ecco, questa è la grande prova che sta davanti a noi. La sfida che sta davanti a noi è quella di interpretare, oggi, tutta questa regolazione economica, di cui il Green Deal è gran parte, allo scopo di non indebolire ulteriormente le nostre imprese, di rafforzarle e di essere in grado di tutelare e difendere i territori, i porti, le infrastrutture, tutto ciò che anima la nostra vita non solo economica, ai fini della sicurezza e della difesa dell'Europa.

La difesa!

Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Well, in particular, the defence industry has a special set of rules around it that to a large degree exempts it from competition rules. Member States, of course, are free to buy their equipment, their software where they want to. But actually in common we try to enable the European defence industry.

We have now the first calls of the European Defence Fund, but if you look at the precursor to that, which was a small fund, I think 600 million, it was actually possible for both big and large companies to participate that had a relationship with the defence industry ecosystem, but also for big and small Member States to participate. So I definitely think that with that kind of European funding, with the openness when it comes to calls, we can strengthen the entire European defence industry and maybe make it because of that more attractive to Member States to do part of their investments, when it comes to ramping up the defence contribution, also to use European equipment.

I think there is a strong competition between US and European defence capabilities and that may be so, but what we are doing right now is actually strengthening the European defence industry in good collaboration with Member States as far as I have seen it.

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Joachim Stanisław Brudziński (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Pani Komisarz! Była już tutaj mowa, jak wiele kontrowersji wzbudziła wizyta kanclerza Niemiec Olafa Scholza w Chinach, jak również decyzja o udostępnieniu udziałów chińskiej firmie Cosco w nowym projekcie hamburskiego portu, który ma polegać na budowie nowego odcinka portu kontenerowego.

Dziś niemieckie media informują z kolei, że działania Cosco w Hamburgu to dopiero początek. Są wiarygodne informacje, jakoby Chiny już od dawna omawiały z zarządem hamburskiego portu ewentualność zaangażowania Niemiec we współpracę z Chinami w basenie Morza Śródziemnego i Bałtyckiego.

Według dokumentu Federalnego Ministerstwa Gospodarki i Technologii uzgodniono również poszukiwanie możliwości przejęcia wspólnie udziałów w terminalach kontenerowych w polskich portach. Dlaczego o tym mówię? Chciałbym zapytać, czy Komisja Europejska przygląda się tego typu działaniom, bo jesteśmy w Unii Europejskiej i wszyscy zgadzamy się, że przejęcie przez Chiny strategicznej infrastruktury to zagrożenie dla naszego bezpieczeństwa i dla naszej suwerenności. Ale czy pod płaszczykiem współpracy chińskich firm z partnerami w Unii Europejskiej, jak chociażby ten przykład, nie będzie próby wejścia tylnymi drzwiami do naszych portów?

Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – No matter how much I want to accept it, there are limits as to what the European Commission can do. I think you appreciate that in many other instances. And looking into areas where Member States have a very clear responsibility is something that we do not do. I completely agree that it's important to make sure that what has been passed by this House is not only implemented, but also enforced, because we are in a situation – and one can think about that as one wants to, but we are in a situation – where there is foreign ownership of part of our port infrastructure and that is why it is so important that the legislation that has been passed actually is being actively put into use. Which means that if one would have the suspicion that, because there is a minority foreign shareholder in a port, they would kind of fudge or prevent the legislation from being fully implemented, then of course the Member State will have to do that, to make sure that the risk assessment is there, that the mitigation is there, that things are being reported. They will have ways to do so.

But I think it is really important that because of the legislation, as it has been formulated, that we put the responsibility where it is to be had, which is with Member States. Of course, if there are issues that are competition-related, it can be for the European Commission to look at if there are issues where it is of a different nature. But for security services, of course it is for them to look at. These capabilities are not for the Commission.

Joachim Stanisław Brudziński (ECR). – Pani Komisarz! Bardzo dziękuję, natomiast na konkretnym przykładzie, jestem mieszkańcem Szczecina, byłym marynarzem. Moi koledzy z portu podają konkretny przykład. W tej chwili jest próba przejęcia, w oparciu o obowiązujące przepisy w Polsce, bo ma Pani Komisarz pełną, 100% racji, w tym, że to państwa członkowskie muszą dbać przede wszystkim w pierwszej kolejności o swoje bezpieczeństwo. Polska sobie radzi z tym znakomicie. Ministerstwo Obrony wielokrotnie odmawiało chociażby Chińczykom zakupów newralgicznych części portu w Trójmieście, w Gdańsku czy w Gdyni, ale na konkretnym przykładzie:

Dzisiaj w szczecińskim porcie jest próba przejęcia nie majątku, nie ziemi, ale spółki operacyjnej zajmującej się przeładunkami ważnymi z punktu widzenia bezpieczeństwa energetycznego, ładunkami. I teraz ta spółka ma być przejęta przez firmę niemiecką. Władze portu mówią coś takiego: mamy problem. Odpowiednie instytucje w Polsce mówią mamy problem, bo za chwilę Komisja Europejska, jeżeli odmówimy sprzedaży tej części udziałów, Komisja Europejska może to zakwestionować jako działania wbrew konkurencji, wbrew wolnemu przepływowi środków w ramach Unii Europejskiej.

Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – I think it's very important to have this very serious approach that you represent. And I think it's also important to act if one sees something that seems to be not as it should be.

I think here – and, as I said earlier on, I will take the idea of having a European port strategy to my colleague who is responsible for ports, Adina Vălean – it is very important, first things first, we have national authorities, we have national police, we have national intelligence services. They have resources. They have competence. They should do their job.

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The Commission has limited resources and above all, limited competence. So I think we cannot wait for neither – if so be – a European port strategy or more pan-European legislation for European competence on this. We need to make sure that those who have the responsibility also do their job. That is the only fast solution to things that are not as they are supposed to be.

Helmut Scholz (The Left). – Herr Präsident! Frau Vizepräsidentin, ich komme noch mal auf Ihre einführenden Bemerkungen zurück, was die Vergangenheit betrifft. Es war die Finanzkrise 2009/2010, als konservative Parteien und viele Staaten innerhalb der EU Griechenland aufgefordert haben, den Hafen zu verkaufen, zu privatisieren. Und zur gleichen Zeit haben sie China gebeten, die Eurozonenländer zu stützen. Heute wird das immer so dargestellt, als ob China sozusagen mit List und Tücke die Häfen hier alle einkauft.

Natürlich müssen wir über die Hafenstruktur, die kritische Infrastruktur sehr deutlich reden. Ich möchte aber, dass diese Infrastruktur in öffentlicher Hand bleibt. Wenn dort eingestiegen werden muss, weil es eine wirtschaftliche Situation in den verschiedenen Mitgliedstaaten gibt, dann bin ich daran interessiert, dass die Leute anständig bezahlt werden, dass die Arbeitsplätze erhalten werden, dass Umweltrechte, Menschenrechte etc. eingehalten werden.

Wie muss also das Beihilfe- und Wettbewerbsrecht generell makroökonomisch, aber auch mit Blick auf die kritische Infrastruktur so umgestaltet werden, dass wir selbst diese Investitionen vornehmen können?

Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – I wasn't there. I don't know if you were there. What I have been told is basically that Greece was asked to put the Piraeus harbour up for sale, and there were very few potential buyers and that, completely in the open, the Chinese bought the harbour. And as far as I know, the Greeks are looking at a harbour that is doing quite well. So I think that is an example of the fact that one should be very careful to say that it's all bad when we have foreign investment. Also, when we have foreign investment from China. And anyway, here we are. And that is why it is so important that the rules that this House sets are being lived by. Because if there is a risk by foreign ownership of essential infrastructure, then that risk will need to be dealt with. Otherwise, we are not safe. When I look at the way we work, I see both public ownership and private ownership being successful and being less successful. For me, what is important is indeed that, whether you have private or public ownership, you live up to the rules governing the infrastructure that you are managing. Because that is exactly the point of having essential infrastructure in different kinds of ownership that you must have the willingness to put around it a framework to make sure that that infrastructure is still serving, also, when there is a public interest. And that public interest can be environmental sustainability in broader terms, of course, working conditions, the way that the entire operation is managed.

For me, as I said I'm quite neutral on ownership. For me, the results of the processes of how the infrastructure is managed and of course that I keep serving the purpose that it is set there to serve and that we for the future becomes, I think, somewhat more assertive as to who is invited in, because people are invited in for business, but not for undermining our security, that be the physical security of infrastructure or the cybersecurity of our infrastructure.

Helmut Scholz (The Left). – Ich gehe noch mal weg von der kritischen Hafenwirtschaft, auch von der Infrastruktur. Sie sprachen auch von Lithium, von kritischer Rohstoffpartnerschaft – die halte ich für ganz wichtig. Aber auch dort müssen wir doch darüber nachdenken: Wie gestalten wir die so, dass die Investitionen, die wir dort tätigen, in unser Interesse und in das Interesse der Adressaten von Investitionen gelangen, und wie wird praktisch bei dieser Investitionsneuausrichtung der Adressat bei der Bestimmung der Richtung von Investitionen, des Ausmaßes der Investition mit beteiligt?

Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – I think that is a really crucial point. I think it's important that one looks at investment in raw materials as we would look at it, if it was investment in raw materials within the Union. There are sources of raw material available within the Union as well. But the thing is that in the past, the people who were looking at the mine, they didn't necessarily get the full part of the value added. And that, I think, is really important that if you want to do the mining, well then you need to figure out how to do the processing and maybe also to do part of the production of the raw materials that you source from that specific place.

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And I think it's really important that we say, well, if you want things to be done in a good manner, the price will be higher. But we should be willing to pay that price because both we can make sure that we vouch for ourselves when it comes to the labour conditions, the environmental effects, the climate effect, but also we can say that we pay a security premium when we diversify the supply of raw materials. We have raw materials in Spain, in Sweden, in Norway, numerous places within the Union, we have developing partnerships with countries outside of the Union, Canada being an obvious one of them, probably the most European country on this planet. And I think we can do that in a way where we can actually say, this is OK. It is doable these days, in particular if the people doing the mining get a bigger bit of the value added of what they are producing.

Reinhard Bütikofer (Verts/ALE). – Thank you, Executive Vice-President, for tackling this important issue here. I believe the protection of strategic infrastructure cannot just be expected from the executive branch of government. We need an all-of-society effort to deal with the integrated multi-actor activities from the Chinese side.

In that regard, I think it's important to raise the awareness of the public. I think the Commission should look into opportunities for supporting, for instance, mapping efforts by academia or think tanks that would help to raise awareness. Also, I believe that often on the local level there is a lack of China competency. In twinning relationships, small towns of below 100 000 inhabitants are twinned with several million inhabitants in a big Chinese metropolis. They could be overwhelmed. So there should be efforts to enhance their China competency to deal with these issues.

And finally, the EU cannot impose a European port strategy, but the European Union can support efforts by national actors, by regional actors to coordinate. And there we have not been doing what we should be doing.

Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – I think this is a very interesting perspective. I myself have been thinking more about this sort of outside of the European Union to make sure that there is a counter-offer to the Chinese offer, for instance, when it comes to digital infrastructure. And that counter-offer from our side should be an offer both to invest in infrastructure but also to invest in digital governance in a way that reflects our democratic values.

When it comes to within the Union, I think it is a fair point both to make sure that more people have the awareness, that media have the expertise to call upon when they want to do articles. I don't know the state of China research within the Union or how that is made available, but I would be more than happy to come back with this because I think awareness is a very important point and also the awareness that nothing comes for free. If you take Chinese investment and that is seemingly for free, you should look at what is written with small letters, as you should do with every contract.

Reinhard Bütikofer (Verts/ALE). – Just one short additional remark. Some Member States, like the Dutch or the Swedish, have invested into creating national China competency centres or different institutions that help creating that competency that we need on all societal levels. And I think it would be helpful if the Commission could put some effort into propagating those shining examples.

Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – I completely take the point. My guess – but that is a guesstimate – is that my colleague responsible for research could give you a full mapping of what is going on in Europe and what is being supported. I am sure that we can do more, maybe also to connect the different environments and to make them more visible, both to journalists, to press and media, but also to individual citizens. So point taken, and we'd be more than happy to come back to this.

Der Präsident. – Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, damit ist die Fragestunde beendet. Ich möchte mich recht herzlich bei den 21 Fragestellern bedanken und für die dazugehörigen Antworten bei der Exekutiv-Vizepräsidentin, Frau Vestager – herzlichen Dank.

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15. Suspeitas de corrupção pelo Catar e a necessidade mais ampla de transparência e responsabilização nas instituições europeias (debate) (debate)

Der Präsident. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Erklärung der Kommission über den Korruptionsverdacht gegen Katar und die umfassende Notwendigkeit von Transparenz und Rechenschaftspflicht in den Organen (2022/3012(RSP)).

Ich darf zu dieser Debatte das Mitglied der Kommission, Frau Ylva Johansson, recht herzlich willkommen heißen.

Pedro Marques (S&D). – Mr President, a point of order regarding the flow of the works. You are aware, of course, that this debate was supposed to start in about half an hour. As much as I'm told, this was foreseen for in about half an hour. All our colleagues were scrutinising this. There is nobody in the chamber. We, our group, are coming because we started alerting the colleagues to come. This is for sure probably the most important debate in this session.

I would ask you – probably even in the name of the other groups, because they are not even here, the leaderships – maybe allow for, I would say, a 10-minute break or something so that the groups can convene. This is such an important debate that we cannot take it cleanly without the groups being aware that it's starting at this moment. That would be the S&D request.

Der Präsident. – Ja, Herr Kollege, es stimmt. Erstens: Wissen Sie, dass die Fragestunde eine flexible Länge hat? Die Fragestunde haben wir um 15.00 Uhr begonnen, und sie ist jetzt nach 70 Minuten zu Ende. Als das absehbar war, haben wir vor 20, 25 Minuten zu telefonieren begonnen und haben alle Fraktionen und Sprecher informiert.

Es sind die ersten Sprecher, inklusive der Kommissarin, anwesend. Es wurden alle vorher informiert. Ich habe mich erkundigt, ob ich unterbrechen soll. Man hat mir gesagt, dass das nicht notwendig ist, weil alle informiert sind. Und ich beginne daher die Debatte und darf die Frau Kommissarin um das Wort bitten. Ich nehme an, dass alle, die ein Interesse haben und auf der Rednerliste sind, ihre Möglichkeiten nutzen, um der Debatte zu folgen, und im Laufe der Debatte hier eintreffen.

Ylva Johansson, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members, last Friday was International Anti-Corruption Day. On this day of all days, Belgian authorities carried out searches on several addresses in Brussels. As of last evening, 20 searches have been carried out. On suspicion of involvement in organised crime, corruption and money-laundering they filed charges against four people, including one former Member of this Parliament and a Vice-President of the European Parliament. The investigations cover a wider network. They confiscated computers, smartphones and over half a million euros in cash.

We do not yet know what the results of this investigation will be. But one thing is clear: there must be zero tolerance for corruption. Corruption is a very serious crime that undermines our democracy, our economy, our society. I applaud the Belgian police and the Belgian authorities for the decisive action in this criminal investigation and for showing that prosecution and the law enforcement system work. And I applaud the officials and Members of this House who are fully assisting this investigation. And I thank President Metsola for your personal support of the investigation, your decisive action, your resolve to meet this test and have the Parliament come out stronger.

The allegations are extremely serious. The investigations are still ongoing and there is a presumption of innocence. But to anyone accepting payoffs, kickbacks, bribes, I say: shame on you. Shame on you for violating trust – the trust of the people of Europe who expect you to fight for their interest, not your own, and for violating the trust of your colleagues here in the Parliament who work very hard, honourably, truthfully, with decency. The only way we can rebuild trust is to fully support the investigations, for the guilty to be brought to justice and for us to root out corruption anywhere we find it.

As President von der Leyen said in her State of the Union speech three months ago in this Chamber, corruption erodes trust. We must fight back with the full force of the law. And that is what we must do every day. Our anti-fraud office OLAF investigates fraud and corruption in the institutions. The European Public Prosecutor's Office fights crimes against the EU budget. We have a strong rule-of-law mechanism to help all Member States fight corruption, with annual monitoring and reporting, and now also clear recommendations. We set up a general law conditionality mechanism to make sure no money from the EU budget goes into corrupt pockets. We took steps to make sure no cent of COVID recovery money ends up in the wrong hands. The fight against corruption is central to our strategy against organised crime and a key target of European police cooperation under EMPACT.

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As a Union, we need to learn the hard lessons and take responsibility, ensuring that we have a better mechanisms and accountability in place, get rid of differences in national laws that obstruct the fight against corruption. That's why I next year will propose a new law. We must criminalise all forms of corruption in all Member States. Not just bribery, as is the case today, but also trafficking and influence, illicit enrichment, embezzlement and abuse of power, and to impose tough EU-wide criminal penalties for these crimes.

The Commission continues to support an EU ethics body for all European institutions – for the Parliament, Council, for the European Court of Justice, the ECB, the European Court of Auditors, and also its advisory bodies the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – without exception. So we can all live by the same clear principles, live up to the same high standards. President von der Leyen sent a letter to these institutions in March, and Vice-President Jourová is carrying the discussions with our partners forward.

Let me be clear: the scandal we discuss here today goes well beyond ethics violations. It's a serious criminal investigation. The Parliament's first response is the right one – to cooperate fully with the law enforcement. But there is anger and frustration in this House and outside. There is understandable outrage and frustration among the millions who believe in the European project, who saw the European unity, helped us through the pandemic and help us now in response to Putin's war.

We built trust based on action, and now we must rebuild. The fight against corruption is mission critical for Europe, and we must have our own house in order first. Our standards should always be the highest. It's what we expect of others, and we must demand it for ourselves.

Der Präsident. – Herzlichen Dank, Frau Kommissarin. Ich danke Ihnen für die Klarheit Ihrer Ausführungen und auch die grundsätzlichen Bemerkungen und darf noch einmal unterstreichen, dass dieses Haus heute die Frau Vize-Präsidentin Kaili mit nur einer Gegenstimme als Vize-Präsidentin dieses Hauses abgesetzt hat.

Zur Wort hat sich nun gemeldet Herr Jeroen Lenaers.

Jeroen Lenaers, on behalf of the PPE Group. – Mr President, dear colleagues, it's really hard to express how sad and angry I am here today because the greed of some individuals in this House has cast a dark shadow over all of us.

I have to fully agree with the Commissioners: shame on them. The news over the past days looked like a bad Netflix film. Bags of cash raided offices and searched houses. But it's not the film. It's the ugly truth of high-level corruption at the heart of the European democracy.

Of course, investigations are ongoing and we need to wait for all the facts but already I want to thank the Belgian authorities, and I would also like to thank our President, Roberta Metsola, for her leadership on this issue and echo her words. There will be no impunity, none. Those responsible must be brought to justice.

And we fully support the internal investigation that the president announced. We must do better; increased transparency and accountability of all activities related to third countries, whether through NGOs or other actors, and strengthened defensive tools and anti-corruption measures to combat foreign interference in our work.

All these steps are necessary to start regaining the trust of our citizens. Because make no mistakes, the action of those who would rather take home bags of cash than bags of work undermine the credibility of all of us. And it is up to us together to repair the damage.

We can already see the Orbáns of this world gloating about these developments, apparently under the impression that corruption elsewhere makes corruption at home less disgusting. Nonsense. And let me emphasise one crucial difference: in stark contrast to the impunity in Orbán's Hungary, in a rule of law, corrupt individuals are arrested, prosecuted, and stripped of their responsibilities. And we say very clearly here today, no tolerance for corruption, no tolerance for impunity.

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Iratxe García Pérez, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señor presidente, señora comisaria, señorías, este Parlamento siempre ha trabajado y seguirá trabajando por la democracia, por el Estado de Derecho y por la transparencia. Siempre hemos luchado contra la corrupción en todas sus formas y lo seguiremos haciendo. Pero reconozcamos que tendremos que hacerlo mejor.

La corrupción destruye las instituciones, socava la confianza de la ciudadanía y, además, daña la imagen política. No nos lo podemos permitir, porque estamos aquí para servir a la ciudadanía. Más allá de nuestras diferencias ideológicas, me siento orgullosa de la reacción de esta Cámara ante el horrible escándalo de corrupción que, desgraciadamente, ha sucedido en este Parlamento.

Sin embargo, hay que dejar algunos puntos claros: ante todo, que los responsables son las personas que han quebrantado la ley, que han cometido delitos muy graves, de los que eran conscientes, y todo el peso de la ley debe recaer sobre ellos. Y por eso, como parte afectada, ya he anunciado que mi grupo se perdonará en la causa.

Y en ese sentido, tenemos que tener claro que los mecanismos del Estado de Derecho han funcionado, y por eso hay una investigación policial en curso. Nuestro primer deber es facilitar esa investigación para que los hechos delictivos puedan conocerse en su totalidad.

Mi responsabilidad como líder de grupo es atajar de inmediato cualquier acción que pudiera derivarse de la actuación de estas personas. Y por eso pedí en seguida que los diputados al Parlamento Europeo afectados por la investigación abandonaran cualquier cargo de responsabilidad, tanto en el Parlamento como en el grupo. Y así ha sido.

Vamos a actuar con contundencia y vamos a iniciar una investigación interna. Desde el minuto uno hemos actuado con firmeza para proteger la honorabilidad del Grupo Socialdemócrata y también la de este Parlamento. Porque el comportamiento criminal de unas personas no puede empañar la labor que hacen cada día la inmensa mayoría de los diputados y diputadas al Parlamento Europeo, así como sus colaboradores y asistentes.

Además, debemos crear una comisión de investigación en este Parlamento, porque más allá de las actuaciones delictivas, debemos conocer qué mecanismos internos pueden mejorarse para que esta situación no vuelva a producirse.

Queremos la máxima claridad y transparencia, pero teniendo en cuenta que la investigación judicial no ha terminado y que lo más importante es que el proceso penal avance y se sepa toda la verdad.

A partir de ahí, en las próximas semanas, debemos discutir medidas concretas: el calendario y el mandato de la comisión de investigación, la necesidad de incluir a terceros países en el registro de transparencia de los *lobbies* o la creación de un órgano independiente de ética.

Le tiene que quedar claro a la ciudadanía: esta casa es transparente. Es la casa de todos y de todas. Y este lamentable episodio no puede volver a ocurrir. Esta tiene que seguir siendo una casa abierta a todos quienes quieren contribuir a construir una Europa unida, una Europa más justa. Porque merece la pena nuestro trabajo, porque merece la pena dejarse la piel por Europa —incluso en días tan tristes como hoy— y porque merece la pena trabajar por Europa, estaremos juntos en esta materia.

Sophia in 't Veld, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, colleagues – shock, disbelief, anger: I believe we all went through the roller coaster last weekend as, bit by bit, we learned about the corruption scandal that took place in our midst. And we are still reeling – or at least that's the way I feel. We are all devastated to see how the criminal acts of Members, former Members and staff of the European Parliament have deeply damaged the image of this House, and it is our task to restore and even strengthen trust. We have a saying in Dutch. Trust arrives on foot and leaves on horseback. In other words, it takes a long time to build trust, but it's broken very rapidly.

Taking influence on political decision-making is in itself a normal and healthy part of democracy, let us not forget that – as a matter of fact, it is democracy, and MEPs must be accessible and open to arguments and debate. They must be able to freely and independently be the voice of their constituents and vote in line with their own views and beliefs. But it is a very different matter if actors are trying to get influence with undue pressures or even bribes.

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And the ugly facts that have emerged are not a mere breach of ethics, colleagues, but criminal acts. And we can fortunately conclude that the criminal justice system works. Now let's use this momentum and revise and strengthen the rules on ethics and transparency nevertheless. There is already a number of proposals on the table, like finally setting up an ethics body with teeth and expanding the transparency register to include third-country representatives, and much more. And we can learn from the best practices from other parliaments.

This House, colleagues, must and can become the gold standard for integrity and transparency. And it is our joint cross-party task to restore trust.

Terry Reintke, *im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ich glaube, wir sind alle immer noch entsetzt über das, was da am Wochenende ans Tageslicht gekommen ist. Ich will mal meinen Vater zitieren, der gesagt hat: „Was für eine verdammte Scheiße, was sie da abgezogen haben.“ Ich glaube, das ist ein Zitat, das zeigt, wieviel Vertrauen zerbrochen ist.

Vertrauen lässt sich nur wieder aufbauen, wenn wir jetzt als Europäisches Parlament handeln. Deshalb werden wir sehr klar sein müssen, auch in der Entschließung, die wir verabschieden, was die Verurteilung der Taten angeht, was die Aufklärung angeht und was bessere Prävention angeht, und eine absolut kristallklare Reaktion auf Korruption und Fehlverhalten ist da absolut zentral.

Den ersten Schritt sind wir heute gegangen, indem wir Eva Kaili als Vizepräsidentin des Parlaments abgesetzt haben. Korruption muss weitgehende Konsequenzen haben. Punkt. Keine Diskussion.

Zweitens: Wir brauchen volle Aufklärung, einen Untersuchungsausschuss und natürlich volle Kooperation mit den belgischen Behörden. Denn wenn sich eins gezeigt hat, ist das, dass es eine fähige und unabhängige Staatsanwaltschaft in Belgien gibt.

Drittens – und ich glaube, das ist ein sehr wichtiger Teil dieser Aufarbeitung – weitergehende Maßnahmen für bessere Prävention. Ja, es gibt Dinge, die auch mit besseren Transparenzregeln nicht vollends zu verhindern sein werden. Aber trotzdem ist es wichtig, dass wir jetzt auf volle Transparenz setzen, zum Beispiel die Aufnahme von Drittstaaten in das Lobbyregister oder eine unabhängige Ethikbehörde.

Einige Kolleginnen und Kollegen werden jetzt sagen: nichts überstürzen, keinen Aktionismus. Aber ich möchte mal ganz klar sagen: Es gibt viele Regeln, die wir als Europäisches Parlament bereits mehrheitlich hier im Plenum beschlossen haben, wie zum Beispiel die Ethikbehörde. Wir müssen jetzt darauf bestehen, dass diese Regeln endlich umgesetzt werden. Die Debatte ist nämlich nicht neu, sondern gerade nur brandaktuell. Mir ist es wichtig, dass wir bei diesen Entscheidungen immer das Bild der Bürgerinnen und Bürger mit im Blick haben. Dieses Parlament muss das verlorene Vertrauen wieder aufbauen, und dafür müssen wir zusammenarbeiten.

Jordan Bardella, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Commissaire, la religion des droits de l'homme s'arrête donc là où commencent les valises de billets. Alors que l'Union européenne s'est érigée en modèle de vertu, en donneuse de leçons et en juge moralisatrice de tous les régimes du monde, la voici présumée corrompue à son plus haut niveau par l'argent d'un État islamiste.

Ce scandale démocratique qui frappe aujourd'hui le Parlement européen, dont l'une des vice-présidentes vient d'être écartée, a le mérite de mettre fin à une mascarade: la mascarade de ceux qui portent en bandoulière les valeurs de l'Europe, la mascarade de ceux qui hurlent le plus fort dans la défense de la démocratie, la mascarade des socialistes soupçonnés ici, au Parlement européen, d'avoir touché de l'argent du Qatar.

Le Qatar est, rappelons-le, une dictature islamiste. La liberté d'expression ne s'y applique pas, l'égalité hommes-femmes et les droits des travailleurs n'existent pas, l'homosexualité y est punie de mort. Le Qatar est cet État où 6 500 ouvriers esclavagisés sont morts sur les chantiers de la Coupe du monde, pour qui nos démocraties modernes détournent le regard. Le Qatar est cet État qui retire ses équipes féminines des rencontres sportives internationales, au motif que ses joueuses ne peuvent disputer les matchs en portant le voile islamique. Le Qatar est cet État qui finance l'islamisme en France et sponsorise les djihadistes d'al-Nosra en Syrie.

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Selon les journalistes français Christian Chesnot et Georges Malbrunot, le prosélytisme du Qatar et, avec lui, l'influence des Frères musulmans en France ont déversé plus de 25 millions d'euros en dix ans dans des constructions d'écoles, de mosquées radicales et d'associations séparatistes.

Combien d'autres élus de ce Parlement sont prêts à vendre leurs prises de position publiques au plus offrant? Combien d'autres font preuve de la même souplesse déontologique, pour ne pas dire du même avilissement moral? Nous refusons que nos nations soient vendues à la découpe. Il est temps de remonter le fil de la corruption et de faire toute la lumière sur les accointances de certains élus ici présents avec le Qatar. Je suis persuadé que d'autres cadavres sont dans le placard, et que nous ne sommes pas au bout de nos peines. Sur le sujet du Qatar comme sur beaucoup d'autres, nous aurons alerté avant tous les autres. Faites donc respecter l'Europe, la vraie, face à ceux qui en font commerce et qui font commerce de nos intérêts.

Assita Kanko, *namens de ECR-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, geachte collega's, corruptie, geld witwassen, criminele organisaties, zo veel cash dat men de hele nacht heeft moeten tellen. Dit gaat niet over drugsbendes of de maffia. Dit gaat over leden van dit Parlement en hun medewerkers.

Zoals iedereen ben ik boos en enorm teleurgesteld over zoveel egoïsme, gewetenloosheid en minachting tegenover de democratie en onze medeburgers. Waarom verhuizen ze niet naar Qatar als ze Qatar willen vertegenwoordigen? Omdat zij weten hoe waardevol onze rechtsstaat is hier in Europa, de rechtsstaat die wij allemaal moeten koesteren en beschermen, maar die zij ondermijnen.

Qatar ondermijnt het vertrouwen in de Europese instellingen én onze rechtsstaat. Deze situatie, deze omstandigheden, deze onthullingen nopen dit huis na te gaan wat er precies is gebeurd, of er gelijksoortige incidenten van ongeoorloofde beïnvloeding zijn, en hoe dit in de toekomst kan vermeden worden. Onze instelling moeten vlug en adequaat handelen om haar onafhankelijkheid en geloofwaardigheid te vrijwaren.

De regels inzake transparantie en integriteit moeten aangescherpt worden. Lobbyregels zullen ook moeten overwogen worden voor vertegenwoordigers van derde landen. Een écht onafhankelijk toezicht op de naleving van deze regels dient ingesteld te worden. Het Parlement is geen Club Med. Schaf dus de parlementaire delegaties af. We weten allemaal dat ze waardeloos zijn en de commissies kunnen het werk doen.

Dit onderzoek moet goed verlopen, zodat iedereen weet dat degenen die omkopen of degenen die corrupt zijn nooit ongestraft zullen blijven. Dat is wel het minste wat we de burgers en oprechte leden van het Parlement verschuldigd zijn.

PREDSEDÁ: MICHAL ŠIMEČKA

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Martin Schirdewan, *im Namen der Fraktion The Left*. – Herr Präsident! Während viele Menschen derzeit Probleme haben, in ihren Beuteln das Notwendigste an Lebensmitteln nach Hause zu tragen, schleppt eine raffgierige Gruppe von Abgeordneten und Mitarbeiterinnen dieses Hauses Koffer voller Bestechungsgeld durch die Gegend. Das ist das Bild, das von diesem schockierenden Skandal bleiben wird.

Noch können wir nicht annähernd das Ausmaß dieses Bestechungsskandals abschätzen. Aber um weiter reichenden Schaden von dieser Institution abzuwenden, braucht es jetzt maximale Aufklärung, Kooperation mit den Behörden und die konsequente Umsetzung und Kontrolle der Transparenzvorschriften dieses Hauses. Meine Fraktion fordert deshalb die Einsetzung eines Ausschusses, der diesen Skandal auch politisch aufarbeitet. Das Einzige, was hier gilt, ist nämlich brutalstmögliche Transparenz.

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Denn über all dem schwebt derzeit die Frage im Raum: Ist es eine übliche Praxis von Staaten und von Konzernen, sich Einfluss auf die Politik der Europäischen Union zu erkaufen? Dieser Korruptionsskandal ist nichts weniger als ein Schlag gegen die Glaubwürdigkeit europäischer Politik. Offensichtlich haben Leute politische Entscheidungen in diesem Haus gekauft, und offensichtlich gab es Abgeordnete, die sich haben kaufen lassen.

Dieser Skandal ist nicht entstanden, weil es hier einige faule Äpfel gibt, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, dieser Skandal ist entstanden, weil wir es mit einem strukturellen Problem zu tun haben. Wie viele Lobbyisten hatten im letzten Jahr Zugang zum Europäischen Parlament, welcher Kommissar hat wann welchen Lobbyverein getroffen, und wie viele der Treffen von Lobbyisten und Repräsentanten von Drittstaaten mit Ratsvertretern sind wirklich veröffentlicht worden? Unsere heutige Debatte kann nur ein Anfang einer langen Aufklärungsarbeit sein, an deren Ende neue Regelungen für Drittstaaten stehen, eine unabhängige Ethikkommission und maximale Transparenz bei der legislativen Arbeit. Sonst wird dieser Skandal die gesamte EU dauerhaft beschädigen.

Laura Ferrara (NI). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, lo scandalo per i gravi sospetti di corruzione dal Qatar che ha travolto il Parlamento europeo sta gettando una cupa ombra su di esso, compromettendo la fiducia dei cittadini nelle istituzioni europee e nei suoi diretti rappresentanti.

La collaborazione con l'autorità giudiziaria è essenziale in questa fase per difendere la credibilità e l'onore del Parlamento, che è la casa comune della democrazia nell'Unione. Abbiamo tutti il dovere di agevolare l'accertamento della verità e di eventuali responsabilità e ringrazio per questo la Presidente Metsola per le misure finora adottate.

Bisogna essere inflessibili nella reazione contro ogni tentativo di corruzione, di atto illecito, di interferenza e di attacco che miri a indebolire il processo democratico e decisionale.

Come Movimento 5 Stelle abbiamo condiviso la volontà di rinviare lavori e votazioni sull'esenzione dei visti per l'UE a favore dei cittadini provenienti da Qatar e Kuwait e, più in generale, chiediamo di generalizzare l'obbligatorietà di registrare, a fini di una trasparenza più rigorosa, gli incontri degli europarlamentari con le lobby e con i diplomatici stranieri.

Nessuna tolleranza contro chi minaccia la democrazia europea, l'integrità delle istituzioni e la credibilità dei suoi rappresentanti.

David McAllister (PPE). – Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues, trust in our Parliament's integrity and the rule of law are paramount for the functioning of European democracy. The European Parliament must conduct a policy of zero tolerance towards corruption.

For this reason, I am appalled that four people closely connected to the European Parliament, including one of its vice presidents, were arrested by the Belgian authorities on suspicions of money laundering, corruption and participating in a criminal organisation.

I very much welcome President Roberta Metsola's leadership, her words yesterday, here in this hemicycle. I welcome her initiative to launch an internal investigation and a wide-ranging reform process. In order to increase transparency and to fight corruption, it is important that we now draw the right conclusions.

Colleagues, the European Parliament cannot assume the role of a court and does not intend to prejudice ongoing investigations. Yet I congratulate the relevant Belgian and further European authorities on 14 further criminal actions through their work. Parliament should fully support the ongoing criminal investigation. For any foreign actor proven guilty in this ongoing case, there must also be swift and dissuasive consequences.

The European Parliament needs to strengthen our anti-corruption mechanisms as well as defensive tools to combat foreign interference. Let me fully underline what colleagues have said. For time reasons, let me just add one additional point. In this case, a non-governmental organisation was allegedly used, or – to be more precise – misused as a vector of foreign interference in our political work. Therefore, we should also have a look at existing regulations in order to increase transparency and accountability of organisations and other actors.

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Pedro Marques (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, Senhora Comissária, a seriedade das alegações de corrupção e os dados já conhecidos são uma mancha profunda nesta Instituição e nas instituições europeias. Pela minha parte, enojado foi o que me senti nos primeiros momentos, furioso e cada vez mais furioso, a cada nova revelação, a cada novo dado que vamos conhecendo. Orgulhoso pelo facto de o meu grupo político já ter agido, e de ter agido de imediato, tal como este Parlamento, expulsando a Deputada Eva Kaili do nosso grupo político e destituindo-a do cargo de Vice-Presidente do Parlamento. Mas temos muito mais a fazer para repor a confiança dos cidadãos na nossa Instituição e nas instituições europeias.

Precisamos, sim, de agir também no contexto do processo judicial, porque, sim, fomos parte lesada também, se estes atos se vierem a confirmar, criando uma comissão de inquérito que vá até ao fundo desta situação, mas tomando medidas concretas para blindar a Instituição contra novos ataques da mesma natureza. É preciso preservar a integridade da democracia europeia, porque, tal como aqui disse a Deputada Sophia in 't Veld bem há pouco, demora muito tempo a construir essa credibilidade, mas pode-se perdê-la apenas num momento. Vamos trabalhar para mudar esta situação.

Adrián Vázquez Lázara (Renew). – Señor presidente, señora comisaria, esta semana el Parlamento Europeo ha aparecido en los medios de comunicación de medio mundo, pero, por desgracia, no por las numerosas acciones positivas que realizamos aquí para nuestros ciudadanos. Presuntamente, hay terceros países que habrían estado comprando la voluntad de diputados al Parlamento Europeo y asistentes parlamentarios de forma ilegal e ilegítima, lo que supone no solo un ataque frontal a esta institución, sino a los valores democráticos que la inspiran.

Pero la democracia y el Estado de Derecho son mucho más fuertes de lo que algunos se piensan. A los corruptos, tanto los que han corrompido como los que se han dejado corromper, os digo una cosa: os van a coger a todos y vais a pagar por ello, más tarde o más temprano. Porque aquí el Estado de Derecho funciona, y unas pocas manzanas podridas no van a pudrir al resto.

Lo que sí es cierto es que ahora es nuestra responsabilidad —y no va a ser nada sencillo— devolver este Parlamento y su reputación al lugar que se merecen. Cueste lo que cueste.

Jordi Solé (Verts/ALE). – Señor presidente, la sombra de la corrupción está manchando hoy la reputación de este Parlamento. Pero esta amenaza no es nueva: teníamos ya sospechas de que ciertos regímenes autocráticos podrían estar tratando de influir en la labor de esta Cámara por medios ilícitos.

Yo personalmente lo denuncié en 2017 a través de una enmienda aprobada por este Pleno, que, además, pedía, y cito, «medidas enérgicas para evitar que se produzca tal corrupción que socavaría la credibilidad y la legitimidad del trabajo del Parlamento». Pero no hicimos nada. Y ahora las sospechas se han convertido en cargos penales.

Espero que ahora sí que actuemos con medidas concretas, como dotarnos de un verdadero comité independiente de ética con poderes reales, sabiendo que, aunque nos dotáramos de las normas más estrictas, al final, que haya corrupción o no depende de nuestro sentido de la responsabilidad democrática y de nuestra ética. Contra la corrupción no valen excusas de ningún tipo. Tenemos que empezar por interpelarnos a nosotros mismos.

Anna Bonfrisco (ID). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, il *Qatargate*, che riguarda ONG, sindacati, individui, assistenti e deputati al Parlamento europeo, è il più grave attacco politico alla democrazia europea di paesi terzi autocratici da quando esistono le istituzioni dell'Unione europea.

Noi chiediamo innanzitutto una forte critica nei confronti del Qatar e dei nemici della democrazia che ci minacciano direttamente dall'esterno, come già abbiamo avuto modo di scrivere in un'interrogazione parlamentare presentata, già due anni fa, dalla nostra collega Ceccardi.

Noi però intendiamo stare uniti, quale processo fondamentale per la produzione degli anticorpi che difendono la nostra società, la cui libertà e la cui democrazia è così vitale per mantenere fermo il pieno rispetto della presunzione di innocenza. Nello Stato di diritto, al quale crediamo tutti.

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Oggi noi potremmo speculare contro alcuni di noi e, invece, ci rammarichiamo anche per essere stati esclusi dal processo democratico di questo Parlamento e svolgere il prezioso ruolo di opposizione costruttiva che serve a qualunque maggioranza democratica.

Nell'autoreferenzialità che spesso distingue alcuni di voi ci avete chiamato col cordone sanitario, ma è stato un tragico errore. Nonostante ciò, di fronte a questo disastro, vi ribadisco, noi restiamo uniti per difendere le istituzioni europee e i cittadini europei.

Nicola Procaccini (ECR). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, ieri è stato detto che la corruzione non è né di destra, né di sinistra. Personalmente io sono d'accordo con questo assunto, ma mi domando se anche i colleghi di sinistra siano d'accordo. Io temo di no, perché li abbiamo sentiti per anni raccontare la favola della loro superiorità morale.

Anche ieri sera questa narrazione falsa e ipocrita è risuonata negli interventi di alcuni capigruppo. Vedete, l'aspetto più rivoltante di questo scandalo sta nelle parole di chi ha spacciato un mese fa, qui dentro, il regime di Doha per un campione dei diritti umani e del progressismo, non solo per le ragioni che oggi comprendiamo un po' meglio, ma anche perché, a sinistra, ci si considera abilitati a stabilire chi è dalla parte giusta della storia, e chi invece no. È stato detto persino che noi occidentali avremmo molto da imparare dal Qatar in fatto di libertà e di diritti.

Questa ideologia perversa e pervasiva è la migliore alleata della corruzione e della repressione. C'è una domanda che dovremmo porci, non solo in quest'Aula: perché un regime islamico decide di pagare alcuni deputati europei e di investire così tanti soldi nello sport più popolare del mondo?

Non sta cercando un ritorno economico, si sta comprando la nostra cultura e il nostro modo di vivere. Tutti lo sanno, ma pochi si oppongono.

Κωνσταντίνος Αρβανίτης (The Left). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, αγαπητοί συνάδελφοι, αισθανόμαστε όλοι αυτό το «πισώπλατο μαχαιρώμα» στην κοινή προσπάθεια, στο Κοινοβούλιο, στη δημοκρατία, στο κράτος δικαίου. Επειδή όμως δεν έχει αξία να μείνουμε μόνο σε διαπιστώσεις, όσο και αν αυτές μας συγκλονίζουν, νομίζω ότι πρέπει να πάμε ουσιαστικά σε μέτρα για το κύρος και την ουσία του θεσμού. Για τις ποινικές ευθύνες θα μιλήσει η Δικαιοσύνη. Εμείς, όμως, πρέπει να αναλάβουμε πολιτικές ευθύνες και αυτό θα φανεί και στο ψήφισμα που θα έχουμε αύριο.

Προτείνουμε, λοιπόν, τη δημιουργία μιας Ανεξάρτητης Αρχής Δεοντολογίας για τους ευρωπαϊκούς οργανισμούς, με εξουσίες έρευνας και επιβολής για όλους τους οργανισμούς, την ενίσχυση των υφιστάμενων κανόνων για τη διαφάνεια, την ενίσχυση του Ευρωπαϊκού Μητρώου Διαφάνειας με υποχρεωτικό και νομικά δεσμευτικό χαρακτήρα, υποχρεωτικό νομοθετικό αποτύπωμα για τους ευρωβουλευτές που συντάσσουν εκθέσεις ή γνωμοδοτήσεις, αναθεωρημένο κώδικα συμπεριφοράς με αυστηρότερους κανόνες για τους ευρωβουλευτές και για τους υπαλλήλους, ειδικά για τα δώρα και τις παροχές.

Να δούμε το θέμα της άρσης ασυλίας για βουλευτές, όταν εμπλέκονται σε εγκληματικές οργανώσεις. Έχουμε ήδη έναν στη φυλακή, τον Λαγό, για συμμετοχή σε εγκληματική, ναζιστική οργάνωση· πληρώνεται κανονικά, όπως θα είναι και η κατηγορούμενη. Επίσης, να τελειώσει η ιστορία με τους πρώην ευρωβουλευτές: η θητεία τους έληξε, τους ευχαριστούμε πάρα πολύ· να σταματήσει αυτό το «μπες- βγες» στο Κοινοβούλιο. Πάμε για αποφάσεις!

Gilbert Collard (NI). – Monsieur le Président, mes chers collègues, la question que l'on n'osait pas se poser se pose maintenant: existe-t-il dans l'Union européenne une cinquième colonne de la corruption? Oui. Que faire? D'abord, combattre la fourberie de certaines ONG. «Pas de paix sans justice», c'était le nom de l'une d'entre elles. «Combattre l'impunité», c'était le nom d'une autre d'entre elles.

Les juges, peut-être, se rappelleront qu'il faut combattre l'impunité, lutter contre le système de l'escroquerie aux droits de l'homme – Panzeri est l'ex-président de la sous-commission «droits de l'homme» – et enfin lutter contre le système des lobbies et obtenir les SMS de M^{me} von der Leyen.

Sven Simon (PPE). – Mr President, colleagues, let me start by congratulating the Belgian authorities and our services on stopping this plot to undermine European democracy.

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The silver lining in this case is that our systems were tested and prevailed. But it is true, European democracy is under attack by countries who seek to undermine our decision-making processes. It is a shame that a few colleagues, former colleagues and staff went along with this.

The vector of attack in this case appears to be an NGO. And for too long, we have turned a blind eye on the lobbying efforts of supposedly non-governmental actors. What we need is a foreign agents registration act modelled on the example in the United States. This means full transparency of who is funding which NGO, their governance structures, budgets and persons of significant control.

Members who have taken money from NGOs have conflicts of interests – it's not so important which NGO or lobby group. And they should recuse themselves immediately from working in respect of policy fields. As the European People's Party, we want to restore trust in the functioning of our institutions and we need to act now, not with political games but with concrete actions.

Gabriele Bischoff (S&D). – Herr Präsident, Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ich glaube, es ist ganz klar geworden, dass das eine harte Woche für uns alle ist. Ich habe selten so viel Gefühle in diesem Parlament gesehen: so viel Wut, so viel Enttäuschung und auch so viel wirkliche Erschütterung.

Aber ich glaube, wir haben gezeigt, dass dieser Angriff, der wirklich hier auf unsere Demokratie, auf die Glaubwürdigkeit unserer Institutionen zielt, uns weiter fordert über diese Emotionen hinaus. Wir haben die ersten Schritte in großer Einigkeit heute gemacht. Und ich möchte der Kommissarin Ylva Johansson danken für die klaren Worte, weil ich glaube, dass wir hier auch als Institutionen härter zusammenarbeiten müssen, um gegen solche Korruption, gegen Kriminelle vorzugehen. Deshalb ist es richtig, dass wir zum Beispiel einen unabhängigen Ethikrat für alle Organe vorgeschlagen haben. Ich bin froh, dass die Kommissarin und die Kommissionsvorsitzende das unterstützt. Wir müssen auch den Rat dazu kriegen.

Und wir müssen hier in unserem Haus die Hausaufgaben machen, was Lobbying von Drittstaaten, von Unternehmen etc. anbelangt. Das werden wir angehen. Im neuen Jahr müssen wir sofort versuchen, das Vertrauen zurückzugewinnen, das wir hier verloren haben.

Hilde Vautmans (Renew). – Voorzitter, commissaris, met de beslissing die we vandaag genomen hebben om het ondervoorzitterschap van Eva Kaili te beëindigen, hebben we een sterk signaal gegeven. Europa is niet te koop, nooit. Dat was ook een noodzakelijk signaal, want dit corruptieschandaal raakt het hart van ons Europees Parlement, van ons Europees project.

Alles wat Qatar betreft – en ik denk dat iedereen het hier al gezegd heeft – moet terug op tafel, om te beginnen met het visumvrij reizen. We moeten de volledige medewerking verlenen aan het gerechtelijk onderzoek, waarin de Belgische diensten uitstekend werk hebben geleverd.

Maar dit is maar het begin. We moeten volledige transparantie geven over alle lobbycontacten in en rond het Europees Parlement en bekijken hoe de andere Europese instellingen daarmee omgaan. En het is breder. We moeten de aanbevelingen van de parlementscommissie over buitenlandse inmenging rigoureus opvolgen. We zijn een doelwit, we moeten dat beseffen. Dit vraagt om een gecoördineerde Europese aanpak en ook een echte enquêtecommissie.

Collega's, tussenkomsten moeten gebeuren op basis van visie, op basis van overtuiging, en niet op basis van geld op uw bankrekening. Laat dit een keerpunt zijn.

Hannah Neumann (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, we have all been elected to represent European citizens and entrusted to protect European democracy. And that is the very foundation of our mandate, and it is so across party lines. And colleagues, until last Friday, I was pretty sure that the dissent that we have, the debates that are sometimes hard, but always the core of democratic decision-making were based on political opinions, on different political opinions and not on suitcases full of money. And this trust now is deeply shaken. We are all standing in the middle of a crime scene with offices sealed, colleagues in prison confronted with the allegation that at least one of us has become a Trojan horse of corruption and foreign interference.

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And I have no illusions. Autocratic regimes have tried to bribe us before, and they will continue to do so in the future, and that is why I want this inquiry committee of the Parliament to know more, to know better what has happened more, to better prevent it in the future, and yes, to build trust again. Our response to this scandal, dear colleagues, has to be clear to the inside as well as the outside. We are not for sale and nor is European democracy.

Nicolaus Fest (ID). – Herr Präsident! Wir haben hier nicht nur ein Problem mit korrupten Abgeordneten, wir haben – das macht dieser Fall deutlich – eben auch ein Problem mit korrupten NGO. Einer der Verhafteten war Gründer der NGO *Fight Impunity*, ein anderer Generalsekretär von *No Peace Without Justice*. Beide NGO hatten – wie praktisch – die gleiche Adresse. Genau diese Strukturen sind das Einfallstor für alle Arten der Korruption. Nicht ohne Grund warnt Interpol, dass NGO immer häufiger der Geldwäsche dienen. Und der deutsche Bundesverfassungsschutz weist darauf hin, dass Katar, aber auch andere europäische Länder systematisch linke NGO finanzieren, um Europa zu destabilisieren – durch Migration, durch Entmilitarisierung, durch Reisemöglichkeiten für Islamisten und Hassprediger.

Korruption ist ein Dauerproblem dieses Hauses, weil es keine politische Kontrolle gibt. Solange die linke Mehrheit Präsidium und Ausschüsse als *closed shop* behandelt und nicht allen Fraktionen einen Sitz gewährt, wird sich daran auch nichts ändern.

Jadwiga Wiśniewska (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Szanowni Państwo! Dziś García Pérez mówi o bronienu honoru Socjalistów i Demokratów po zatrzymaniu wpływowej członkini S&D. Przez lata to właśnie S&D brutalnie deptała honor i godność Polski, nie zważając na fakty i okoliczności. Zatem dziś wiele osób w Polsce pyta, czy te nieuzasadnione ataki na Polskę były sponsorowane?

Skandal korupcyjny w Parlamencie Europejskim ujawnia hipokryzję i podwójne standardy, których nie można tolerować. Ujawnia podwójne standardy również w Komisji i również Komisja Europejska musi się z tym problemem wreszcie zmierzyć. Konieczne jest zatem powołanie komisji składającej się z przedstawicieli państw członkowskich, która sprawdzi, jak funkcjonują instytucje unijne.

Konieczne jest zwrócenie szczególnej uwagi na przypadki lobbingu i korupcji na wysokich szczeblach nie tylko ze strony Kataru, ale również Rosji. W takich przypadkach jak realizacja gazociągu Nord Stream czy polityka klimatyczna konieczne jest zwiększenie kontroli państw członkowskich nad instytucjami unijnymi.

Marc Botenga (The Left). – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Commissaire, un million et demi d'euros récupérés et de nombreux bureaux perquisitionnés, sous scellés, dans ce Parlement – probablement la partie émergée de l'iceberg. En effet, le problème est structurel.

Je me rappelle qu'à chaque fois que nous proposons de réduire les revenus des députés, vous nous répondez: «Non, les députés, il faut bien les payer, parce que sinon, ils se feront corrompre.» Vous me l'avez chanté en boucle pendant des années, et clairement, cela n'a pas marché.

Des eurodéputés corrompus illégalement par le Qatar, ce serait extrêmement grave. Mais des députés influencés légalement par des lobbies, des multinationales, des portes tournantes et des mandats dans des conseils d'administration, c'est grave aussi.

En dat is een probleem hier met de geldcultuur. Te weinig, nauwelijks, geen transparantie, een cultuur van totale straffe-loosheid; daar spreekt Transparency International over. Met die hoge lonen verliezen parlamentsleden hun realiteitszin. De meesten flirten liever met de bourgeoisie dan te leven zoals de gewone mensen. Het is hoog tijd dat politici het volk leren dienen in plaats van hun eigen zak of de multinationals.

Tamás Deutsch (NI). – Elnök Úr! Az Európai Unió történetének legsúlyosabb korrupciós botrányával állunk szemben. A brüsszeli korrupció az egész Unió intézményrendszerének a hitelességét rengeti meg. A napnál is világosabbá vált, hogy a baloldal korrupcióellenességről szóló hagymázás szólamai csupán ócska politikai hazugságok. Kaili, Barley, Freund, Verhofstadt vagy Sarvamaa képviselők átláthatóság meg ellenőrizhetőség melletti szövegei csupán a brüsszeli korrupció elfedését szolgálják.

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A rabló kiáltott pandúrért. A képmutatás netovábbja ugyanis, hogy önök politikai hazugságokra alapozva napi rendszérességgel vádolnak meg nemzeti kormányokat korrupcióval, és követelnek ellenük pénzügyi büntetéseket. Mindeközben pedig a brüsszeli korrupció, a politikai befolyás áruba bocsátása láthatóan önöknél maga a norma, a rendszer, politikusostul, civilszervezetestül. Ezzel a korrupciós botránnyal Brüsszel minden hitelességét elveszítette abban, hogy másokon számon kérje a korrupciót.

Heléne Fritzon (S&D). – Herr talman! Kommissionär! Jag är också både chockad och arg över att det synes vara så att vi har korrupktion i vårt folkvalda parlament. Det skadar inte bara vårt Europaparlament som institution, det skadar politiken, det skadar demokratin och det skadar trovärdigheten.

Jag vill säga tack till vår kommissionär, Ylva Johansson, för ert tydliga tal. Och ja, de ska skämmas. Den som har begått brott ska självfallet ställas inför rätta, men samtidigt måste vi ta vårt ansvar i parlamentet, i EU:s institutioner. Vi måste ha reformer som stärker transparens och öppenhet. Vi måste ha system där det känns tryggt för våra medborgare. De ska kunna lita på våra institutioner och de ska kunna lita på oss. Låt oss använda vår ilska, som vi nu känner, till att se till att detta aldrig, aldrig någonsin mer tar sig in i vårt parlament.

(Talaren godtog att svara på ett inlägg ("blått kort"))

Charlie Weimers (ECR), inlägg ("blått kort"). – Herr talman! I november, Heléne Fritzon, ville Europaparlamentets majoritet ha en parlamentsresolution kritisk mot Qatar. Där röstade du och dina partikamrater Erik Bergkvist och Ilan De Basso emot den idén. Jag skulle vilja fråga varför? Jag skulle vilja fråga varför Socialdemokraterna i Sverige tog ställning för visumfrihet för Qatar när exempelvis Centerpartiet, som inte direkt är kända för stängda gränser, röstade emot?

Heléne Fritzon (S&D), svar ("blått kort"). – Herr talman! På denna fråga från Charlie Weimers vill jag bara svara att Charlie Weimers mycket väl vet att vi röstade om formalia på dagordningen. När vi sedan kom till resolutionen kan jag tydligt redovisa att jag som socialdemokrat tillsammans med min grupp står upp för arbetarnas rättigheter, flickors och kvinnors rättigheter. Och det gör vi varje gång vi fattar så viktiga beslut, till skillnad från Charlie Weimers.

Katalin Cseh (Renew). – Mr President, Qatar's attempt to buy influence in the European Parliament is absolutely outrageous. But it also confronts us with a very grim reality. Authoritarian countries are actively trying to infiltrate European institutions and, let's face it, our safeguards are just not up for the task right now. We knew this was the case in the European Council, where Viktor Orbán has been using his vetoes along the interests of Russia or China, undermining Europe. And now we see that foreign influence has reached this parliament as well, and it must have very far reaching consequences. We need very urgent reform in ethics and lobbying frameworks, and we need a much better vetting system in foreign policy personnel as well. And our message to Qatar must be crystal clear: attempts to silence us and to by the European Parliament will never succeed. We will never turn our back on human rights violations, or on the thousands of workers who have died while constructing stadiums for their World Cup of shame. In fact, all Qatar achieved with their bribe money is that we will fight twice as hard to make sure that there will be some consequences.

Erik Marquardt (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident! Korruption ist Gift für die Demokratie, und das haben viele gesagt. Uns ist auch klar, dass das Europäische Parlament vergiftet wurde. Ich habe in diesen Tagen viele Gespräche geführt, und ich fand eigentlich sehr gut, dass es eine breite Mehrheit gab, die gesagt hat: Wir versuchen nicht einmal zu sagen, das ist das Problem von einigen Kriminellen, und wir haben damit nichts zu tun. Es gab auch wenige, die gesagt haben: Das ist das Problem einer Fraktion, und wir haben damit nichts zu tun. Ich glaube, das ist das Wichtigste, was wir gerade tun können, dass wir verstehen, dass zwar nur wenige an diesem Skandal Schuld haben, aber dass wir alle die Verantwortung haben, dass so etwas nie wieder vorkommt.

Es muss natürlich Konsequenzen geben für Katar. Es muss aber auch das Verständnis geben, dass Katar nicht der einzige Staat ist, der die Demokratie angreift. Ich glaube, dass wir da auf der einen Seite gucken müssen: Wie können wir als Institution besser werden? Wie können wir mehr Transparenzvorschriften machen? Wie können wir aber auch schauen, dass diese Transparenzvorschriften dann eingehalten werden?

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Es gibt viele Abgeordnete, die keine Lobbytreffen angeben – nach drei Jahren nicht. Das muss sich morgen ändern. Es ist doch völlig klar. Da müssen wir nicht nur die Regeln ändern, sondern wir müssen eben auch schauen: Wie können wir sie durchsetzen? Wie können wir die Strafverfolgungsbehörden stärken? Wie können wir gemeinsam diese harte Aufgabe angehen, dass die Glaubwürdigkeit, die so zerstört ist, langsam wieder aufgebaut werden kann?

Jaak Madison (ID). – Austatud istungi juhataja! Austatud volinik ja austatud kolleegid, niipalju kui teid siin saalis on. Esiteks tuleb kiita loomulikult Belgia politseid väga hea töö eest. Et leida 600 000 eurot kilekottides või poekottides europarlamenti kontoritest on muidugi märkimisväärne töö. Samas ma kardan, et see võib olla muidugi jäämäe tipp, et viis-kuus parlamendisaadikut sotsiaaldemokraatide seast on seotud korruptsiooniga Kataris ja ma arvan, et siit tuleb veel väga palju välja seda informatsiooni. Kuid korruptsioon on probleem olnud alati ja jääb alati olema kahjuks, ja alati tuleb sellega võidelda. Samamoodi on korruptsioonihõnguline Euroopa Komisjoni presidendi tegevus. Ma tuletan meelde, et ka parlament on väljendanud rahulolematust seoses faktiga, et komisjoni president proua von der Leyen suutis ära kaotada sadu tekstisõnumeid Whatsappis ettevõtte Pfizer tegevjuhiga enne tehingut, mille kohaselt Euroopa Liit ostab 1,9 miljardit doosi vaktsiini väärtuses umbes 35 miljardit eurot maksumaksja raha. Ja kui küsiti, et kus need sõnumid on, siis need sõnumid on kadunud. Ma võin teile öelda, et infotehnoloogiliselt on võimalik need sõnumid taastada, kuid paraku on Euroopa Komisjon otsustanud seda hoopis varjata ja lükata vaiba alla. Ja siin on koht ka parlamendil: kui me tahame tõesti korruptsiooni vastu võidelda, siis see tuleb võtta liistule, nii nagu on öelnud ka ombudsman Emily O'Reilly, et selline salastamine on vastuvõetamatu, sest vastasel korral see näeb välja ja see haiseb nagu ehtne korruptsioon. Vastasel korral oleme meie siin, õigemini teie siin olete koos Euroopa Komisjoniga suurimad korruptandid terves Euroopa Liidus. Sellega tuleb tegeleda.

Vincenzo Sofo (ECR). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, al di là dell'aspetto giudiziario che compete alla magistratura, lo scandalo Qatar pone un tema politico che quest'Aula non può ignorare: le porte delle istituzioni europee sono oggi spalancate all'azione di lobby esterne e dotate di enormi strumenti di influenza, siano essi paesi stranieri, multinazionali o ONG.

E proprio il *Qatargate* dimostra che quello delle ONG sia un caso che merita particolare attenzione. Basta infatti leggere la gran parte delle proposte che arrivano nelle commissioni per scoprire quanta pressione ci sia per dare a certe organizzazioni pseudoumanitarie ruoli di rilievo nel processo decisionale delle nostre istituzioni, creando situazioni di forte ambiguità come, ad esempio, nel caso del conflitto di interessi tra ONG e la Corte europea dei diritti dell'uomo, dove molti giudici sono espressione diretta proprio di queste realtà.

Realtà che in modo legale incidono significativamente nella vita democratica europea, senza però avere alcun mandato democratico per farlo, senza che si sappia a chi rispondono, né quali interessi tutelino davvero.

Ecco perché credo che la commissione d'inchiesta sul *Qatargate* sia dunque necessaria ma non sufficiente. Se vogliamo che le istituzioni europee recuperino trasparenza e credibilità agli occhi dei cittadini dobbiamo liberarla dalla morsa di lobby opache, lasciando che a guidare l'azione sia solo ed esclusivamente chi ha il mandato popolare per farlo.

Κώστας Παπαδάκης (NI). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, μήτρα που γεννά τη διαφθορά με επίκεντρο το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο είναι η ίδια η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση του κεφαλαίου. Σε αυτό το έδαφος εκδηλώθηκε το σκάνδαλο χρηματισμού με την Καϊλή και άλλους πρώην και νυν ευρωβουλευτές. Το ψήφισμά σας για το ξέπλυμα του Κατάρ εγκρίθηκε χωρίς καν ονομαστική ψηφοφορία. Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, Λαϊκό Κόμμα και Σοσιαλδημοκράτες, πάνω στους τάφους χιλιάδων νεκρών εργατών στα κάτεργα του Κατάρ, ανακαλύπτετε υποδειγματικές εργασιακές μεταρρυθμίσεις με συνήγορο τον, επίσης διωκόμενο, επικεφαλής των «εργατοπατέρων» της ITUC. Οι καπιταλιστές του Κατάρ, μέχρι χθες στρατηγικοί εταίροι για την εναλλακτική ενεργειακή επάρκεια της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και με απελευθερωμένη βίζα, έγιναν τώρα αυταρχικό καθεστώς που επιτίθεται στην ευρωπαϊκή δημοκρατία. Όσοι κάνουν πως ανακάλυψαν τώρα τα λόμπι που πρωταγωνιστούν σε αυτόν τον βούρκο, πλάι σε ύποπτες ΜΚΟ και στα κατά παραγγελία ψηφίσματα της Υποεπιτροπής Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων, «πλασάρουν» τώρα νέα «παραμύθια» για αδιαφάνεια, «καλά» λόμπι και κώδικες δεοντολογίας. Οι λαοί να βγάλουν συμπεράσματα. Καμιά εμπιστοσύνη στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και το σάπιο καπιταλιστικό σύστημα που υπηρετεί! Δεν διορθώνονται· μόνο ανατρέπονται με την πάλη των λαών.

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Brando Benifei (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, le indagini stanno facendo emergere una situazione aberrante, che deve portare tutto il Parlamento europeo a essere unito su ciò che c'è da fare.

Sono scioccato e deluso ma soprattutto furioso per il probabile coinvolgimento in un affare criminale di parlamentari, ex deputati e assistenti che hanno per anni frequentato, come colleghi, queste istituzioni. La giustizia farà il suo corso per accertare le responsabilità, ma voglio dire chiaramente che qualunque tentativo di influenzare il mio partito, il Partito democratico, è fallito e faremo in modo che continui così.

La nostra delegazione è stata quella che, all'interno anche del nostro stesso gruppo politico, ha scelto di votare convintamente gli emendamenti rafforzativi del gruppo The Left sul versante dei diritti umani e del diritto dei lavoratori nella risoluzione sul Qatar, respinti dalla destra, oltre ad aver presentato dure interrogazioni all'Alto rappresentante Borrell nei mesi scorsi sui mondiali.

Prenderemo ogni iniziativa necessaria per far emergere la verità e garantire l'onorabilità del nostro lavoro e delle nostre battaglie.

Oltre all'annuncio di una nuova legge anticorruzione fatto dalla Commissaria, un'importante iniziativa è la creazione di un organismo europeo indipendente sulle questioni etiche. Noi l'abbiamo sempre votato e ci aspettiamo, adesso, che anche quei gruppi politici che si sono opposti cambino idea.

È il momento di andare fino in fondo e salvare la nostra democrazia da chi vuole distruggerla per interessi personali o di altri Stati.

Valérie Hayer (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Commissaire, chers collègues, notre Parlement est la cible d'ingérences. En novembre, la Russie lançait une cyberattaque après qu'on l'eut qualifié d'État finançant le terrorisme. Aujourd'hui, nous découvrons que d'autres, ici le Qatar, soudoient nos membres afin de recevoir les faveurs de leurs votes et de leurs réseaux. Ce n'est ni plus ni moins que de la corruption. Par appât du gain, quelques-uns ici ont renié l'exigence morale qu'impose notre mandat. Oui, la justice doit faire son travail, et le Parlement européen fera la transparence sur cette affaire.

Chers collègues, si pernicieux que soient les actes d'ingérence que nous subissons, l'action de quelques individus ou États ne saurait mettre à mal notre Europe et nos institutions. La corruption n'a pas sa place dans nos institutions. C'est pourquoi je n'aurai pas la main qui tremble si nous devons être amenés à lever des immunités. Vous l'aurez compris, face à la corruption, notre groupe Renew sera intransigeant, comme il sera intransigeant dans les réformes qu'il portera pour que ces actes ne se reproduisent jamais. Créons cette haute autorité pour la transparence que mon groupe porte depuis 2019. Madame la Commissaire, c'était là une promesse de la présidente Ursula von der Leyen. Nous sommes prêts.

Manon Aubry (The Left), *intervention «carton bleu».* – Monsieur le Président, je pensais pouvoir poser la question à Valérie Hayer, qui la refuse. Je vais donc poser ma question, et elle va rester avec un point d'interrogation; j'espère qu'elle aura la capacité de lever ledit point d'interrogation. En plus, je voulais dire que je partageais son indignation contre ce plus gros scandale de corruption, qui est sans précédent, mais j'avais deux questions.

La première, c'est comment expliquer qu'Emmanuel Macron ait déclaré dans ce contexte, il y a à peine quelques semaines, que cette Coupe du monde témoignait de changements concrets à l'œuvre, et que le Qatar s'était engagé dans cette voie, devait continuer et pouvait compter sur notre soutien? C'était le texte exact d'un de ses tweets.

Deuxième question: comment, dans ce contexte, accepter qu'Emmanuel Macron se rende au Qatar, ne boycotte pas et soutienne de cette manière-là un gouvernement qui est en train de corrompre notre institution? Je regrette de ne pas avoir de réponse.

Heidi Hautala (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, colleagues, some have already pointed out that stricter ethics rules would not have prevented the kind of serious criminal acts that we have now seen. But I want to convince you that lax rules, on the other hand, can create opportunities for corruption. An organisational culture that turns a blind eye to smaller indiscretions of Members only serves to enable more serious abuses of office.

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Parliament has been, until now, light-handed in dealing with dodgy friendship groups, false electoral observation missions and questionable use of Members' allowances. The free mandate of an MEP is not an excuse to act against the core values of our Union.

The proposed committee of inquiry must have a strong mandate for far-reaching reforms to protect this House from undue foreign influence and other abuses of power. Importantly, new rules on Members' conduct must include enforcement and sanctions. Until now, they are just symbolic.

And back in 2021, may I remind you, I wrote a letter to President Sassoli, together with colleague Mr Glucksmann, and made concrete proposals on undue foreign influence. We received no reply. The threat of foreign influence must now, finally, be taken seriously.

(The speaker agreed to respond to a blue-card speech)

Karen Melchior (Renew), *blue-card speech*. – Heidi Hautala, you mentioned that you wrote a letter in 2021 to the President of the Parliament with concrete proposals. Could you elaborate on what the concrete proposals were in that letter?

Heidi Hautala (Verts/ALE), *blue-card reply*. – Thank you for your question, Ms Melchior. First of all, the simple thing that we could have done on that day we could still do today: we obliged foreign embassies and diplomats and other foreign actors to be registered in the transparency register.

And then, of course, this question of wild unauthorised election observation should be tackled because we have in our Rules the protection of the dignity of the Parliament. So Members should not be allowed in activities that damage the reputation of the Parliament, and we should give a broad interpretation to this, including electoral observation missions that only are in favour of strengthening autocrats that we as an institution do not want to defend.

Carles Puigdemont i Casamajó (NI). – Mr President, there is a political culture in Europe and in certain countries of the Union which consists of increasing leniency towards human rights violations – a strategic increase.

Qatar-friendly Europe is an example of this political culture, as is the lucrative relationship between Spain and the regime of Saudi Arabia. One only needs to see the sympathy and praise of Commissioner Schinas every time he has met with Qatari representatives to understand what the official narrative is.

When economic interests water down the demand for respect for human rights, the door to corruption opens a little more. Maybe we should try to be less friendly and more demanding.

Νίκος Ανδρουλάκης (S&D). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, καταρχάς, συγχαρητήρια στις βελγικές αρχές που αποκάλυψαν αυτό το σκάνδαλο, σε αντίθεση με άλλους που συγκαλύπτουν τα σκάνδαλα. Κανείς δεν έχει το δικαίωμα να θέτει σε καθεστώς ανυποληψίας το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο. Έχουμε χρέος να είμαστε θεματοφύλακες της διαφάνειας και της δημοκρατίας και όχι παραδείγματα προς αποφυγή. Γι' αυτό, από την πρώτη στιγμή που έμαθα γι' αυτήν τη σοκαριστική υπόθεση, προχώρησα άμεσα στη διαγραφή της κυρίας Καϊλή από το κόμμα μας. Δεν φτάνει να λέμε ότι είμαστε όλοι το ίδιο. Οφείλουμε να το αποδεικνύουμε με τις πράξεις μας. Είναι λοιπόν η ώρα της δράσης.

Γι' αυτό προτείνω πρώτον, να απαγορεύεται σε κάθε Ευρωπαίο αξιωματούχο μετά το πέρας της θητείας του να γίνεται λομπιστάς. Δεύτερον, όπως φτιάξαμε την Ειδική Υπηρεσία Ελέγχου των κινητών των ευρωβουλευτών και συνεργατών από κακόβουλα λογισμικά για να προστατεύσουμε τη Δημοκρατία μας, αύριο το πρωί κιόλας, να συγκροτήσουμε ένα ειδικό όργανο εξονυχιστικού ελέγχου όλων των περιουσιακών στοιχείων των ευρωβουλευτών και του τρόπου με τον οποίο αυτά αποκτήθηκαν. Είναι δύο κινήσεις που θα βοηθήσουν να έρθει το φως και να απομακρυνθεί κάθε σκιά από αυτή τη δημοκρατική Συνέλευση. Το οφείλουμε στους πολίτες που εκπροσωπούμε, το οφείλουμε στο όραμα της Ενωμένης Ευρώπης.

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Karen Melchior (Renew). – Mr President, Commissioner, the extent of the alleged corruption is criminal. It must be prosecuted and we must investigate how we can do better. However, no matter how good the rules are, there will always be criminals who take the risk and the suitcase of euro notes. But we can make stronger rules. We need to clean up our act in the European Parliament. We need to do away with informal friendship groups outside the rules of Parliament and replace them with regulated interpolitical groups. We need to extend our transparency register to representatives of foreign governments and former MEPs.

Thank you, colleagues and Commissioner, for your support for an ethics body with investigative powers for all the EU institutions, which Renew Europe has called for since 2019. And rules cannot stand alone. We must not accept colleagues being unduly influenced to change wording, votes and legislation. To help expose criminality, we must make our whistleblower system stronger.

And finally, to my colleagues, if you see something that seems odd or out of line with previous opinions or known facts, then do something, confront your colleagues and even your political leadership. It is a joint responsibility to prevent the corruption of the few.

Ernest Urtasun (Verts/ALE). – Señor presidente, mis primeras palabras son de agradecimiento y de apoyo a la justicia belga y a la policía belga por haber destapado este caso gravísimo de corrupción.

Evidentemente, los principales responsables son aquellos que se han dejado corromper y también aquellos que han corrompido. Ambos por igual. Y tengo que decir también que no podemos pensar que este es simplemente un caso aislado que no afecta a la institución; está afectando a la imagen de la institución, en un momento, además, muy difícil, en el que mucha gente está pasándolo mal. Esto lo único que hace es aumentar la desafección entre ciudadanía e instituciones europeas.

Por lo tanto, yo lo que quiero hoy aquí es lanzar una advertencia a todos y a todas nosotros. Cuidado con cerrar esta crisis en falso. Cerrar esta crisis en falso significaría, simplemente, sustituir a la señora Kaili en la vicepresidencia, y no hacer nada más. Eso sería un grandísimo error.

Necesitamos responder a esta crisis con una reforma profunda de las normas de transparencia. Porque el Parlamento no puede seguir siendo el punto débil del sistema de integridad de la Unión Europea. Necesitamos reformar profundamente el modo en que funcionamos.

Dino Giarrusso (NI). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, quale vergogna grave e profondissima oggi ricopre questo palazzo! Quanti miliardi di euro costa questo palazzo? Quanto costa ad ogni singolo cittadino? Quanti miliardi di euro costiamo noi? E quanti miliardi di sogni, desideri, speranze di una vita migliore, i cittadini europei affidano a questo Parlamento?

Quei miliardi di sogni sono stati traditi, il patto di fiducia con i cittadini è stato infangato. Abbiamo visto sacchi di soldi a casa di colleghi, ex colleghi, sindacalisti, rappresentanti di ONG. Sembravano i sequestri che vengono fatti agli spacciatori e ai mafiosi. Montagne di contanti. Vergogna!

È una giornata terribile e io chiedo a tutti voi, dalla Presidente Metsola in giù, di reagire con forza ma non solo con le parole, con i fatti!

Serve una legge spazzacorrotti anche in Europa, servono regole durissime, serve punire i colpevoli oggi, ma anche creare condizioni affinché nessuno possa più rubare in questo modo il futuro dei cittadini europei, la loro fiducia e i loro soldi.

Buttiamo fuori da questo palazzo i corrotti, i corruttori e la possibilità stessa di corrompere in futuro, altrimenti questo Parlamento non avrà più ragione di esistere.

Raphaël Glucksmann (S&D). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, étreints par la honte, habités par la colère, conscients que les citoyens exigent de nous fermeté et intransigeance, nous devons agir vite. «C'est aujourd'hui qu'il faut savoir se débarrasser des vieux fardeaux devenus encombrants»: ces mots d'Altiero Spinelli doivent nous servir de boussole.

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C'est aujourd'hui qu'il faut se débarrasser de ces vieux fardeaux que sont l'insouciance, l'indolence, la culture de l'impunité et l'ethos de la compromission. C'est aujourd'hui qu'il faut trancher dans le vif. Il nous faut une commission d'enquête. Il faut mettre en place une haute autorité de la transparence de la vie publique au niveau européen et une règle européenne sur la capture des élites par des régimes étrangers.

Cependant, imposer de nouvelles règles ne suffira pas. Ce qu'il nous faut retrouver aujourd'hui, c'est le courage, le courage d'affronter les lobbies qui pénètrent nos institutions, le courage de contrer ces régimes étrangers – qatarien, russe ou encore chinois – qui font leur marché chez nous. Cela fait deux ans qu'avec les membres de la commission spéciale INGE, que je préside, nous essayons d'alerter sur les ingérences et la corruption. Eh bien, le temps est venu d'envoyer un message au monde: les démocraties européennes ne sont pas à vendre.

Γεώργιος Κύρτσος (Renew). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, η Καίλη, την οποία καθαιρέσαμε από Αντιπρόεδρο, βοηθήθηκε στην πολιτική της άνοδο από ισχυρά συμφέροντα στην Ελλάδα που ελέγχουν τα μέσα ενημέρωσης και από τα λόμπι που αναπτύσσονται στον χώρο των ευρωπαϊκών θεσμών. Η πορεία και η πτώση της αποτελούν δίδαγμα και κίνητρο για να επιβάλουμε κανόνες. Τα μεγάλα επιχειρηματικά συμφέροντα πρέπει να περιοριστούν σε όφελος του ανταγωνισμού, των καταναλωτών και, κυρίως, της πολιτικής εξουσίας. Η επιρροή ξένων δυνάμεων, όπως το Κατάρ που νομίζει ότι μπορεί να αγοράζει τα πάντα, πρέπει και αυτή να περιοριστεί με δραστικό τρόπο. Ζητείται αυτοκριτική από τους Ιταλούς σοσιαλιστές που της έδωσαν τόσες ευκαιρίες, τους αξιολογητές που έβρισκαν πάντα άριστες τις επιστημονικές της προτάσεις για χρηματοδότηση και από όσους πρόβαλαν τα προϊόντα των πολυεθνικών ψηφιακών κολοσσών στο Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο υπό την αιγίδα της Καίλη. Μην γελιέστε συνάδελφοι, δεν είναι μόνο το Κατάρ.

Mounir Satouri (Verts/ALE). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, le scandale de corruption qui éclabousse notre institution aujourd'hui est de la pire espèce, car cette corruption cherchait à faire taire notre institution sur les droits de l'homme. Bien des régimes autoritaires s'immiscent dans la vie démocratique du Parlement, cherchent à faire porter leurs objectifs et essaient de se racheter une image. Aujourd'hui, c'est le Qatar, qui a bâti sa Coupe du monde sur les cadavres de travailleurs exploités.

Cela fait des années que le groupe écologiste sonne l'alarme sur la corruption et que nous demandons que des mesures soient prises. Nous exigeons une autorité éthique européenne indépendante et une commission d'enquête à la hauteur. Aujourd'hui, nous faisons face à ce qui se passe quand la transparence n'existe pas et que ceux à qui incombent les responsabilités n'ont pas pris les mesures dissuasives nécessaires. Il y aura toujours des corrompus et des corrupteurs si nous ne mettons pas un vrai dispositif anticorruption en place.

Je dis aux régimes corrupteurs: «Vous ne vous rachèterez une image qu'en respectant le droit, les droits de l'homme, la liberté et l'égalité femmes-hommes, pas en achetant des députés.»

Francesca Donato (NI). – Signor Presidente, signora Commissaria, onorevoli colleghi, i gravi fatti di corruzione emersi in questi giorni a carico di membri e funzionari del Parlamento suscitano giustamente indignazione e sgomento in tutti noi.

Personalmente, da tempo sostengo che le norme in vigore su trasparenza e lobbying siano del tutto inadeguate a prevenire o limitare i rischi di corruzione, ma ciò non si limita al solo Parlamento, bensì riguarda senz'altro anche la Commissione europea.

È noto che anche la Presidente della Commissione sia sotto indagine della Procura europea per le modalità di gestione dell'acquisto congiunto dei vaccini contro il COVID, ma non ho udito una sola parola di indignazione, nessuno ne ha chiesto le dimissioni in quest'Aula. Perché?

Ditemi, pensiamo forse che giganti come Pfizer o le lobby del digitale o della difesa abbiano meno forza e spregiudicatezza del Qatar nell'influenzare le decisioni dell'Unione europea a proprio vantaggio?

Servono regole stringenti sul lobbying tutto e dobbiamo ai cittadini una commissione d'inchiesta anche su questi fatti, non solo sul Qatar.

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Agnes Jongerius (S&D). – Voorzitter, het lijkt inderdaad op een surrealistische Netflixfilm, maar het is wakker worden in een keiharde realiteit. Collega's in ons Parlement en bij ngo's hebben zich ingelaten met corruptie. In onze ergste dromen hadden we dat niet kunnen denken. Het vertrouwen in de Europese democratie is aangetast en daar past maar één antwoord bij. We kunnen dit alleen maar keihard veroordelen. Er is geen plaats voor corruptie hier. Nu niet en nooit niet.

Tegelijkertijd is het ook niet het moment van louter woorden, maar ook van daden. En die daden moeten beginnen bij onszelf. Dat betekent dat we naast het inrichten van een eigen enquêtecommissie hier ook willen pleiten voor het instellen van een onafhankelijk onderzoek naar deze gebeurtenissen. Tegelijkertijd – zeg ik ook – steunen we de oproep voor het herzien van de regels rond lobbyafspraken, te beginnen bij de derde landen, die ongehinderd toegang hebben tot het Parlement. Het is tijd voor actie. Het is tijd voor daden.

Daniel Freund (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Korruption ist die größte Bedrohung für unsere Demokratie. Korruption ist strafbar. Und wer sich mit Tüten voller Geld bestechen lässt, der gehört ins Gefängnis.

Aber dieser Fall erledigt sich für das Europäische Parlament nicht von selbst an dem Tag, an dem die belgischen Behörden ihre Arbeit fertig gemacht haben. Denn es gibt in diesem Haus leider einige, die offenbar kein Bewusstsein dafür haben, was man als Abgeordnete darf und was sich einfach nicht gehört.

Wie kann es aber sein, dass Abgeordnete hier sich von blutigen Diktatoren auf Luxusreisen einladen lassen? Wie kann es sein, dass eine ganze Reihe Abgeordnete überhaupt kein einziges Lobbytreffen veröffentlichen? Wie kann es sein, dass bei 25 Verstößen gegen die Verhaltensregeln hier im Haus nicht einmal sanktioniert wurde, es keine Konsequenzen gab?

Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, ich persönlich habe es ziemlich satt, dass einige wenige hier den Ruf des Parlaments in den Dreck ziehen. Es muss endlich Schluss damit sein. Drittstaaten-Lobbying muss ins Lobbyregister. Die Lobbytermine gehören veröffentlicht, auch mit den Vertretern von Katar. Und die Lobbyregeln müssen endlich unabhängig überwacht werden. Es darf keine faulen Ausreden mehr geben, sonst, befürchte ich, stehen wir einigen Monaten wieder hier und haben den nächsten Skandal. Also lassen Sie uns daran jetzt was ändern.

Vystúpenia podľa postupu prihlásenia sa o slovo zdvihnutím ruky

Maria Walsh (PPE). – Mr President, I know it's shocking to read news of police investigations into the work of an elected official and staff of Parliament. It is shocking to me and incredibly shocking to our EU citizens.

And it is important that due process is followed. Today, in Strasbourg, I, along with 624 MEPs, voted for an early termination of the office of Vice-President of the Parliament Eva Kaili.

The public should be able and needs to be able to trust the work of us MEPs and Parliament's staff. At the end of the day, we are elected by the public for the public to carry out our work in public interest and are answerable to the people. That is our job.

Corruption of any nature has no place in our political landscape here or in our Member States. I welcome any internal investigations and improved procedures to uphold the reputation of our EU institutions. We need to be transparent, to be accountable, and to do what is right. I stand for a strong Europe, a fair Europe, and a trusted Europe.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señor presidente, señora comisaria Johansson, este Parlamento Europeo fue el primer Parlamento del mundo en legislar la protección penal y procesal de los denunciantes de la corrupción, los *whistleblowers*. Este Parlamento Europeo ha legislado con dureza y de manera vinculante, para todos los Estados miembros, contra toda forma de corrupción y blanqueo. Por eso, este Parlamento tiene que estar rigurosamente unido, sin fisuras, en la condena de los corruptos y de los corruptores, en la cooperación con la justicia durante una investigación todavía en curso y en su disposición a deducir las lecciones ineludibles.

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Pero también tiene que permanecer unido y sin fisuras en la defensa de su integridad y transparencia —de hecho, es el Parlamento más accesible y transparente del mundo—. Del mismo modo, tiene que estar unido en la condena de cualquiera que con sus actos y su responsabilidad penal demuestre que nunca fue digno de la confianza que se obtiene para poder acceder al derecho, al deber y la dignidad de representar a la ciudadanía europea en este Parlamento.

Viola von Cramon-Taubadel (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident! Transparenz, Integrität, Antikorrruption, Fairness, Menschenrechte: Seit Monaten sprechen wir über diese Themen, insbesondere in Verbindung mit Katar.

Erst ging es um FIFA und Fußball, jetzt geht es um unsere Demokratie in Europa. Aber die Forderungen sind die gleichen. Wir müssen gemeinsam hier für unsere Werte eintreten. Wir müssen als Institution gegen den Einfluss von außen kämpfen und müssen jetzt die Lupe in die Hand nehmen. Wir müssen unserer Rechenschaftspflicht hier nachkommen.

Milliarden für *sportwashing*, Greenwashing mit der FIFA, jetzt 25 Millionen für *socialwashing* mit der IAO. Es ist nur eine Frage der Zeit, bis wir noch mehr Quittungen finden. Katar hat Geld und will sich ein besseres Image kaufen. Die EU ist aber nicht käuflich, und es wird Konsequenzen geben für alle, die sich noch mehr ein Preisschild umhängen.

Geert Bourgeois (ECR). – Voorzitter, collega's, ik ben net als u allen ten zeerste geschokt door de gebeurtenissen. Tegelijk prijs ik mij gelukkig dat we een performante politie hebben én een onafhankelijke justitie. En we moeten zeker onze eigen regels inzake transparantie en verantwoordingsplicht aanscherpen.

Maar ik wil hier waarschuwen tegen een interinstitutioneel ethisch orgaan, een orgaan bestaande uit derden – ook al zijn ze onafhankelijk –, dat onze naleving van onze regels zou controleren. Wij mogen ons niet laten medecontroleren door een orgaan dat mee door de uitvoerende macht is aangesteld. Een parlement dat zichzelf respecteert, controleert de uitvoerende macht, en niet omgekeerd. Wij moeten daarentegen werk maken van de versterking van ons eigen comité dat onze eigen gedragscode doet naleven.

Leila Chaibi (The Left). – Monsieur le Président, plus d'un million et demi d'euros en liquide, cela représente 94 années au SMIC. Autrement dit, un couple qui travaille toute sa vie ne gagnera pas autant d'argent que ce qu'a dépensé le Qatar pour corrompre des élus européens. Et encore, nous n'en sommes qu'au début de l'enquête.

La plupart d'entre nous ne se sont pas vu proposer des mallettes de billets. Par contre, la plupart d'entre nous ont connu le hameçonnage. C'est le nom que l'on donne à une technique qui fait un peu comme si nous étions des poissons qu'on amadouait avec des appâts. Nous avons tous reçu ces appâts. Pas plus tard que la semaine dernière, j'ai reçu une invitation à aller dans l'un des hôtels les plus luxueux de Bruxelles, envoyée par l'ambassade du Qatar à mon adresse électronique du Parlement. Deux semaines avant, c'était une invitation à aller sur place au Qatar, visiter des stades, rencontrer des syndicats et observer la manière dont le Qatar avait mis en place un ensemble de mesures pour renforcer la protection sociale et les conditions de travail.

Chers collègues, nous devons nous attaquer aux racines de ce scandale et légiférer pour que le lobbying débridé et la corruption ne soient plus comme un poisson dans l'eau au Parlement européen.

Łukasz Kohut (S&D). – Panie Przewodniczący! Nie ma świętych krów w Parlamencie Europejskim. Wiceprzewodnicząca zatrzymana. Jaka jest reakcja Unii? Po pierwsze pełna współpraca ze służbami. Po drugie natychmiastowe zawieszenie wszelkich uprawnień. Po trzecie pozbawienie funkcji wiceprzewodniczącej. Po czwarte debata plenarna i rezolucja w tej sprawie. Unia z całą mocą prawa zareagowała, bo nie ma taryfy ulgowej dla tych, którzy sprzeniewierzyli się europejskim wartościom. Bo właśnie o to chodzi w praworządności, by reagować, by zwalczać łamanie prawa, wobec którego wszyscy są równi.

A dzisiaj ci z prawej strony, którzy wyją o braku praworządności w Unii, zapomnieli. Zapomnieli o dwóch wieżach, o Mejsie, o respiratorach, zapomnieli o wyborach kopertowych w Polsce. Kto wtedy poniósł odpowiedzialność? Uccie się od Unii, uccie się, jak reaguje się na łamanie prawa. Zero tolerancji dla korupcji, zero tolerancji dla łamania prawa.

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Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE). – Señor presidente, ¡qué escándalo! Es que no se pueden hacer negocios con la política. Pero ¿quiénes se creen que son algunos eurodiputados? ¿Dioses?

Somos representantes de nuestros pueblos, no vendedores de votos ni de influencias. La ética, la responsabilidad, la integridad en el trabajo y, sobre todo, la transparencia debe ser la manera de ejercer nuestro mandato. Nuestro grupo político denunció muchas veces las prácticas de corrupción. Denunció que estábamos siendo acosados por muchos lobbies. Y los grandes grupos no hicieron nada.

Existen injerencias extranjeras como las de Qatar, Marruecos, Israel o Turquía. Esto no es nada nuevo, señorías. Exigimos ya una comisión de investigación y tolerancia cero contra la corrupción. Por cierto, me sorprende mucho que el Partido Popular Español no esté presente hoy en la Cámara. Me sorprende mucho. M. Rajoy.

Petros Kokkalis (The Left). – Mr President, as we see photographs of piles of cash found in the hands of members of our European Parliament community, how can citizens not wonder how much money is there that we don't see? It is really existential, too, for the integrity of our House to immediately and radically reform our governance structure and provide the transparency and accountability that the citizens we represent demand and deserve.

And we must start this week – tomorrow, I think – with a resolution that will demonstrate credibly our commitment to take concrete measures, many proposed by previous speakers, to bring our House in order and give us the opportunity to rebuild the trust that is necessary to perform our real duty: to exercise parliamentary scrutiny over the Commission and the Council, and to resist not only foreign interference, but also domestic interference.

Diana Riba i Giner (Verts/ALE). – Señor presidente, señora comisaria, las informaciones del *Qatar gate* son graves, especialmente porque rompen la base de aquello en lo que se fundamenta cualquier democracia: la confianza de la gente. Porque hay algo que no podemos olvidar nunca: todos nosotros estamos aquí, en esta sala, por la misma y única razón, porque hemos recibido la confianza de los ciudadanos.

La imagen de fuerzas de seguridad incautando maletines con centenares de miles de euros de responsables políticos y trabajadores de esta casa, no solo nos avergüenza como institución, sino que nos repugna profundamente. Debemos ser implacables.

Iniciemos una comisión de investigación. Creemos un organismo ético independiente para poder investigar todas las instituciones europeas. Prohibamos las donaciones de países terceros para partidos políticos y diputados al Parlamento Europeo e instauremos un período transitorio para los antiguos diputados que dejen su escaño, a fin de garantizar que no utilizan su influencia para fines como el que hemos visto en este caso. Cero tolerancia ante la corrupción. Cero tolerancia ante los corruptos.

(Ukončenie vystúpení podľa postupu prihlásenia sa o slovo zdvihnutím ruky)

Ylva Johansson, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, Members of this Parliament, thank you for this very important debate and for channelling your anger and frustration into a firm commitment to do what's necessary to rebuild trust. There must be zero tolerance for corruption. It's a very serious crime that undermines our democracy, economy and society. As a Union, we need to learn the hard lessons and take responsibility.

The scandal we are discussing here today goes well beyond ethics violations; it's a criminal investigation. Even though we urgently need the EU Ethics Body for all European institutions, this is a criminal investigation. The only way we can rebuild trust is to fully support this investigation – for the guilty to be brought to justice and for us to root out corruption anywhere we find it.

Finally, let me say that our debate today also gives me hope. The strong words spoken on condemnation, the demand for justice and action; we are at the beginning of a struggle that will be long and hard. Bringing the guilty to justice will be, comparatively, the easy part, – rebuilding trust, that will be hard. Let us be honest about this.

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To do that, our fight against corruption must be unrelenting, uncompromising and unforgiving in our Union, in our Member States and in our institutions. To show everyone it is not this scandal that defines us, but our resolve, determination and action to do everything it takes to do what is right.

Predsedaĵuci. – Rozprava sa týmto skončila. Hlasovanie sa uskutoční vo štvrtok.

Písomné vyhlásenia (článok 171)

Alfred Sant (S&D), *in writing*. – It takes two to tango. Corruption in this Parliament does not just arise because it is provoked from the outside, as our President claims. It also arises because objectively, features in our operations invite such ‘provocation’, and find response among some of us. There are the ways by which decisions are taken – not least those related to personnel and functions: in cabals, justified via political alliances or hidden friendships; prized representatives of this Parliament besides their work here, carry on unchecked lucrative and non-transparent assignments; a huge number of MEPs do not provide any information about their contacts and discussions with third parties.

The Parliament expands its areas of discussion beyond its competences, impacting on the public opinion of nations and the views of rating agencies. Another fallacy is to believe that the problem is restricted to interference by authoritarian regimes. Likely, democratic regimes are also responsible, from Israel and Taiwan to the US. More importantly, a much wider range of private sector lobbies with a much deeper interest in EU affairs must be considered. The critical self-assessment that is important in considering these issues is never close to our concerns. In the eight years I have been here, I have not seen it.

16. A recente decisão do Conselho de JAI sobre a adesão a Schengen (debate)

Predsedaĵuci. – Ďalším bodom programu je vyhlásenie Komisie a Rady –Nedávne rozhodnutie Rady SVV o pristúpení k schengenskému priestoru (2022/3011(RSP))

Vladimír Balaš, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, dear Commissioner Johansson, honourable Members of Parliament, on 5 October this year, the Czech Presidency stated here that the completion of the Schengen Area, by including in the area without internal border controls all Member States who fulfil the conditions, was a priority for us.

We are very pleased that during our Presidency, Croatia was able to take this important step by joining the Schengen Area without internal border controls and I would like to congratulate our Croatian colleagues for reaching such a milestone.

We have also stated that the Czech Presidency was committed to making progress so as to enable Bulgaria and Romania to be fully part of the Schengen Area. Significant progress was made during this semester, and we commend both countries for all their work and efforts in this respect.

Two fact-finding missions to Bulgaria and Romania were carried out by Member States’ experts under the coordination of the Commission. The Council informed the European Parliament of these developments, including of the results of the two fact-finding missions, in writing earlier this month.

The Presidency concluded that both Bulgaria and Romania are ready to fully enter the Schengen Area and appreciated their key role in the protection of the external borders, as well as their substantial contribution to the security of the Schengen Area in general.

The Presidency is convinced that Bulgaria and Romania put in place all the necessary tools, structures and procedures. Therefore, they deserve to become full members of Schengen.

At the Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting on 8 December, the proposed draft Council decision that would allow for lifting the internal borders controls in Bulgaria and Romania from 1 January 2023 has not, unfortunately, gained the unanimous support as required.

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Work will continue on this basis to ensure that we can welcome Bulgaria and Romania into the Schengen family in the near future. The Council remains committed to continuing this work in the next semester, and the upcoming Swedish Presidency has already expressed the determination to continue these efforts.

The Schengen Area is one of the greatest achievements of our Union. In recent years, it has been under considerable strain and considerable efforts were and still are required to ensure the resilience of the Schengen Area.

We remain convinced that the completion of the Schengen Area by fully including Bulgaria and Romania would constitute another key milestone in its functioning, mainly in terms of improving the overall functioning of the EU's external borders.

Ylva Johansson, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, Schengen is the largest free travel area in the world, an area of freedom, security and justice, bringing liberty, prosperity, and identity because Schengen is part of who we are. So I say to the people of Croatia ‘welcome’, my warmest congratulations. You will start a new year as members of the euro and members of Schengen.

But when it comes to the decision on Bulgaria and Romania, I need to express my deep disappointment. I deeply regret the Council did not take a positive decision. Especially, since it has long been the Commission's view that Bulgaria and Romania fulfil all the criteria to be full members of the Schengen area, for more than 11 years already.

And as two recent voluntary fact-finding missions have confirmed, Bulgaria and Romania are upholding Schengen standards of border protection and security, and are doing so efficiently, reliably, honourably. All these years, Bulgaria and Romania helped build a well-functioning Schengen area, dealing effectively with the pandemic and with the fallout of Putin's war.

Romania and Bulgaria are doing an incredible job in managing the consequences of the war in Ukraine. Bulgaria provides temporary protection to around 150 000 Ukrainian refugees. 2.5 million people from Ukraine entered into Romania this year so far, receiving support and assistance.

I saw for myself at the Siret border crossing the endless lines of women and children, tired and afraid, and the border guards making sure they could cross swiftly and orderly and in a secure way.

Bulgaria and Romania have highly trained and dedicated staff, state of the art infrastructure, and know-how. They have done the work. They are ready. They deserve to be in. More than that, it is a legal obligation and they have a legitimate expectation to join. These are the rules.

And Schengen too is ready. This is not the Schengen of 2011, but a stronger Schengen. With new Schengen governance around dedicated Schengen councils, with a key role for the European Parliament.

Welcoming Bulgaria and Romania will remain my main priority. I'm determined to make this happen. This is important for the citizens of Romania and Bulgaria. We will continue to work hard together with the Council to welcome Bulgaria and Romania next year. And I know that I can count on the continued support of the European Parliament. We need Bulgaria and Romania in Schengen, like we need Croatia and all its other members.

I am the first to say, there are challenges in the European Union, but we must not confuse them with the Schengen enlargement criteria. Challenges related to migration, to security, to the rule of law exist. Yes, they do. And we are addressing them with European solutions on all fronts.

Fighting organised crime – one of my top priorities – we gave Europol a stronger mandate, we are boosting police cooperation. We fight corruption and uphold the rule of law with our strong rule of law mechanism. We respond to migration challenges with very operational plans.

Just last week, we presented a new action plan on the Western Balkans. And one very positive result of last week's Council, thanks to the leadership of the Czech presidency, is the clear progress on the pact on migration and asylum, with negotiations on important files that we hope to close this week here in Strasbourg.

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Delaying Bulgaria and Romania entering Schengen will not make it easier to address these shared challenges. Quite the contrary, welcoming Bulgaria and Romania will make us stronger, safer and protect all borders better. By moving border guards and resources from internal borders to protect the EU external border, connecting Bulgaria and Romania to Schengen security databases, stepping up police cooperation and information exchange, cross-border surveillance and hot pursuit. And regular comprehensive Schengen evaluations will make sure standards remain high.

The truth is simple; to fight crime and corruption and manage migration together we need Bulgaria and Romania in. Their membership will also bring a much needed boost to the internal market by eliminating time lost at borders and by boosting travel, trade and tourism.

So we all lost in the vote last week. There is only one winner, and he lives in the Kremlin. And I know December is the season of giving, but I should say no presents for Putin.

Honourable Members, divided we are weak, united we are strong. As a Union, we must now welcome Bulgaria and Romania to Schengen as we promised, as they deserve, as it's only right. If we don't, then we are playing into Russia's hands, allowing division, disunity and discord to spread. But if we do welcome them, then we all win. We will all benefit from greater security and prosperity. And we should show the world that at a time of our greatest need, Europe stands together.

Manfred Weber, *im Namen der PPE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, Herr Ratsvertreter, sehr geehrte Frau Kommissarin! Das Veto von letzter Woche war ein Fehler. Und wir alle spüren die Frustration, wenn wir diesen Fehler heute in der Diskussion analysieren. Ich möchte mich ausdrücklich für die starken Worte unserer Kommissarin bedanken, die die Richtung der Diskussion heute vorgegeben hat.

Der erste Punkt, den ich ausdrücken möchte, ist Respekt. Respekt gegenüber den drei Staaten, dass sie viel erreicht haben. Gerade Rumänien und Bulgarien haben in den letzten Jahren gezeigt, was richtige Grenzkontrolle ausmacht, was Umsetzung von Schengen-Recht bedeutet. Die Rumänen beispielsweise haben gegenüber den ukrainischen Flüchtlingen Enormes geleistet, und das gilt es anzuerkennen.

Das Zweite, was zu sagen ist: Schengen ist Teil der Identität Europas. Gerade in Kriegszeiten müssen wir Einheit zeigen, müssen wir Gemeinsamkeit zeigen. Die Schengen-Erweiterung hätte bedeutet: Wir glauben an uns, wir glauben an das, wovon wir als Europäer gemeinsam profitieren.

Das Dritte: Ja, es gibt ein Problem mit illegaler Migration. Ja, die Aufnahmezentren in Österreich, in Deutschland, in Belgien, in den Niederlanden sind voll. Wir müssen illegale Migration bekämpfen, keine Frage. Aber wir werden es besser machen, wenn wir es miteinander machen, wenn wir Grenzen schützen, die Rückführung verbessern und Schlepperbanden besiegen. Ich möchte ausdrücklich sagen, dass Bulgarien und Rumänien an diesen hohen illegalen Migrationszahlen nicht schuld sind. Es sind die Frontex-Zahlen, die belegen, dass die beiden Staaten nicht die Westbalkanroute darstellen. Es ist vielmehr Ungarn, über das wir reden sollten. Weil Viktor Orbán leider Gottes seine Grenzen mittlerweile geöffnet hat. Dort liegen die eigentlichen Probleme, wenn es um illegale Migration geht.

Das Vierte, was ich ausdrücken möchte, ist: Die Entscheidungen der Niederlande und Österreichs waren ein Fehler. Bulgarien und Rumänien haben das gleiche Recht, in einem geeinten Europa so zu leben, wie wir leben dürfen. Jetzt geht es darum, nach dieser Enttäuschung von letzter Woche den nächsten konkreten Schritt zu gehen: dass wir mit Österreich, mit den Niederlanden daran arbeiten: Bitte, sagt uns konkret, was besser gemacht werden soll. Nur dann können die Punkte umgesetzt werden. Die Europäische Volkspartei als größte Fraktion und größte Partei Europas unterstützt Bulgarien und Rumänien auf den Weg in die europäische Schengen-Zone. Das Veto war falsch, und die rumänischen Bürgerinnen und Bürger können sich auf unsere Unterstützung verlassen.

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SĒDI VADA: ROBERTS ZĪLE*Priekšsēdētājas vietnieks*

Gabriele Bischoff, *im Namen der S&D-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, Frau Kommissarin, Herr Minister! Wir begrüßen es alle hier, dass Kroatien tatsächlich ab dem 1. Januar dabei ist. Das war eine gute Entscheidung und ich gratuliere wirklich allen, die dazu beigetragen haben.

Aber es ist ja schon von der Kommissarin, von allen gesagt worden: Es war wirklich ein schwerwiegender Fehler von Österreich und von den Niederlanden, Bulgarien und Rumänien, die alle Kriterien seit Jahren erfüllen, die sich sogar noch bereit erklärt haben, diese zusätzlichen *fact-finding missions* zu machen, um guten Willen zu zeigen, das zu verwehren. Das wird nur die antieuropäischen, die populistischen Kräfte in diesen Ländern stärken. Deshalb habe ich einen kleinen Schimmer Hoffnung herausgehört. Aber das reicht nicht, denn wir machen es ja immer so: Es klappt nicht – Versprechen, es klappt nicht – Versprechen.

Wir müssen liefern, dass wirklich diese beiden Länder aufgenommen werden, denn Regeln müssen für alle gelten, in jedem Verein. Sonst erodiert uns die Basis hier. Deshalb brauchen wir hier ein klares Signal.

Jan-Christoph Oetjen, *im Namen der Renew-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, Herr Minister, Frau Kommissarin! Schengen ist zweifelsohne eine der größten Errungenschaften der Europäischen Union. Sie stiftet Vertrauen, sie ist eine Zone der Freiheit und der Prosperität. Dass Österreich aus innenpolitischen Gründen – und ausschließlich innenpolitischen Gründen – diese Bewegung angeführt hat, die dazu geführt hat, dass Bulgarien und Rumänien nicht aufgenommen werden können, ist schäbig, verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen, es ist schäbig und mit nichts zu rechtfertigen.

Denn die Wahrheit ist doch, dass Bulgarien und Rumänien schon heute den Schengen-Acquis zum Teil besser umsetzen als Mitgliedstaaten, die heute schon im Schengen-Raum sind. Das ist doch die Wahrheit, und die muss man an dieser Stelle einmal aussprechen, verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Deswegen erwarte ich, dass diese Blockadehaltung dringend, dringend aufgegeben wird. Verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen, wir haben sogar die Gelegenheit dazu. Der Rat tagt noch einmal, und die Staats- und Regierungschefs müssen das korrigieren, was von den Innenministern an dieser Stelle verbockt wurde. Das möchte ich hier sehr klar sagen.

Wir freuen uns natürlich darüber, dass Kroatien, das auch alle diese Kriterien schon erfüllt hat, jetzt in den Schengen-Raum aufgenommen wird. Aber das ist eben nur der halbe Schritt, verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Kommissarin hat recht. Es ist nicht nur eine Frage von Vertrauen der Menschen in Rumänien und Bulgarien, die darauf vertrauen müssen, dass wir unser Wort halten, sondern es ist eine Frage von Rechtsstaat und von Prinzipien. Denn auf dem Weg in den Schengenraum halten Rumänien und Bulgarien alle Kriterien ein, und deswegen haben sie ein Anrecht darauf, dass sie in diesen Schengen-Raum aufgenommen werden.

Ich fordere die Österreichische Volkspartei, die das Ganze angeführt hat, auf, die Blockade aufzugeben und endlich den Weg für Rumänien und Bulgarien frei zu machen.

Monika Vana, *im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, Frau Kommissarin, Herr Ratsvertreter! Für uns Grüne haben Freizügigkeit in Europa und Solidarität allerhöchste Priorität. Das Schengener Übereinkommen ist, wie schon gesagt wurde, eine große Errungenschaft und keine Verhandlungsmasse. Es bedeutet Schutz der Reisefreiheit und gehört zu den Grundpfeilern der Europäischen Union. Dieses Symbol für das Zusammenwachsen Europas darf nicht leichtfertig eingeschränkt werden.

Ich stehe hier auch als österreichisches Mitglied des Europäischen Parlaments, und ich möchte meine Solidarität mit meinen Kolleginnen von Bulgarien und Rumänien zum Ausdruck bringen. Weder auf europäischer noch auf nationaler Ebene verstehen wir Grüne die Entscheidung zur plötzlichen Blockade der Schengen-Erweiterung um Rumänien und Bulgarien durch den österreichischen Innenminister.

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Wir teilen seine Ansicht nicht. Innenpolitisches Kalkül darf bei Entscheidungen von so großer Dimension keine Rolle spielen. Hier ist eindeutig europäische Solidarität gefragt, wie Sie, Frau Kommissarin, gesagt haben:

Divided we are weak, together we are strong.

Cristian Terheș, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – Mr President, Madam Commissioner, the vote of Austria to abusively block Romania's accession into Schengen is an act of flagrant political corruption. This vote also demonstrated that the Austrian EPP Chancellor, Karl Nehammer is the puppet of the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, and the Russian spearhead who is undermining the European project from within.

Romania earned, at a heavy price, the national right to be part of Schengen. For 11 years the EU Commission and the Parliament are stating that Romania meets all the requirements to be part of this area. But now we cannot exercise this right because of false pretexts of corrupt Austrian politicians. Enough is enough. Romania is nobody's punching bag for someone or a political party to earn political points in their countries.

The fact, though, is that companies from Austria were trying to blackmail Romania to give them easier and cheaper access to our resources, which Austria does not have. Such imperialistic behaviour is unacceptable. While different EU leaders are talking about European solidarity, Austrian businesses, like Raiffeisen Bank, for example, do not have a problem with still operating in Russia.

I urge the Commission to take all the necessary steps to punish the current leadership of Austria and all the businesses conducting operations in Russia.

Clare Daly, *on behalf of the The Left Group*. – Mr President, Last week, as a result of the work of the Lighthouse Reports, we saw Bulgarian border guards shooting a Syrian teenager. We heard shocking reports of EU funds being used to lock migrants in an open cage while Frontex stands idly by. Pushbacks are routine; violence is systemic.

Then we hear that Bulgaria and Romania's accession to Schengen is being blocked by Austria and the Netherlands as a result of the situation on the border – not because of the persecution and brutalisation of migrants, but because that brutality is not enough. You couldn't make it up. This is Frontex Europe, fortress Europe – a core of greedy racists farming out its dirty work to the poor of Europe's periphery, a violent continent selfishly guarding its stolen wealth.

The people of Bulgaria and Romania have waited 10 years to join Schengen. Let them in. Stop demanding more violence as a condition of entry. Schengen membership should not be paid in migrants blood.

Kinga Gál (NI). – Elnök Úr! Örvendünk Horvátország schengeni övezethez való csatlakozásának, és továbbra is teljes mértékben kiállunk Románia és Bulgária schengeni csatlakozása mellett. A két ország tizenegy éve vár a schengeni tagságra, akkor közölte először az Európai Bizottság, hogy készen állnak a csatlakozásra. Az Európai Parlament ezt számtalan állásfoglalásban megerősítette. Románia és Bulgária méltatlan helyzetbe került a konszenzus hiánya miatt, pedig maradéktalanul teljesítették a feltételeket. Keményen védik határaikat, az Unió külső határait, és sokat tettek az illegális migráció megfékezésé érdekében.

A schengeni megállapodás, a belső határnélküliség az európai integráció egyik fő vívmánya. Elfogadhatatlan, hogy uniós tagállamok indokolatlanul rekednek ezen kívül. Súlyosan hipokrita magatartás, hogy miközben Magyarországot az európai egység szétverésével vádolják alaptalanul és igaztalanul, addig egyes régi tagállamok következmények nélkül bonthatják meg az egységet egy ilyen súlyos kérdésben.

Paulo Rangel (PPE). – Mr President, Council, Commission, first, I would like, naturally, to congratulate Croatia on becoming a full member of Schengen. But my joy with this accession is unfortunately in contradiction of my deep sadness and regret at the decision of the Council, which is unfair and unacceptable, to reject the accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the Schengen Area.

I have to say to my dear friend, Jan-Christoph Oetjen, that I regret our position in government, despite it being a government from the EPP. I also have to say the same of the Rutte government, which is a liberal government and which had exactly the same attitude. This is not an ideological matter. There are independent assessments by the Commission and by Member States that really say that Romania and Bulgaria are totally prepared to enter the Schengen zone. So this is an unfair, illegal and unconstitutional decision of the Council and we cannot tolerate that.

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So, all my solidarity to the Romanian and Bulgarian people.

Dan Nica (S&D). – Domnule președinte, doamnă comisar Johansson, vreau să vă mulțumesc pentru modul în care ați prezentat situația României și pentru obiectivitate și suport în toată această perioadă.

Felicitări și mulțumesc mult președinției cehe pentru modul impecabil în care s-a comportat.

Din păcate, acest Consiliu de Justiție și Afaceri Interne a adus și un moment rușinos: o țară membră a Uniunii Europene, din păcate condusă de un cancelar, de Nehammer, care, în dispreț față de regulile europene, în dispreț față de regulile de conduită, față de îndeplinirea standardelor europene de către România, a decis să țină ostatică țara mea, douăzeci de milioane de români, în afara spațiului Schengen.

Acest lucru nu trebuie să rămână fără un răspuns și răspunsul trebuie să fie unul european, un răspuns al nostru, al celor care cred în valorile Uniunii Europene și să-i spunem domnului cancelar Nehammer și acelei părți din guvernul austriac care a avut această decizie și această atitudine rușinoasă că România nu merită așa ceva, că trebuie să fie recunoscută ca țară-parte a Uniunii Europene, că noi, românii, suntem cetățeni europeni și suntem mândri că suntem români și acest lucru înseamnă că trebuie să fim recunoscuți ca atare de către toată lumea.

România trebuie și merită să fie în spațiul Schengen.

Илхан Ключук (Renew). – Г-н Председател, уважаема г-жо Комисар, благодаря за всички усилия, които положихте. Беше важно не само за България и за Румъния, а преди всичко за българските и румънските граждани Комисията да бъде много еднозначна в своята оценка, а именно, че България и Румъния трябва да бъдат част от Шенгенското пространство.

Колеги, минаха 11 години. За тези 11 години се промениха много неща в Европейския съюз и извън него. Световната политика днес е различна, но за съжаление не се промени отношението на някои държави към България и Румъния. И аз задавам въпроса българските и румънски граждани не са ли европейски граждани или какво им казваме, че са второ качество граждани? Не заслужават да бъдат част от Шенген, не заслужават да бъдат част от еврозоната. Ние платихме висока цена и българи, и румънци, и всички, които живеят в тези държави, платиха цената да бъде част от двата съюза: НАТО и Европейския съюз. И ще вървим по този път, защото вярваме, че ние направихме правилната геополитическа ориентация и искаме да бъдем пълноправни, пълноценни членове на Европейския съюз.

Но затова не може да има две Европи, не може да има двойни стандарти, може да има една единствена обединена Европа. Затова нека да обединим усилия и да работим 2023 г. да бъде годината на България и Румъния в Шенген.

Siegfried Mureșan (PPE). – Domnule președinte, aderarea României la spațiul Schengen este un obiectiv fundamental pentru țara mea, România. Oamenii vor acest lucru tocmai fiindcă sunt pro-europeni și fiindcă vor să fie mai aproape de Europa.

Pentru a ne atinge acest obiectiv, am făcut foarte multe eforturi, am securizat frontiera României conform celor mai înalte standarde internaționale, am îndeplinit toate condițiile, lucru confirmat de Comisia Europeană în repetate rânduri.

Am reformat justiția, astfel încât Mecanismul de Cooperare și Verificare să fie ridicat.

Toate evaluările Comisiei și ale experților statelor membre confirmă că România este pregătită să adere la spațiul Schengen și că acest lucru ar face întreg spațiul Schengen mai sigur.

Am reușit să avem sprijinul a 26 din 27 de state membre. Totuși, Consiliul JAI nu a luat o decizie favorabilă din cauza opoziției unui singur stat, Austria. Dezaprobăm poziționarea Austriei, o considerăm nejustificată. Este o nedreptate la adresa oamenilor. Știm că argumentele sunt în favoarea noastră, știm că cifrele sunt în favoarea noastră.

Vă cer să respingem populismul, vă cer să respingem ca Parlament European toate argumentele nejustificate, să folosim argumente obiective, cifre oficiale ale instituțiilor europene.

România nu este sursa migrației, nu a fost niciodată.

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Obiectivul nostru este să aderăm la spațiul Schengen și vom lucra cu toată lumea pentru a ne atinge acest obiectiv cât de curând.

Elena Yoncheva (S&D). – Monsieur le Président, la semaine dernière, l'Autriche et les Pays-Bas ont bloqué l'entrée de la Bulgarie dans Schengen, se cachant derrière des arguments qui n'avaient rien à voir avec les règles et normes européennes. L'Autriche et les Pays-Bas ont abusé de leur droit au sein du Conseil, remettant en cause l'avenir de l'Union européenne.

Aujourd'hui, je n'ai qu'une question pour la Commission. Les Pays-Bas et l'Autriche ont fait preuve d'un abus de droit flagrant au cours de la semaine dernière, piétinant non seulement la législation de Schengen, mais aussi le traité sur les principes fondamentaux. En tant que gardienne des traités, la Commission européenne a l'obligation de réagir

Permettez-moi de dire que la Bulgarie n'a pas besoin de mots d'assurance. Nous avons besoin d'actions concrètes. Pour cette raison, Madame la Commissaire, je vous demande aujourd'hui: allez-vous porter plainte devant la Cour de justice de Luxembourg pour violation du principe de coopération loyale?

Dacian Ciolos (Renew). – Mr President, first of all, I'd like to thank the Commissioner for what she has already done.

Dar vreau să fiu foarte clar, subiectul aderării României și Bulgariei la spațiul Schengen trebuie să fie pe agenda Consiliului European de săptămâna aceasta, pentru că acesta nu este și nu poate fi considerat un subiect închis după votul din Consiliul JAI de săptămâna trecută, pentru că nu mai este un subiect care vizează doar Austria, Bulgaria și România.

Aderarea României la Schengen a devenit o problemă politică europeană, pentru că veto-ul Austriei în Consiliul JAI nu are de-a face cu niciun criteriu Schengen, ci cu politica de azil și migrație și asta trebuie discutată și rezolvată în Consiliul European.

Această practică abuzivă și ilegală a veto-ului cinic sfășie solidaritatea europeană și pune sub semnul întrebării credibilitatea Uniunii Europene.

Deci acest subiect nu mai poate fi lăsat în suspans și să așteptăm încă să treacă săptămâni și luni ca să îl rezolvăm. Aștept, deci, de la șefii de stat și de guvern să găsească o soluție cât mai repede cu putință pentru rezolvarea acestui blocaj care e nedrept și ilegal și care nu face decât să dea apă la moară extremiștilor și anti-europenilor.

Deci, subiectul șefi de stat și de guvern e în mâinile voastre și în primul trimestru al anului viitor acest subiect trebuie închis.

Емил Радев (PPE). – Г-н Председател, решението на Съвета България и Румъния да останат в чакалнята на Шенген дава повод за антиевропейско говорене, което поставя под съмнение едно от най-големите достижения на Европейския съюз. Не бива да подхранваме евроскептицизма с несправедливи двойни стандарти, особено сега, когато Европа не е същата и трябва да защитаваме ценностите си, а разширяването на Шенген означава повече сигурност и солидарност.

Вече 11 години, цели 11 години, пълноправното ни членство е заложник на вътрешнополитическите проблеми на други държави, въпреки че покриваме всички критерии. Така не се гради доверие в принципите на Европейския съюз. Пазим една от най-тежките външни граници на съюза, тази с Турция и съвсем не сме сред слабите звена в системата за граничен контрол. Българските гранични полици дори загубиха живота си, бранейки общата ни сигурност. Призовавам Съвета в най-кратки срокове да вдигне бариерата пред България и Румъния, за да не се разколебава доверието в Европейския съюз като проект за равностойно партньорство и солидарност.

Rovana Plumb (S&D). – Domnule președinte, vreau și eu să mulțumesc doamnei comisar și întregii Comisii Europene pentru sprijinul acordat aderării la Spațiul Schengen pentru România și Bulgaria, desigur.

Vreau să mulțumesc Președinției cehe pentru sprijinul acordat și pentru voința de a menține proiectul european unit.

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Comportamentul, însă, de săptămâna trecută al cancelarului Austriei și al ministrului său de interne este un atac la proiectul european și o desconsiderare a drepturilor românilor.

Nu putem accepta să devenim captivi unui joc de politică internă a unui stat membru. Nu vom suferi de sindromul Stockholm și nu vom ajunge să simpatizăm cu cei care ne țin captivi.

Ne dorim ca pe agenda Consiliului European de săptămâna aceasta să se discute subiectul Schengen, pentru că românii merită respect, pentru că România merită să fie în spațiul Schengen.

Vlad-Marius Botoș (Renew). – Domnule președinte, domnule ministru Balaș, doamnă comisar Johansson, vă mulțumesc și eu pentru tot suportul necondiționat pe care mi l-ați arătat în ultimele luni și mai ales săptămâna trecută. În Consiliul JAI, unde săptămâna trecută România și Bulgaria au primit un veto nedrept și umilitor pentru aderarea la spațiul Schengen, deși îndeplinim toate criteriile de mai bine de zece ani.

Românii și bulgarii sunt ținuți la poarta Uniunii Europene și, orice am spune, nu putem vorbi despre egalitate de drepturi atâta vreme cât zeci de milioane de europeni sunt ținuți ore în șir la graniță, au parte de controale suplimentare și de un tratament inechitabil. Această decizie, deși pare nesemnificativă pentru mulți cetățeni europeni care se bucură de toate drepturile, pune în pericol fibra Uniunii Europene, hrănind în mod deosebit de periculos ideologiile naționaliste și separatismul tot mai accentuat al susținătorilor Rusiei.

Herr Kanzler Nehammer! Wir resignieren nicht – wir, die Rumänen. Unser Kampf hört hier nicht auf. Und ihre Entscheidung war nicht nur gegenüber den Rumänen ungerecht – die übrigens die zweitgrößte Minderheit in Ihrem Land sind –, sondern gegenüber den europäischen Werten. Ich hoffe, Sie werden den Fehler, den Sie gemacht haben, erkennen und in den nächsten Tagen beheben.

Karlo Ressler (PPE). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, tri desetljeća od međunarodnog priznanja i agresije, u desetoj godini našeg europskog članstva, Hrvatska zaokružuje svoj puni povratak europskoj civilizaciji. U vrijeme duboke neizvjesnosti i rata na europskom kontinentu, to nam, uz bolju prometnu povezanost, veću konkurentnost, slobodu kretanja i jednu veliku razvojnu priliku, donosi i dodatnu sigurnost - snažniju i otporniju državnu granicu.

Žao nam je da nisu primljene i Rumunjska i Bugarska čiji građani već predugo čekaju ravnopravnost i potpunu slobodu kretanja. U ovom osjetljivom geopolitičkom trenutku potreban nam je snažniji Schengen s Rumunjskom i Bugarskom. Želim još jednom zahvaliti svima koji su pružali potporu hrvatskom članstvu u Schengenu u posljednjim mjesecima, a za kraj, također, zamolit ću vas i za još malo potpore večeras u našem polufinalu protiv Argentine.

Иво Христов (S&D). – Г-н Председател, Петър Бъчваров, Йордан Илиев, Атанас Градев, това са имената на трима български полицаи, убити в последните месеци. Трима европейци, които заедно с колегите си охраняваха спокойствието на българи, австрийци, холандци, на гражданите на целия Съюз. Правят го ефикасно, както констатират всички инспекции. Призна го Европейският парламент, призна го и Комисията.

Решението на Австрия и Нидерландия да затворят вратите на Шенген за България и Румъния не е мотивирано от загриженост за върховенството на закона. То е безочливо пренебрежение към волята на Европейския парламент и констатациите на мониторинга за изпълнените критерии. Той е пример за това как националният егоизъм и електоралните сметки убиват духа и буквата на европейската конструкция.

В опит да угодят на националистите в своите страни някои европейски лидери правят подарък на еврофобите в България и Румъния, третирайки ги като неканени гости на прага на Шенген. Уважаеми колеги, нека не убиваме вярата в Европа, която българските полицаи охраняват с цената на живота си.

Ramona Strugariu (Renew). – Domnule președinte, nașii copilului meu sunt cetățeni români care trăiesc în Austria și predau la o universitate din Viena. De pe mâinile lor ies generații de tineri austrieci și europeni pe care-i cresc în spiritul valorilor europene, al unității și solidarității europene în care credem. Și cancelarul austriac, declarativ, crede în ele.

Cu alte cuvinte, domnule cancelar Nehammer, românii mei educă pe tinerii dumneavoastră austrieci. Fac asta cu mult profesionalism și devotament. Pe ei și pe alții ca ei i-a umilit votul din JAI care aruncă România la periferia Europei, în timp ce unii români educă Europa chiar în inima ei.

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Dar eu sunt convinsă că nu își vor face datoria pentru Austria și tinerii ei mai prejos de valorile în care cred, ci vor continua tocmai pentru că înțeleg aceste valori și le respectă, așa cum vă respectă țara.

Asta trebuie să facă și România, acum, la Consiliul din decembrie și mai departe, să continue civilizată și cu demnitate, să-și susțină cauza.

Campaniile urii și răzbunării nu ne ajută.

Sunt convinsă că ne vom întâlni colegii austrieci în multe negocieri politice și diplomatice pe care învățăm, după astfel de experiențe, să le purtăm mai bine și o vom face.

Niciunul dintre noi nu se va opri până când România nu va fi în Schengen, pentru că merită fiecare om al ei.

Ioan-Rareș Bogdan (PPE). – Domnule președinte, vin în fața dumneavoastră după ce Austria a dat un vot împotriva Europei. Acest vot a umilit România și ține ostatici milioane de români. Votul Austriei sfidează articolul 2 al Tratatului Uniunii Europene, care spune că statul de drept este o valoare fundamentală.

Ungaria are banii blocați din cauza încălcării statului de drept. Austria, nu, încă nu, deși cancelarul Nehammer are o atitudine iliberală pronunțată și absolut rasistă. Votul Austriei sfidează articolul 21 al Tratatului de funcționare al Uniunii Europene referitor la libera circulație, plus alte 20 de acte normative.

Potrivit acestor acte normative, România are dreptul să i se ridice controalele la frontieră dacă respectă acquis-ul Schengen. România a trecut de toate evaluările. A fost ridicat și MCV. Au fost vizite suplimentare de evaluare. 22 de experți din 12 țări UE și reprezentanți Frontex și Comisie, plus 10 experți suplimentari olandezi. Sunt fapte pe care cancelarul Austriei le ignoră sub pretext că e permisivă cu imigranții țara mea. O minciună cap-coadă. Cancelarul Nehammer a decretat prin blocajul Schengen al doilea dictat de la Viena pentru români.

Excelențele Voastre, domnia legii este baza existenței Uniunii Europene. Cer Comisiei și Parlamentului să solicite Curții de Justiție constatarea încălcării de către Austria a acquis-ului și să facă demersuri pentru suspendarea dreptului său de vot.

(Președintele a întrerupt vorbitorul)

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

Eugen Tomac (PPE), intervenție de tip „cartonaș albastru”. – Domnule președinte, doamnă comisar, domnule Bogdan, ați spus că este un vot împotriva Europei și ați cerut sesizarea Comisiei cu privire la începerea unei proceduri la Curtea de Justiție a Uniunii Europene.

Sunteți lider politic în România. Cereți Guvernului României, care este reclamant privilegiat în această situație, să reclame la Curtea de Justiție a Uniunii Europene acest abuz, pentru că Consiliul Uniunii Europene nu poate bloca România.

Ioan-Rareș Bogdan (PPE), răspuns la intervenția de tip „cartonaș albastru”. – Vă mulțumesc pentru ceea ce spuneți, domnule Tomac, și vă asigur că Guvernul țării noastre va face acest lucru pentru că este cea mai gravă nedreptate din ultimii 70 de ani care s-a întâmplat României și acest lucru va fi sancționat, iar Austria va suporta consecințele.

Victor Negrescu (S&D). – Domnule președinte, dragi colegi, aș începe prin a mulțumi doamnei comisar Johansson pentru că a fost un adevărat avocat al României în sensul aderării la spațiul Schengen. Dar trebuie să spunem așa cum stau lucrurile: Europa a intrat într-o criză profundă ca urmare a veto-ului exercitat de Austria împotriva propunerii Comisiei de a include România în spațiul Schengen.

Cum este posibil să acceptăm ca un guvern al unui stat membru să calce în picioare legislația și recomandările europene, fără ca noi să acționăm pentru a proteja drepturile cetățenilor noștri care au fost grav afectate de această decizie nedreaptă ?

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România respectă criteriile spațiului Schengen, fapt confirmat de toți. Astăzi, însă, într-un context foarte dificil, solidaritatea blocului comunitar este pusă sub semnul întrebării de acest veto care servește intereselor Federației Ruse.

Românii nu au de ce să negocieze cu politicienii din Austria pentru respectarea drepturilor lor și nu vor accepta trocuri economice.

Insistăm ca în cadrul Consiliului European să fie discutat acest subiect și să stabiliți un calendar ferm de aderare în cel mai scurt timp cu putință.

Dragi români, vom lupta cu demnitate până la capăt pentru acest obiectiv, nu vom ceda și avem aici mulți prieteni care sunt dispuși să sprijine România.

Vlad Gheorghe (Renew). – Domnule președinte, „Europa unită” - asta e doar o lozincă dacă permitem în continuare ca România și Bulgaria să fie ținute total nejustificat la cozile Europei.

Să ai România și Bulgaria în afara Schengen, în mijlocul unei crize economice, energetice, cu un război la granițe e nu doar discriminator, ci și absolut stupid. Atât de stupid încât te întrebi cui folosește acest lucru? În mod clar, Europei, nu. Este foarte periculos, pentru că scade încrederea în Uniune, alimentează propaganda antieuropeană și legitimează în toate aceste țări naționalismul. Este discriminator pentru că nu se poate ca unii cetățeni europeni să aibă doar drepturi și alții doar obligații. Și este nedrept și nu putem cere solidaritate doar de la România și doar de la Bulgaria.

Dincolo de președinți, miniștri, guverne slabe, extremiste, în campanie sau cu agendă proprie, mesajul nostru trebuie să fie unul singur: suntem toți egali în această Uniune și nu e nimeni mai presus. Suntem mai puternici împreună, iar cetățenii noștri nu trebuie să plătească niciodată jocurile interne sau polițele electorale ale nimănui, nici măcar ale austrieților.

Андрей Ковачев (PPE). – Г-н Председател, 11 години, 11 години повтаряме едно и също, Комисията, Парламента, независимите експерти по сигурността, че България и Румъния изпълняват всички технически критерии и има винаги в Съвета някой, който казва, че заради вътрешната и политическата ситуация, било то избори, местни, национални или други вътрешни политики, не е сега момента. Аз повече не мога да слушам тези обяснения не е сега моментът или търсене на други аргументи, като например механизма по върховенството на закона, който е за всички страни в Европейския съюз, който няма връзка с техническите критерии по Шенген, които и България, и Румъния изпълняват.

България допринася за сигурността на всички европейски граждани. Ние сме част от Шенгенската информационна система, нашите служители в Гранична полиция защитават и нидерландските граждани, и австрийските граждани, и шведските граждани, и всеки европейски гражданин. Това поведение беше недостойно от миналата седмица, то трябва да бъде поправено по най-бързия начин и никакви действия по отношение на разделяне на двете страни, тук трябва много ясно да се каже, защото колегите не го казаха преди това. Не може да има разделяне на България и Румъния, те изпълняват еднакво критериите и трябва да бъдат в шенгенското пространство по едно и също време колкото се може по-бързо.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señor presidente, señora comisaria Johansson, durante largos años este Parlamento Europeo ha hecho cuanto ha estado en su mano, con todos los instrumentos a su alcance, para defender Schengen, proteger Schengen frente a restricciones arbitrarias y contrarias a las medidas de necesidad y al límite temporal señalados por el Tribunal de Justicia, y proteger Schengen queriendo que Schengen se complete de una vez con los Estados miembros a los que echamos de menos: Croacia, Rumanía y Bulgaria.

La decisión del Consejo de Ministros de Justicia e Interior abre la puerta a Croacia. La saludamos, pero decimos que tenemos la obligación de usar todas las medidas legales y judiciales a nuestro alcance para recurrir la injusticia de la exclusión de Rumanía y Bulgaria. Y añado que esto pone de manifiesto que Bulgaria ha sido excluida por un país de los 27 y ambos, Bulgaria y Rumanía, por dos países de los 27, lo que nos dice con claridad que, en una reforma de los Tratados, tenemos que acabar con la unanimidad como criterio de toma de decisiones cuando produce injusticias tan clamorosas como esta, que niega el acceso pleno a la realización de un derecho fundamental, el consagrado en el artículo 45 de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea —la libre circulación—, a los ciudadanos de Rumanía y Bulgaria, a los que echamos de menos en Schengen.

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Lukas Mandl (PPE). – Mr President, Commissioner, colleagues, I look forward to the moment when Bulgaria and Romania will join Schengen. We will have to decide reliably and responsibly as soon as we can, but we can't yet.

And this is the reason why we have to accept political developments – there is no legal stance against it, and the drama is not the few months of postponement of the Schengen access, which I really look forward to; the drama is the migration crisis that is increasing. And this is not due to the Commission that much, because the Commission has proposed a very good concept two years ago, even more than two years ago already, but the process has not been ongoing in the Council of the Member States' governments as well as in our very European Parliament.

And this is why we have to push forward the agenda, we have to protect our borders better, we have to fight organised crime in the area of human trafficking. We have to do our best for solidarity between the Member States when it comes to asylum procedures, when it comes to return procedures and all the other fields. There is not Bulgaria or Romania to blame. There is a lot of work to do for this institution, the European Parliament, and also for the Council of the Member States' governments. And then I look forward to go forward with the Schengen accession of the two countries.

(The speaker agreed to respond to a blue-card speech.)

Jan-Christoph Oetjen (Renew), Wortmeldung nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“. – Herr Kollege, ich möchte mich dafür bedanken, dass Sie klar gesagt haben, dass es überhaupt keine rechtsstaatlichen Gründe dafür gibt, dass Rumänien und Bulgarien von der österreichischen Regierung abgelehnt werden, sondern dass andere Gründe dafürsprechen, dass Sie also klar ein rechtsstaatliches Verfahren vonseiten Österreichs an dieser Stelle brechen. Vielen Dank für diese Offenheit.

Sie haben gesagt, dass die Migrationspolitik das Thema ist. Ist Ihnen bewusst, dass es einfacher ist, die Migrationsbewegungen zu kontrollieren, wenn Rumänien und Bulgarien Teil des Schengen-Raums und nicht außerhalb des Schengen-Raums sind? Ist Ihnen klar, dass wir gestern im LIBE-Ausschuss das Eurodac-Mandat beschlossen haben, dass wir also klare Schritte für eine gemeinsame Asyl- und Migrationspolitik machen?

Deswegen fordere ich Sie auf: Hören Sie auf, das zu blockieren, denn es geht voran, auch in dem Sinne, in dem Sie es wollen.

Lukas Mandl (PPE), blue-card reply. – Thank you very much colleague. If I have the floor – this was not really a question, but I anyway will answer.

First of all, I have worked very hard on registration via Eurodac at the borders, and I guess that's a small step forward in this whole endeavour of managing the migration crisis.

And dear colleague, you have purposely misunderstood the point. There is no legal procedure to change the decision because it's a decision that's up to elected officials at a government level and at a legislative level and this is a decision that has to be taken. And it's not yet responsibly and reliably possible to take the decision.

I hope it will be possible soon when we withdraw this blockade from whomever in the Council – it's not transparent; from the Parliament it is transparent who is blocking here, to proceed with solving this migration crisis.

(The speaker agreed to respond to a blue-card speech.)

Vlad-Marius Botoș (Renew), blue-card speech. – Mr Mandl, you explained to us that technically we can't change this procedure, and you explained to us that the migration wave is increasing. But is this migration wave not also going through Croatia? We don't have anything against Croatia, but when we see the numbers, Croatia also has also an increase in migration – not only Romania or Bulgaria.

Lukas Mandl (PPE), blue-card reply. – Thank you for the question. It's a very important point because a major part of the issue at the moment has a route which goes through the respective countries we are talking about today, and the major part is also going through the Balkans, the Western Balkans. And frankly I am concerned that it was not the European level, it was even not the European Commission in that case, which negotiated with the Balkan countries, especially the Western Balkan countries, in order to control this situation, to control this migration. It was, again, the Austrian Government who took responsibility for that. I would be happy if the European level would be it that solves European problems and I hope we can achieve such a situation, such a process, as soon as possible.

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Carmen Avram (S&D). – Domnule președinte, ca om care a tânjit 40 de ani să facă parte din Uniunea Europeană, ca cetățean al unei țări care încă iubește această Uniune, deși a îndurat greutăți și sacrificii, ca membru al unei națiuni care a supraviețuit unei istorii crunte doar trăind cu speranța că într-o zi va fi respectată și tratată de la egal la egal, am fost și rămân îngrozită și înjosită de momentul din 8 decembrie, când o singură voce a anulat drepturile a 20 de milioane de români, călcând și pe legislația europeană, și pe voința celorlalte state membre. Un moment cu atât mai jignitor cu cât s-a bazat pe o minciună pe care autorul nici măcar nu s-a oboșit să o facă mai credibilă. Eu vorbesc acum având în spate milioane de români care știu că i-ați mințit. Domnule Nehammer, dumneavoastră pe cine ați avut în spate și care au fost adevăratele motive pentru care ne-ați interzis să vă fim egali? Românii v-au fost prieteni, dar i-ați discriminat și umilit. Pentru ei vă spun acum

Herr Nehammer! Ab heute aus Rumänien kein „Grüß Gott“ mehr, nur Schande!

Mulțumesc Comisiei, președinției cehe și statelor care ne-au sprijinit.

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

Vlad Gheorghe (Renew), intervenție de tip „cartonaș albastru”. – Sunteți deputat PSD, doamna Avram, sunteți în coaliția de guvernare. Aveți împreună cu colegii dumneavoastră de aici, din PNL, responsabilitatea pentru acest eșec. Cum vedeți dumneavoastră rolul ministrului Aurescu ? Sau, mai important, rolul ministrului Bode ? Credeți că dâșii mai trebuie să mai fie miniștri ? Cred că credeți că rolul lor ne ajută pe noi, românii, în acest moment sau mai mult ne încurcă ?

Carmen Avram (S&D), răspuns la intervenția de tip „cartonaș albastru”. – Cred că putem să transformăm acest subiect într-un subiect de politică internă, dar adevărul rămâne că România a fost respinsă de o singură voce, de cancelarul austriac, care, cu ajutorul unei minciuni, sprijinindu-se pe pretexte false, s-a opus celorlalte 26 de state care au stat ferm în spatele României.

Lena Düpont (PPE). – Herr Präsident, werte Kollegen! Dass innenpolitische Debatten die Weiterentwicklung von Schengen blockieren, ist nicht nur bedauerlich. Ein Blick in die europäische Geschichte zeigt auch, dass dieses Kalkül selten aufgeht. Die Entscheidung von letzter Woche richtet Schaden an, Schaden für die politische Glaubwürdigkeit Einzelner, aber auch der EU als Gesamtes, Schaden für die rechtliche Glaubwürdigkeit, diese entscheidende Verlässlichkeit von Verfahren, und Schaden für die persönliche Glaubwürdigkeit, das so wichtige Vertrauen untereinander, sowohl menschlich als auch zwischen den Staaten.

Bulgarien und Rumänien erfüllen die nötigen Anforderungen seit Langem. Sie haben die Aufnahme verdient, und das nicht erst seit gestern.

Natürlich können und müssen wir – alle, *by the way* – noch besser werden: von der Sicherung der Außengrenzen über ein verlässliches Asyl- und Migrationspaket, in der grenzüberschreitenden Polizeizusammenarbeit, im Informationsaustausch. All das dient dem Schutz von Schengen nach innen wie auch nach außen. Aber den Kollegen Mandl – der jetzt leider nicht mehr da ist – einmal angesprochen: Offene Herausforderungen müssen in den Rechtsakten angegangen werden, in denen sie auch gelöst werden können.

Können wir hier unseren Einsatz erhöhen? Natürlich können wir das, und es ist dringend geboten. Aber es ist und bleibt unfair, Länder, die noch nicht einmal im Schengen-Raum sind, dafür verantwortlich zu machen. Jetzt gilt es, den Weg aus der Blockade zu formulieren. Es braucht einen konkreten Fahrplan. Das und nicht weniger sind wir den Bürgerinnen und Bürgern von Rumänien und Bulgarien schuldig.

Brīvā mikrofona uzstāšanās

Cristian-Silviu Bușoi (PPE). – Domnule președinte, dragi colegi, doamnă comisar, blocarea accesului României și Bulgariei în spațiul Schengen a fost un act nedrept. Votul împotriva României al Austriei, ca urmare a deciziilor actualului premier și actualului ministru de interne din Austria, a fost un act straniu, injust, nejustificat.

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Pretextele prezentate public de cancelarul Nehammer sunt bazate pe ipoteze și cifre false și reprezintă nu doar un act neașteptat și incorect față de România, dar și o sfidare la adresa celorlalte state membre, o sfidare față de Comisia Europeană, care a adus argumente tehnice solide, și o sfidare la adresa Parlamentului European.

Această decizie injustă trebuie reparată cât mai curând posibil, poate chiar până la sfârșitul anului sau cel mai târziu în prima parte a anului viitor.

De asemenea, trebuie să reflectăm împreună cum putem gestiona în viitor situații în care, în mod total nejustificat, împotriva voinței generale a tuturor celorlalți, împotriva oricăror evidențe și logici, un stat membru blochează o decizie atât de importantă.

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Domnule președinte, doamnă comisar, domnule ministru, ce am ascultat astăzi, eu ascult de 11 ani. Vă mulțumesc, doamnă comisar și domnule ministru, că ne-ați susținut. Problema este rezultatul. Nu România și Bulgaria au fost sfidate prin votul Austriei, ci instituțiile europene, pentru că și astăzi ați spus că îndeplinim toate condițiile. Doamnă comisar, de asemenea, Colegiul Comisarilor a votat, Parlamentul a votat și mulțumesc colegilor. Niciodată nu am mai primit 547 de voturi. Problema este ce facem atunci când o țară membră încalcă un regulament și nu are niciun temei juridic. Este minciună în instanță. Eu așa înțeleg: că atunci când minți, ești pedepsit. Doamna comisar, în acest sens, eu, ca cetățean român, în numele cetățenilor pe care îi reprezint, am transmis două scrisori Comisiei Europene. Una: ce măsuri luați de sancționare a unei țări care blochează piața internă? Sărbătorim 30 de ani de piață internă, dar iată, suntem două piețe: Schengen și non-Schengen. Și dacă demarați procedurile de modificare a Tratatului pentru votul în unanimitate, pentru că din punctul meu de vedere, nu este specific unei democrații.

(Președintele a întrerupt vorbitoarea)

Nicolae Ștefănuță (Renew). – Domnule președinte, regret că în această sală suntem aproape doar români și bulgari. În afara doamnei Düpont, căreia îi mulțumesc și domnului Mandl, pentru câteva secunde, uităm prea des să fim europeni, să fim uniți, să fim solidari. Guvernul austriac crede că austriecii nu au încredere în români, dar medicii români îi tratează pe austrieci. Românii le construiesc case austrieilor, austriecii fac afaceri cu românii. Ce ar deveni Europa dacă fiecare partid politic național ar folosi UE pentru temele politice de acasă, indiferent de adevăr, de realitate? Domnule cancelar Nehammer, lipsa de compasiune vine din frică. A spus-o chiar Sigmund Freud, conaționalul dumneavoastră. Dar cehul Václav Havel a spus că iubirea învinge frica. Noi spre asta trebuie să ne îndreptăm, să ne revenim la o uniune a solidarității, a unității, a iubirii.

Александър Александров Йорданов (PPE). – Г-н Председател, аз не съм изненадан от решението на Австрия. Добре помня, че преди 4 години австрийският външен министър танцуваше валс с Владимир Путин и след това стана член на борда на директорите на руския енергиен гигант Роснефт. Оставянето на България и Румъния извън Шенген обслужва политиката на режима в Кремъл за разделение на Европейския съюз.

Позволявам си да кажа, че мигрантите в Австрия са по-малък проблем, отколкото са капиталите на руски олигарси в тази страна. А решението на Нидерландия е безпринципно, защото е продиктувано от тяснопартийни интереси. Очаквам Австрия и Нидерландия да се извинят на българския народ. Външната граница на Шенген ще се охранява по-добре, когато България е член на Шенген.

Tudor Ciuhodaru (S&D). – Domnule președinte, șantajul Schengen trebuie să înceteze. Prezența României în spațiul Schengen este un drept al țării mele ca stat membru al Uniunii Europene, în baza unor obligații pe care noi le-am îndeplinit. Nu schimbați regulile în timpul jocului. Cine seamănă vânt, culege furtună.

Gheorghe-Vlad Nistor (PPE). – Domnule președinte, o să fie cât se poate de scurtă intervenția mea și nu am să cad în derizoriu de a face politică internă, cum deja au încercat unii colegi din Parlament aici. Problema e una foarte simplă. Sigur, este un atac care pe un român ca mine îl umple de indignare și enervare. Se întâmplă la fel cu colegii noștri bulgari. Se întâmplă, deci, cu peste 30 de milioane de cetățeni ai Uniunii Europene. Dar problema e alta: indignarea ar trebui să fie a celor 500 de milioane de cetățeni europeni, pentru că, de fapt, acesta este un atac flagrant la baza, la fundamentele instituțiilor europene. Este un atac flagrant la solidaritatea, coerența și coeziunea unității europene. Comisia nu poate sta indiferentă. Parlamentul a votat, a votat în mod clar și cert în alt fel decât un cancelar și un ministru de externe.

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Цветелина Пенкова (S&D). – Г-н Председател, какво казват Нидерландия и Австрия с техните позиции на вето, че загърбват резултатите от двете експертни мисии и че не признават позицията на Европейската комисия, че не са съгласни с позициите на Европейския парламент, че не признават становището на други 25 държави членки.

Нидерландия и Австрия не назоваха реални причини за тяхното вето, очевидно те се коренят във вътрешнополитически процеси и обслужват правителствата в двете държави, а това не е европейска позиция, това не е полезно за целия Европейски съюз. Ние не бива да допускаме такова дискриминационно отношение към правата на група европейски граждани и то не трябва да се допуска, да се толерира, то трябва да се заклеява от институции като нашата и затова благодаря на колегите и на всички институции, които заеха тези прави позиции.

Аз имам въпрос към министър Балаш и комисар Йохансон какви ще са конкретните стъпки, които Съветът и Комисията ще предприемат, за да гарантират присъединяването на България и Румъния заедно в най-кратки срокове?

Daniel Buda (PPE). – Domnule președinte, votul Austriei nu a fost doar împotriva aderării României și Bulgariei la spațiul Schengen, ci a fost un vot dat împotriva unității Uniunii Europene, punând sub semnul întrebării însăși funcționalitatea instituțiilor europene.

Karl Nehammer, știi bine că nu România este responsabilă de prezența celor 75 000 de migranți în Austria. Din păcate, cinstea, corectitudinea și onestitatea nu sunt elemente care să te definească. Dar ține minte că prin minciună nu se poate construi nimic durabil. Nu poți afirma în Forumul de la Salzburg din noiembrie anul acesta că susții aderarea României la spațiul Schengen, iar câteva zile mai târziu să faci exact invers. Domnule cancelar, Putin și Rusia, cu siguranță, vă mulțumesc astăzi, dar nu uitați că istoria o să vă judece mâine, deoarece prin acest vot аți început un proces de distrugere a proiectului european care timp de peste 70 de ani a garantat pacea și stabilitatea în Europa.

Șefilor de state și de guverne vă transmit că aveți obligația morală ca de îndată să apărați proiectul european, iar acest lucru înseamnă România și Bulgaria în spațiul Schengen.

Tomislav Sokol (PPE). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, Vijeće za pravosuđe i unutarnje poslove prošlog je tjedna donijelo jednoglasno političku odluku o pristupanju Republike Hrvatske Schengenu. Hrvatska, tako, od prvog siječnja 2023. postaje punopravna članica prostora slobode kretanja, bez presedana u svijetu, koji predstavlja jedan od simbola projekta europske integracije.

Nepunih deset godina nakon pristupanja Europskoj uniji, Hrvatska, kao članica Schengena i eurozone, postaje potpuno europski integrirana. Od toga će koristiti imati svi hrvatski građani, a posebno izvoznici, turistički radnici i oni koji žive u pograničnim područjima te često prelaze granicu. Za Hrvatsku i njezine građane to je ujedno i ostvarenje strateškog interesa punopravne pripadnosti Europi i Zapadu. Upravo zahvaljujući velikom naporu hrvatske vlade, Hrvatska je u najsveobuhvatnijoj i najdetaljnijoj evaluaciji uspješno ispunila 281 preporuku u osam područja. Međutim, proces jačanja schengenskog područja mora ići dalje. Ne smijemo zaboraviti Rumunjsku i Bugarsku. Zato koristim ovu priliku da izrazim punu potporu pristupanju ove dvije države Schengenu.

Marian-Jean Marinescu (PPE). – Domnule președinte, doamnă comisar, atât dumneavoastră, cât și domnul ministru Balaș аți afirmat că frontierele externe ale României și Bulgariei sunt securizate. Vă mulțumesc, de asemenea, pentru angajamentul pe care l-ați luat aici că veți rezolva această problemă, veți corecta această decizie greșită în cursul anului 2023. Aud de multă vreme aceste lucruri. Vă urez succes în discuțiile pe care le veți avea cu Olanda și cu Austria. Până atunci însă, consecințele negative, în special economice, vor continua. Аți spus, de asemenea, că desființarea frontierelor interne ar întări frontierele externe, pentru că s-ar transfera lucrătorii pe acele frontiere. De aceea, vă întreb care este opinia dumneavoastră dacă România și Bulgaria ar crea un spațiu de liberă circulație mai mic, nu Schengen, Vidin-Calafat sau Giurgiu-Ruse ?

Андрей Новаков (PPE). – Г-н Председател, аз бях стажант в Европейския парламент преди да стана негов член и като такъв първото нещо, което научих е, че тук всеки може да стане всичко, защото хората се третират еднакво, без значение откъде идват. За пръв път съм разколебан в това, най-вече заради поведението на правителството на Нидерландия. Самият факт, че има дебат дали България и Румъния да влязат в Шенген е обиден. България и Румъния не просто имат право да влязат в Шенген, а Европейският съюз има задължението да приеме България и Румъния в Шенген.

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Представете си, ако утре двете държави спрат да изпълняват своите задължения като членове, както го прави в момента Нидерландия. Ако да кажем, спрат да си плащат членския внос в европейския бюджет, в тази зала за 705 души ще има 1705 души, които да протестират. И искам да ви кажа, че тези, които в момента хранят чудовището на европейския скептицизъм, ще са първите, които то ще подгони. България и Румъния ще преподават урок на онези, които са създали Европейския съюз, защото това няма да ни откаже от нашия път към Европа и няма да ни пречупи. Ще видите на следващите избори, че проевропейските партии ще спечелят въпреки несправедливото отношение.

Eugen Tomac (PPE). – Domnule președinte, mă adresez direct doamnei comisar Johansson. Din păcate, Consiliul JAI a anulat două articole importante din tratat care ne permit nouă să visăm că avem aceleași drepturi ca și ceilalți cetățeni ai Uniunii Europene, și anume libertatea de circulație a cetățenilor europeni și libertatea de circulație a bunurilor, aspecte prevăzute în tratat. Doamnă comisar, cer Comisiei să apere Tratatul Uniunii Europene. Este o discriminare fără precedent, iar noi, românii și bulgarii merităm să fim tratați exact ca toți ceilalți cetățeni. Tocmai de aceea, în numele spiritului evocat în tratat, vă cer să mergeți la Curtea de Justiție a Uniunii Europene, să apărați Tratatul Uniunii Europene. Este inacceptabil ceea ce a făcut o țară, blocând accesul nostru în spațiul Schengen, în Consiliul Uniunii Europene.

(Brīvā mikrofona uzstāšanās beigās.)

Ylva Johansson, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, when, not if, Bulgaria and Romania join Schengen, we all win. More trade, travel, tourism, a boost for the internal market. We will all be safer, with full use of the information system, better police cooperation and information exchange. Border guards now checking passports at borders between Member States will go to protect the EU external borders.

If Bulgaria and Romania's accession are further delayed, we all lose. As I said already in my introductory remarks, I am the first to say that we have significant challenges in the EU on security, on irregular migration, on rule of law. But we should not confuse these challenges, that we need to address together, with the Schengen enlargement criteria. On the contrary, we need Romania and Bulgaria in Schengen to better address these challenges.

And to sum up what was mentioned in the debate, let me clarify – it's the Commission that has signed a Frontex agreement with North Macedonia. It's the Commission that is now renegotiating the Frontex agreement with four other Western Balkan partners. It is the Commission, together with the Czech Presidency, that at the EU Western Balkan ministerial that we had in the beginning of November in Tirana, reached an unprecedented agreement with all the Western Balkan partners to align their visa policies. And we already see the deliverables from Serbia, from Albania and North Macedonia and expect more to come. We also there launched a new anti-smuggling operational partnership with the six Western Balkan partners, underpinned with EUR 30 million. It was the Commission that presented one week ago the Action Plan to counter the irregular arrivals on the Western Balkan routes.

So, we are doing a lot from the Commission side and we also see actually a slight decrease in the arrivals all along the Western Balkan routes. But of course more needs to be done.

I regret the Council decision last Thursday. It shows that we are divided, are fractured, at a time when we need unity and solidarity. And the only winner is Putin, who is actively stoking unrest and division into our Union. And for what? There is no point in delay. Bulgaria and Romania are entitled to join once all criteria are met and they have been met. So the Commission said in 2011, and we just confirmed a few weeks ago in our Schengen communication, and so say two fact-finding missions this year. Commitments must be honoured. The time is right. We must rally together and admit Bulgaria and Romania into Schengen. I am determined to make this happen, already next year. The citizens of Romania and Bulgaria deserve it. And it will make us all stronger together, united. Thank you for your strong support.

Vladimír Balaš, President-in-Office of the Council. – Mr President, Honourable Members of Parliament, Madam Commissioner, thank you for the views expressed today.

As I said, the Council under the Czech leadership has made all efforts to achieve the well-deserved full accession of Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania into the Schengen area. I am sure the Council remains committed to working on this matter.

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And the work will continue under the next presidency building on the efforts carried out during this semester in an open and constructive manner with a view to reaching a unanimous decision on the full application of the Schengen *acquis* in Bulgaria and Romania as a matter of priority.

We shouldn't adopt decisions that disrupt confidence in the EU, and we shouldn't adopt decisions that disrupt our unity. And I can just subscribe to the words of Madam Commissioner: only united we stand strong.

President. – That concludes the debate.

Written statements (Rule 171)

Balázs Hidvéghi (NI), írásban. – Elfogadhatatlan az a döntés, hogy Románia és Bulgária nem csatlakozhat a schengeni övezethez. Mindkét tagállam több mint 10 éve teljesítette a szükséges feltételeket, két nyugati tagállam – Ausztria és Hollandia – mégis megvétózta a csatlakozásukat. Ausztria és Hollandia döntése súlyosan méltánytalan és igazságtalan minden román és bolgár állampolgárral, a területükön élő minden közösséggel szemben. A schengeni szabad mozgás joga minden európai embert megillet, és politikai okokból nem lehet őket ettől megfosztani.

Képmutató és felháborító, hogy azok, akik rendszerint az európai egységért aggódnak, most mélyen hallgatnak. Égbekiáltó kettős mérce, hogy ha egy közép-európai ország él a vétójogával, dorgálást kap kérte, de ha ugyanezt egy nyugat-európai tagállam teszi, az rendben van. Igencsak cinikus az is, hogy a nyugati tagállamok most hirtelen az illegális migrációra és a határvédelemre hivatkoznak, miközben Magyarországot évek óta ideológiai okokból támadják a határkerítés megépítése miatt. Románia és Bulgária sokat tett a határaik védelme, az illegális migráció megfékezése érdekében, és készen állnak a csatlakozásra. Kérem a két tagállamot, hogy ismét fontolják meg a kérdést, és döntsenek Románia és Bulgária mielőbbi schengeni felvétele mellett!

Theresa Muigg (S&D), schriftlich. – Die Ablehnung der österreichischen Bundesregierung des Schengen-Beitritts von Rumänien und Bulgarien ist nicht nur für die Menschen in den beiden Ländern schockierend, sondern hat in der gesamten Union und darüber hinaus einen Schock hinterlassen.

Menschen aus Rumänien, Bulgarien und Österreich verbindet nicht nur die Donau, sondern auch eine lange gemeinsame Geschichte, die bis in den heutigen Alltag reicht. Sie sind ein elementarer Bestandteil der österreichischen Arbeitswelt, genauso wie die Präsenz österreichischer Unternehmen zum Alltag in Rumänien und Bulgarien gehört. Ich möchte Kroatien zum Schengen- und Euro-Beitritt gratulieren, jedoch müssen wir endlich dafür sorgen, dass alle Bürgerinnen und Bürger in der Europäischen Union die gleichen Rechte bekommen.

Rumänien und Bulgarien sind elementarer Bestandteil dieser Union und sollten daher auch dem Schengen-Raum angehören. Innerhalb des Schengen-Raums sollte es keine Diskriminierung geben. Die EU-Kommission hat eindeutig bestätigt, dass alle Voraussetzungen für einen Schengen-Beitritt von Rumänien und Bulgarien gegeben sind. Die Grenzsicherung in Rumänien und Bulgarien entspricht den Standards des Schengen-Raums. Gleichzeitig muss aber auch sichergestellt sein, dass es zu keinen Menschenrechtsverletzungen an den Grenzen kommt, wie dies in der Vergangenheit der Fall war. Die Staaten sind aufgefordert, Überwachungsmaßnahmen zu ergreifen, damit Grundrechte gewahrt bleiben und es zu keinen illegalen Pushbacks kommt.

Matjaž Nemec (S&D), pisno. – Notranji ministri so prejšnji teden prižgali zeleno luč za vstop Hrvaške v Schengen. Njena pot v območje brez nadzorov na notranjih mejah je bila ekspresna. Ta pot je veliko bolj zapletena za Romunijo in Bolgarijo.

Komisija je predlagala njun vstop v Schengen že leta 2011, za tem je vstop odobril tudi Evropski parlament. A Romunija in Bolgarija sta še vedno, tudi po več kot 11 letih, v Schengen čakalnici. Čeprav si je češko predsedstvo prizadevalo za odpravo blokade tudi zanju, sta na koncu pri svojem pridržku vztrajali Avstrija in Nizozemska, domnevno zaradi neučinkovitega obvladovanja migracij in zaradi neučinkovitega boja proti korupciji.

A pri avstrijskem vetu gre za izjemno grobo zlorabo notranjepolitičnih razmer za pridobivanje poceni točk. Pri tem se ne moremo izogniti podatku Frontexa, da je po Balkanski poti letos v Unijo nezakonito vstopilo več kot 2-krat toliko ljudi kot leta 2021, tudi preko Hrvaške.

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Bolgarija in Romunija pa nimata izbire glede Schengena, tako kot ga je imela denimo Velika Britanija. Izvajati morata vso zakonodajo, investirati v vso novo tehnologijo, a ne da bi uživali prednosti Schengena. Pri avstrijskem vetu gre pravzaprav za nevarno proti evropsko držo, ki bo lahko imela še težke posledice. Temu se moramo nujno upreti.

17. Perspetivas para a solução dos dois Estados para Israel e a Palestina (debate)

Sēdes vadītājs. – Nākamais darba kārtības punkts ir debates par Komisijas paziņojumu par izredzēm panākt divu valstu risinājumu attiecībā uz Izraēlu un Palestīnu (2022/2949(RSP)).

Helena Dalli, *Member of the Commission.* – Mr President, honourable Members of the European Parliament, this has been another difficult year with more than 120 Palestinians killed. Year 2022 is the deadliest for Palestinians in the West Bank since the United Nations started systematically counting fatalities in 2005, when measured on a monthly average. It is also the deadliest year for Palestinian children in the West Bank in 15 years, with 34 children killed by Israeli forces or settlers, with an overall record high settler violence.

We witnessed a wave of terror attacks across Israel, with more than 20 casualties, as reported by the UN's OCHA. This was followed by more Israeli military operations and incursions in Palestinian cities. We also witnessed another violent escalation in Gaza in August with the Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

We therefore call on the parties to exercise restraint and to do everything to prevent further escalation and to rebuild a path towards dialogue. Any use of force must be proportionate and in line with international law. The EU, of course, condemns all acts of terrorism in the strictest terms.

Against this difficult background, the prospects for a resumption of genuine negotiations conducive to ending the occupation and achieving the two-State solution appear very distant. There is nonetheless no credible alternative. The two-State solution remains the best way of bringing lasting peace, stability and equal rights to both peoples.

Therefore, the EU is actively engaging with our partners in the Middle East, the US and beyond, to explore ways to revive the peace process. In September, during the UNGA High-level Week in New York, we hosted a ministerial round table marking the 20th anniversary of the Arab Peace Initiative. Importantly, the event was co-sponsored by the League of Arab States and Saudi Arabia.

In this vein, the EU Special Representative for the MEPP, Sven Koopmans, will continue working with all our international partners to reopen a path towards a comprehensive regional peace.

In light of Israel's recent normalisation agreements with four Arab States, which the EU supports, we are exploring possibilities to use these new contacts to increase momentum to the benefit of the Middle East peace process too. In October, HR/VP Borrell co-chaired with Israeli Prime Minister Lapid, the EU-Israel Association Council. At this meeting, the first in a decade, the EU and Member States discussed with Israel how to develop strategic bilateral cooperation, but also passed a strong message on the EU's commitment to a two-State solution and the need to reopen a political horizon. HR/VP Borrell was clear that unilateral actions such as continuing settlement expansion and demolitions must stop in order to preserve the chances of a just and viable peace.

This will also be our message to the incoming Israeli Government, which we hope will confirm the country's full commitment to the shared values of democracy and rule of law, and with which we hope to engage in serious conversation on the conflict and the need to reopen the political horizon for the Palestinian population.

The EU is now also strengthening our dialogue further with the Palestinian Authority. HR/VP Borrell has invited the Palestinian Foreign Minister, Riyad al-Maliki, to the Foreign Affairs Council in January. It will be an opportunity to exchange on how the EU can best support the Palestinian Authority and the peace process, but also to discuss the necessity of organising the postponed national Palestinian elections and take steps forward towards Palestinian unity.

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Lukas Mandl, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Mr President, Commissioner, colleagues, I called the resolution we are discussing today the ‘as if’ resolution. We are doing it as if Israel were not the strongest rule-of-law state and the only democracy in the Middle East. We are doing it as if Israel were our strong partner in terms of security, our own security, but also in other fields like innovation, economy and many other fields. We are doing it as if there were not more urgent problems on this planet, especially for Europe, like the war of aggression from Putin’s Russia, inflation, the energy crisis, or on a geopolitical level, what’s happening in the Pacific and elsewhere.

We are doing it as if it were a recent development that would justify such a resolution. That’s not the case, actually, but I negotiated on it since it’s on the table. This is a parliamentary process, and I’m happy that we could at least include the main precondition for the language providing the title for this very resolution. This precondition is a security guarantee for Israel from those who are threatening Israel, who are attacking civilians in Israel, and who have been attacking them for decades and are still doing so.

Frankly, colleagues, it’s not very smart to align with the enemies of our friends, and in this case it’s also immoral to do so. So let us seek such a security guarantee. Let us seek to fight terrorism. Let us support those who fight terrorism in the first place, Israel, in securing its own people. Then we can achieve a true peace – a sustainable peace. This might also be the purpose of this very resolution.

Javi López, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señor presidente, hacemos una Resolución hoy aquí, en el Parlamento Europeo, porque nos preocupa y ocupa el conflicto entre Israel y Palestina. Nos preocupa que la tensión haya aumentado durante los últimos años y la violencia que padecen ambos bandos. Al mismo tiempo, creemos que, después de pasar cinco años sin una Resolución por parte del Parlamento Europeo sobre el conflicto, este era el momento. También porque pasan cosas sobre el terreno, entre ellas, la llegada de un nuevo Gobierno a Israel, al que queremos enviar un nuevo mensaje sobre cuál es la postura europea del Parlamento Europeo.

La postura europea sobre el conflicto es la necesidad de dotar de garantías de seguridad, obviamente a ambos lados, a Israel, pero, al mismo tiempo, de sentar las bases para una solución negociada, que pasa inexorablemente por la creación de dos Estados viables, democráticos, que convivan de la mano. Eso es lo que hace la Resolución.

Al mismo tiempo, también explicamos cómo los asentamientos, la ampliación de los asentamientos, las demoliciones sistemáticas y la ocupación no solo violan el Derecho internacional público, sino que hacen imposible en la práctica la solución de dos Estados. Asimismo, reiteramos nuestro apoyo a una solución que pase por las fronteras del año 1967, a que se acabe con el bloqueo de la Franja de Gaza y a que reclame la Unión Europea protagonismo, liderazgo, con una conferencia de paz, para poder ayudar a la convivencia, la paz y la seguridad que merecen israelíes y palestinos.

Hilde Vautmans, *namens de Renew-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, commissaris, collega’s, we hebben vanmorgen urenlang onderhandeld. Als we spreken over Israël en Palestina zijn het altijd hevige discussies met heel veel emoties, dat moet ik u niet vertellen. Ik wil graag mijn schaduwrapporteurs heel hartelijk bedanken. Het was een heel moeilijk, heel heftig debat, en we hebben geprobeerd om samen een goede resolutie te maken.

We zijn het erover eens dat de tweestatenoplossing de enige weg vooruit is. Mevrouw de commissaris, wij vinden dat Europa daarin een rol moet spelen, moet bijdragen aan die tweestatenoplossing, hoe moeilijk de situatie ook is. Vandaar dat wij u heel duidelijk vragen – aan de Commissie – om een Europees vredesinitiatief op gang te trekken. Organiseer daarvoor een internationale conferentie als eerste stap. Maak aan de volgende Israëlische regering duidelijk dat de bezetting van de Palestijnse gebieden moet stoppen. Maak de Palestijnse Autoriteit duidelijk dat zij haar eigen huis op orde moet krijgen. En veroordeel resoluut het geweld aan beide zijden.

Anno 2022 is de wereld – en dat weten we – er niet veiliger op geworden. Maar dit conflict verdient onze blijvende aandacht. Dat is onze taak. Dit Parlement rekt op u.

Jordi Solé, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, we know what the solution for a lasting peace between Israel and Palestine is: two sovereign states living in peace and security on the basis of the 1967 borders, and with Jerusalem as the capital of both states. But we also know that we are far from this solution – the farthest we have been in a long time.

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The situation on the ground is explosive. Illegal settlements proliferate, as well as demolitions and threats of evictions, such as in Masafer Yatta. The unacceptable reality of occupation becomes unbearable. Attacks on Israeli territory are back. The Palestinian leadership is incapable of unity and renewal. The new Israeli Government will include far-right extremists threatening to formalise the annexation of the occupied territories, and the international community seems to get disengaged from the real end of the conflict.

In such a context, we need, more than ever, political resolve from the EU. We need a European peace initiative, which is based on international law and UN resolutions, and which envisages the end of the conflict as an absolute priority.

Thierry Mariani, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Monsieur le Président, après l'affaire du «Qatargate», le Parlement européen n'est pas en mesure d'être crédible sur ce dossier. Le Qatar prend régulièrement des positions hostiles à Israël devant les institutions internationales. Ce fut encore le cas le 21 septembre dernier, à l'occasion de la 77^e Assemblée générale des Nations unies.

Ni Israël, ni la Palestine, ni aucun pays ne pourront prendre notre débat au sérieux au cours de cette affaire. Notre Parlement européen et tout spécialement sa sous-commission «droits de l'homme» ont été sous l'emprise du Qatar. Rien ne nous permet aujourd'hui de dire que ce n'est plus le cas. Maintenir ce débat, c'est poursuivre l'humiliation d'une institution qui n'a pas su se protéger de l'ingérence évidente d'un État parrain de l'islamisme.

Je souhaiterais que la France soit à l'initiative d'une nouvelle dynamique en faveur de deux États viables. C'est la seule solution, nous le savons, pour que la paix arrive un jour entre Israël et la Palestine. Mais elle n'a rien à gagner à le faire par l'entremise de l'Union européenne, qui n'a ni la volonté ni la crédibilité pour soutenir une telle initiative.

Bert-Jan Ruissen, *namens de ECR-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, commissaris, collega's, vrede rond Jeruzalem, tussen Israël en de Palestijnen: zou het er ooit van komen? En zo ja, hoe dan? De EU denkt het al tientallen jaren te weten: via een tweestatenoplossing gebaseerd op de grenzen van vóór 1967. Maar hoe realistisch is dat nog? Van serieuze vredesonderhandelingen is al jaren geen sprake. Gaza staat onder het bewind van een terroristische organisatie, de Westelijke Jordaanoever onder dat van een Autoriteit die haar democratische legitimiteit al lang heeft verloren.

En ondertussen wordt de vraag steeds prangender. De Europese Unie heeft al miljarden euro's aan subsidies gegeven, maar ondertussen is er nog geen schim van een levensvatbare Palestijnse staat. Kan die er eigenlijk wel komen? Ook al gelet op het feit dat er geen sprake is van één aaneengesloten gebied.

Voorzitter, wat betekent dat nu voor onze opstelling? Ik geloof echt dat we een stap terug moeten zetten. Het is niet aan de Europese Unie om aan Israël en aan de Palestijnen voor te schrijven wat de uitkomst moet zijn van hun noodzakelijke vredesonderhandelingen. Dat hoeft dus niet per se een tweestatenoplossing te zijn. Ik zou zeggen, laten we ons concentreren op het bevorderen van een omgeving waarin er ruimte ontstaat voor gesprekken, een omgeving van wederzijds respect.

Is het in dit verband echt te veel gevraagd, mevrouw de commissaris, om subsidies aan de Palestijnse Autoriteit conditioneel te maken, waarbij we harde garanties willen zien dat ons geld niet terechtkomt bij terroristische organisaties en niet wordt gebruikt voor schoolboeken waarin geweld wordt verheerlijkt? Graag een reactie op dat punt.

Vrede in het Midden-Oosten. Zou het er ooit van komen? Ik geef de moed niet op. De Abrahamakkoorden tussen Israël en een groeiend aantal Arabische landen laten zien dat het kan. Maar vooral geef ik de moed niet op omdat ik in de Bijbel verrassende vergezichten tegenkom. Bidden we om de vrede voor Jeruzalem, dan is dat een gebed met hoop.

Manu Pineda, *en nombre del Grupo The Left*. – Señor presidente, hoy podemos decidir si queremos respetar el Derecho internacional o si preferimos hacer un nuevo brindis al sol. Si respetamos el derecho inalienable del pueblo palestino a vivir en su propia tierra, en paz y con dignidad, o si nos limitamos a hacer una nueva declaración en la que manifestemos, compungidos, nuestra más profunda preocupación por esta inaceptable situación. Palabras tan grandilocuentes como vacías y estériles si no van acompañadas de acciones.

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El criminal régimen israelí arresta y asesina a niños y a niñas palestinos cada día y lleva a cabo una sistemática política de limpieza étnica y *apartheid* contra un pueblo que solo quiere vivir dignamente en su tierra. Y mientras, la Unión Europea lo premia con un acuerdo de asociación preferente, le permite participar en programas como Horizon Plus o Erasmus —proyectos financiados por la ciudadanía de los Estados miembros— y consiente el comercio en territorio europeo de productos procedentes de los asentamientos ilegales israelíes en la Cisjordania ocupada.

Este año, las autoridades israelíes han impedido la entrada a Palestina de miembros de esta Cámara y, sin embargo, la presidencia de este Parlamento no se atreve a imponer medidas de reciprocidad.

Ahora estamos muy consternados porque todo apunta a que, en nuestro entorno, podría haber personas a las que Qatar y Marruecos habrían incentivado para que laven, mejoren y protejan su reputación. Pero parece que al régimen colonial israelí se le está haciendo ese mismo trabajo, y mucho más, de forma gratuita, hasta que se demuestre lo contrario.

Λευτέρης Νικολάου-Αλαβάνος (NI). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, διαχρονικά η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και όλες οι ελληνικές κυβερνήσεις αναβάθμισαν την οικονομική, ενεργειακή, στρατιωτική συνεργασία με το Ισραήλ, σε βάρος του παλαιστινιακού λαού. Φέτος, τα θύματα κατοχικής βίας του Ισραήλ ξεπερνούν τα 141. Μεταξύ τους ανήλικες κοπέλες, νέα αγόρια, δημοσιογράφοι. Οι θηριωδίες του ισραηλινού στρατού κάνουν το γύρο του κόσμου. Χιλιάδες είναι οι πολιτικοί κρατούμενοι σε άδλιες συνθήκες με τις απαράδεκτες «διοικητικές κρατήσεις».

Η σημερινή συζήτηση φανερώνει ξανά την υποκριτική ευαισθησία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης που εργαλειοποιεί τα «ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα» για τα θύματα πολέμου, κατοχής, επιδρομών· γιατί όταν συμβαίνουν αυτά στην Παλαιστίνη από το κράτος-δολοφόνο του Ισραήλ, οι θύτες εξισώνονται με τα θύματα και τηρείτε «ίσες αποστάσεις». Μόνη λύση αποτελεί η κλιμάκωση της αλληλεγγύης με τον παλαιστινιακό λαό για την αναγνώριση του δικού του κυρίαρχου κράτους στα σύνορα του '67 με πρωτεύουσα την Ανατολική Ιερουσαλήμ. Απαιτούμε να τεθούν σε ισχύ τα ψηφίσματα αναγνώρισης του παλαιστινιακού κράτους που έχουν ληφθεί από τα κράτη μέλη, όπως εκείνο του ελληνικού Κοινοβουλίου από το 2015.

Željana Zovko (PPE). – Mr President, Madam Commissioner, I wholeheartedly support the idea of a negotiated two-State solution. It would bring an end to a long-lasting conflict in the Middle East and allow the states of Israel and Palestine to live side by side with guarantees for the region's peace and security.

Unfortunately, we have witnessed the continuation of the political stalemate and an increase of escalation with the use of military power, incitement to violence and terrorist attacks against security forces and citizens. These actions are incompatible with the peaceful resolution to the conflict and also further settlements would undermine the process.

With the Abraham Accords, Israel has shown its wish to better its relations with the other Arab states. It also recently settled the maritime dispute with Lebanon. Based on these improvements with the region, parties can build the support to resume the negotiations, which did not take place since 2014.

Peace in the Middle East is a key priority for the EU and we have to continue investing in the trust building and reconciliation process. I urge the External Action Service and EU Member States to enhance their cooperation with the parties involved and work towards the normalisation of relations and to oppose any acts that undermine the prospect of a two-State solution.

Pedro Marques (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, Senhora Comissária, passaram quase três décadas desde que a assinatura dos acordos de Oslo criou a esperança de uma solução pacífica para Israel e a Palestina e para os seus povos. Uma solução assente em dois Estados soberanos. Israel e Palestina a coexistirem pacificamente, com Jerusalém como capital de ambos os Estados.

Infelizmente, muitos passos foram dados depois disso no caminho errado, tornando cada vez mais difícil a implementação dessa solução. As consequências dessas más opções têm sido pagas com a insegurança, com vidas, com o subdesenvolvimento.

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Com esta resolução, o Parlamento Europeu envia uma mensagem muito clara a todos os intervenientes no processo, incluindo ao novo governo de Israel, ao partido de extrema direita que o vai integrar, aos vários partidos radicais que o vão integrar e, em particular, a alguns ministros deste novo governo.

É necessário retomar negociações de paz que conduzam à implementação da solução dos dois Estados em cumprimento da legislação internacional e das resoluções das Nações Unidas. Todas as ações sistemáticas que prejudicam a resolução deste conflito têm uma firme condenação da nossa parte, incluindo a violência por parte de qualquer dos dois lados, ou a ocupação de terras ou a instalação de colonatos nos territórios ocupados.

É preciso caminhar noutro sentido, retomar o espírito de Oslo, retomar o caminho do diálogo que criou a esperança e conduziu à atribuição do Prémio Nobel da Paz aos signatários dos acordos.

VORSITZ: OTHMAR KARAS

Vizepräsident

Frédérique Ries (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, j'ai donc une minute pour vous dire pourquoi ce texte, à mes yeux, n'est pas satisfaisant. Treize considérants et vingt-six paragraphes, souvent déséquilibrés, qui, en gros, énumèrent des griefs, mais ne proposent rien. Il faut attendre cinq pages pour parler enfin d'avenir et de solutions – c'est le titre de notre résolution.

Deux paragraphes, essentiels pourtant, sur la paix par en bas, sur l'importance de la société civile et, surtout, sur la reconstruction de la confiance par l'économie et par l'énergie. C'était le credo de Shimon Peres, et c'est le fondement aussi de l'Union européenne, le vrai ferment d'une solution à deux États.

Sinon, les vrais sujets sont poussés sous le tapis: l'échec du gouvernement d'union nationale en Israël, ces négociations en ce moment même avec l'extrême droite religieuse, là-bas, aux prétentions insupportables et inacceptables, et, surtout, ces précautions dans notre texte à l'égard du Hamas, cette timidité, l'apologie de la violence, qui constitue son véritable ADN, ou encore la suppression des notions mêmes d'antisémitisme et d'exportation de l'incitation à la haine, ou encore cette espèce de bémol qui a été mis à l'espoir suscité par les accords d'Abraham.

Je dois m'arrêter ici, mais pour toutes ces raisons, je ne voterai pas ce texte en l'état.

Margrete Auken (Verts/ALE). – Hr. Formand! Nu står vi igen med en beslutning, der taler om en to-statsløsning, og at vi skal tilbage til forhandlingsbordet, som om parterne er ligeværdige. Vi overser hele tiden, at den ene part besætter den anden og har gjort det i 50 år. Og der er ingen chance for, at selve grundproblemet løses, før besættelsen er ophævet, og vi kan få reelle forhandlinger. Og vi må ikke heller glemme, at det er virkelig godt, at vi snakker om 1967-løsningen, men det er altså 22 % af det historiske Palæstina til palæstinenserne og 78 % til Israel. Bare lige for at holde proportionerne klare her. Og igen taler vi jo altså også om, at vi skal opretholde – det gør vi mange andre steder – folkeretten. Men Israel kan tydeligvis overtræde folkeretten, uden at der sker noget synderligt ved det. Og vi bliver bedt om – og det vil jeg godt understrege her – både af palæstinenserne og af vores fredsvener i Israel, at vi omsider gør noget, så hele denne atmosfære af straffrihed bliver ophævet, og vi har midler ved hånden, retlige midler, som vi kan bruge, hvis de omsider kunne få nogle konsekvenser.

Anna Bonfrisco (ID). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, serve a tutti noi uno spirito e una mentalità di normalizzazione fatta di tanti piccoli passi tesi alla costruzione, alla costruzione della pace.

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Servono quelle predisposizioni umane semplici che già si trovano espresse negli accordi di Abramo: rafforzare la pace, non distruggerla come fanno l'Iran o il Qatar armando il terrorismo; promuovere la coesistenza, la dignità umana, la libertà, la cooperazione, la tolleranza e il rispetto; sostenere la scienza, l'arte, la medicina, il commercio e porre finalmente fine alla radicalizzazione. Ecco cosa serve.

Io ho completa fiducia nella capacità di Israele di costruire la pace tra i popoli e non vedo più la cosiddetta «questione israelo-palestinese» come una sfida di politica internazionale.

E se l'Unione volesse giocare un ruolo importante di mediazione tra palestinesi e israeliani, forse occorrerebbe partire suggerendo al presidente Abbas di non fare disinformazione.

Karen Melchior (Renew), *blue-card speech*. – Member Bonfrisco, you mentioned the Abraham Accords as part of a solution for finding peace and a two-state solution. The Palestinian representatives were not involved in negotiating these Abraham Accords, which were initiated by President Trump and his son-in-law. How do you see them as part of a two-state solution if the Palestinians were not invited?

(Anna Bonfrisco weigert sich, die Wortmeldung nach dem Verfahren der blauen Karte von Karin Melchior zu beantworten.)

Alexandr Vondra (ECR). – Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, surely we all can agree that we want a long-term and peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian issue. That is beyond dispute. I guess we all want world peace and nice weather as well. I don't want to mock it; of course, we have to do everything we can.

It is clear that Israel, as the only long-term democratic, predominantly Jewish state in the Middle East, must be given security guarantees that are credible to the Israeli public. The EU's credibility in this matter is diminished by the fact that it repeatedly ties itself to various dubious programmes that support Palestinian radicals. This reduces its own credibility in the eyes of both partners and further deepens the rift.

These days, it is more than appropriate to recall that the EU must first and foremost control its hands and pockets. That's the way we should start.

João Pimenta Lopes (The Left). – Senhor Presidente, esta é uma importante discussão, sobretudo no contexto do agravamento da agressão em curso por parte de Israel contra a Palestina e o seu povo.

A situação na Palestina é bem demonstrativa da duplicidade de critérios da UE, nomeadamente em matéria de direitos humanos. Onde está a cláusula de suspensão do acordo de associação UE-Israel, Senhora Comissária? Quanto dinheiro dos fundos da União Europeia continuam a financiar direta ou indiretamente a indústria militar israelita?

Não basta a afirmação importante da solução dos dois Estados como a única possível, quando a União Europeia, pela sua convivência e cumplicidade, contribui, pela omissão, para o agravamento da política israelita que visa impedir a concretização dos direitos inalienáveis do povo palestino, tal como consagrados nas resoluções das Nações Unidas. É necessária uma política consistente que vise a criação de um Estado da Palestina soberano, viável e independente, nas fronteiras de 1967, com Jerusalém Leste como capital, assegurando o direito de regresso dos refugiados e a libertação dos resistentes palestinos detidos em prisões israelitas. Toda a solidariedade para com a luta do povo palestino.

Fabio Massimo Castaldo (NI). – Mr President, dear colleagues, dear Commissioner, we often discuss here in the European Parliament on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and on the prospects for its resolution. It seems to me, though, that we are somehow disconnected from the situation on the ground. The reality of violence the people living in those lands are experiencing each and every day as we keep repeating on liturgy on the two-State solution being the only possible one. Let me be clear: I completely agree on that and I support that. But I wonder what are we really doing in practice to facilitate such outcome? And it's clear the process has come to a complete standstill and our Union is not doing enough, or anything, to reignite it.

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Dear colleagues, in the last period we have been discussing about strategic autonomy, about the need to find the EU's place in the world, about being a more proactive geopolitical player, especially in our neighbourhoods. I can't think of a better test to our determination than trying to facilitate a solution to a conflict that has been going on for far too long. We need a serious reflection on what we can do and especially on what we are willing to do. And most of all, we need concrete actions instead of never-ending discussions.

Juan Ignacio Zoido Álvarez (PPE). – Señor presidente, voy a comenzar mi intervención con una reflexión básica de relaciones internacionales: un cambio de gobierno que se produce por medio de las urnas nunca debe ser motivo para cortar relaciones con un país. Mucho menos cuando se trata de un aliado tan fundamental para los europeos como es Israel. Es un socio estratégico en materia de seguridad e inteligencia energética y comercial, y en muchos otros ámbitos.

No solo sería una torpeza diplomática, sino también un gesto profundamente antidemocrático, impropio de la Unión Europea. E iríamos a contracorriente: mientras el mundo árabe y nuestros socios transatlánticos apoyan los Acuerdos de Abraham, refuerzan sus lazos con Israel e intensifican la cooperación, algunos en esta Cámara pretenden que Europa haga todo lo contrario.

Ya sabemos que la izquierda radical siempre está deseando polarizar, está deseando volar los puentes que nos unen a Israel. Pero, si lo consiguen, no solo estarán volando por los aires una relación estratégica, sino también cualquier futuro para la solución de dos Estados y para la paz en Oriente Próximo.

Por eso, frente a los radicales incendiarios, frente a aquellos que justifican veladamente actos terroristas, frente a aquellos que cuestionan la soberanía de Israel, los israelíes y los palestinos siempre encontrarán la mano tendida de todos los europeos que defendemos su derecho a existir, a existir en paz, y la necesidad de contar con ellos como aliados.

Evin Incir (S&D). – Mr President, colleagues, peace must be the ultimate goal wherever a conflict appears. Freedom must be the ultimate goal wherever an occupation exists. Life must be the ultimate goal where death is ever-present. But yet, over half a century has passed with a total lack of progress in getting close to ending the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

2022 has become the deadliest year for Palestinians in over 15 years. The people of Palestine and Israel are suffering. It is a shame on this Parliament, it is a shame on the EU, and it is a shame on the international community that we have let occupation become permanent. How hard can it be to implement the ruling of our own court, the European Court of Justice, on the labelling of Israeli settlement products? How hard could it be to demand an end to the demolition of Palestinian homes and structures? How hard could it be to apply visa rules on Israeli settlers in occupied Palestine? The Palestinians need a visa today, but the settlers don't need visas.

The EU, including this Parliament, claims it wants a two-state solution, but our actions say something else. We have let the two-state dream turn into a one-state reality through letting the settlements grow without any actions from our side.

Sylvie Brunet (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, je réaffirme mon soutien à une solution du conflit israélo-palestinien fondée sur la coexistence de deux États – c'est bien le sens de cette résolution. La violence ne peut qu'entraîner la violence et je la condamne, de quelque côté qu'elle vienne. Je pense fortement que le droit international doit être vraiment respecté, particulièrement la résolution 2334 du Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies, qui condamne l'extension des colonies en Palestine de la part de l'État d'Israël.

L'Union européenne peut, et doit, jouer un rôle actif et majeur pour l'obtention d'une paix durable, j'en suis absolument convaincue. Cette conférence de paix internationale est vraiment à organiser rapidement. Une autre enceinte d'action est l'Assemblée parlementaire de l'Union pour la Méditerranée, dont je fais partie. La stratégie «Global Gateway» est également importante. Les fonds européens que nous donnons sont aussi évalués, donc il faut absolument maintenir cette aide.

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Grace O'Sullivan (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, colleagues, because the idea of elected MEPs travelling to the West Bank was too much for Israel, I was not allowed into Palestine earlier this year, but recently I stopped in to Izz Cafe run by Izz and Eman in Cork City. They've set up a community and made a business, and like most Palestinians abroad, going home is almost impossible.

The coming far-right government in Tel Aviv will undoubtedly make this even worse for Palestinians while they curtail the rights of women and minorities in Israel. We have come down hard on far-right movements here, most recently in Germany. A far-right government in Tel Aviv cannot be let off the hook. Europe must cut funding to Israel, end all arms exports, end trade with illegal settlements, and build a Palestinian state now.

Laura Huhtasaari (ID). – Arvoisa puhemies, Israel on Lähi-idän ainoa demokratia. Israelissa myös naiset ovat vapaita ja tuomioistuimiin voi luottaa. Ympärysvallioista ei voi sanoa samaa. Mikään valtio ei ole täydellinen, mutta on puistattavaa, että kun Israel iskee takaisin, jostain käsittämättömästä syystä läntinen media on ääri-islamistien puolella.

Juutalaisvastaisuus on vakava ongelma myös Euroopassa. Meillä on kotoperäisesti antisemitismia. On ääri-vasemmistossa, on äärioikeistossa, mutta ihan myös tavallisesta vasemmistosta löytyy antisemitismia, kuten Labour-puolueesta Briteissä.

Arabien ja juutalaisten konfliktia Palestiinassa on yritetty ratkaista kahden valtion mallilla, jota YK ehdotti vuonna 1947. Mallin toteutumista oltiin lähempänä Oslon neuvotteluissa 1993, mutta pysyvän rauhan saavuttamisen esteeksi on nähty arabien tavoite ajaa juutalaiset mereen. Israelilaisella on oikeus itsenäisyyteensä ja koskemattomuuteensa, ja Jerusalem kuuluu juutalaisille. Palestiinalaiset ansaitsisivat myös oman valtion. Sitä ei kuitenkaan saavuteta tukemalla terrorismia.

Joachim Stanisław Brudziński (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Pani Komisarz! Jesteśmy wszyscy zaniepokojeni ostatnią falą napięć na okupowanych terytoriach palestyńskich, w tym we Wschodniej Jerozolimie. Ten rok jest już jednym z najbardziej śmiertelnych dla Palestyńczyków na Zachodnim Brzegu od ponad dekady. Doświadczają oni przemocy ze strony izraelskich sił bezpieczeństwa, ale także ze strony osadników. Równocześnie należy potępić wszystkie ataki terrorystyczne w Izraelu. Te ataki dokonywane przez islamskich terrorystów i podkreślić, że terroryzm pozostaje jednym z najważniejszych zagrożeń dla bezpieczeństwa Bliskiego Wschodu, jak i Europy.

Szanowni Państwo, za kilka dni będziemy obchodzić Święta Bożego Narodzenia, dlatego nie sposób w tym miejscu nie wspomnieć o Palestyńczykach, którzy od wieków w Betlejem, w Nazarecie pozostali wierni swojej wierze, a dziś doświadczają prześladowań ze strony zarówno Izraela, jak i swych islamskich pobratymców.

Myślę, że szczególnie w tych dniach ze strony Parlamentu Europejskiego powinien popłynąć głos poparcia dla palestyńskich chrześcijan w Izraelu.

Marc Botenga (The Left). – Mr President, dear colleagues, this weekend, a 16-year-old girl was sitting at home in Jenin, Palestine. When she heard people scream outside, she went to the roof to see what was going on. And on the rooftop of her own house an Israeli soldier shot and killed her; two bullets to the face, one to the neck, one to the shoulder.

Jana Zakarneh, an innocent child, another one killed. This year, Israeli forces have assassinated several tens of Palestinian children, continue to destroy Palestinian schools and homes, and steal, occupy ever more land.

But what does the European Union do? Nothing! Worse, it intensifies relations with Israel. You speak of human rights, but you let Israel kill with impunity. That hypocrisy disgusts me!

Anna-Michelle Asimakopoulou (PPE). – Mr President, Madam Commissioner, this year has seen multiple clashes between Israelis and Palestinians. It's actually been one of the deadliest years in recent memory, and too many innocent civilians, including young children, have paid the ultimate price. Terrorist attacks against Israel have led to the highest death count since 2008, and this is a sign, perhaps, that the Palestinian Authority is increasingly losing its control and its credibility.

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We cannot afford to turn away from this discussion. Peace between Israel and Palestine is not a bilateral issue. It is a regional issue. If we lose sight of that, then we fail to appreciate the many barriers which stand in the way of peace, and to recognise the available paths to peace.

This conflict does not exist in a vacuum. We see actors like Iran continuing to do all it can to sow division and destruction – a regime which defines itself by its hatred of Israel and supports terrorist groups like Hezbollah and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, with the goal of Israel's ultimate destruction.

But there is another path, and we see this reflected in other parts of the region – a diplomatic and prosperous path to peace, namely the Abraham Accords, a process that has seen Arabs and Israelis traveling to each other's countries and discussing how they can develop their economies together to prosper – and these are areas where our policy in the region could be more proactive.

So, we must get tougher on Iran and we must offer more support to champion the outcome of the Abraham Accords. In doing so, we can help remove barriers and follow the path to genuine and lasting peace.

Elena Yoncheva (S&D). – Monsieur le Président, nous sommes tous très conscients des difficultés à faire face à un conflit qui dure depuis plusieurs décennies. Nous ne pouvons pas rester spectateurs d'une situation qui crée le désespoir et l'insécurité et coûte la vie à de nombreux innocents. Dans les circonstances actuelles, ramener la paix n'est pas une tâche facile, mais elle n'est pas impossible.

Nous devons commencer par redonner la priorité à la paix dans notre agenda européen pour trouver des solutions au conflit. Le format de Munich de 2020 faisait partie d'une initiative constructive de l'Union européenne en direction d'une solution à deux États. Nous devons maintenir ce format en vie. L'Union européenne a toutes les sources disponibles pour cela. Elle devrait montrer l'exemple dans la promotion de la paix, en rassemblant des contributions concrètes que les partenaires internationaux sont prêts à fournir, car la violence n'aidera pas à résoudre le conflit.

Nicola Beer (Renew). – Herr Präsident! Eine Diskussion über den Nahost-Friedensprozess ist überfällig. Sie darf trotz des russischen Angriffskrieges auf die Ukraine nicht aus unserem Blickfeld geraten. Sie ist dringend nötig, denn eine Zweistaatenlösung ist schwieriger denn je. Eines ist völlig klar: Nur mit ernsthaftem Bemühen der Konfliktparteien selbst, nur mit Willen zu fairer, friedlicher Konfliktlösung wird in der Region Frieden möglich sein. Auf beiden Seiten braucht es ein klares Bekenntnis, politische Führung und konkretes Handeln für eine Zweistaatenlösung.

Auch wir im Europäischen Parlament müssen weg von festgefahrenen Konfrontationen, hin zu einer balancierten, konstruktiven Rolle der Europäischen Union. Die EU kann aus ihrer Geschichte beitragen, als Kontinent der Versöhnung unterstützen, eine umfassende, dauerhafte und friedliche Lösung zu finden. Den Teufelskreis von Gewalt, Gegengewalt und Hass zu durchbrechen, das ist entscheidend.

Wir müssen konsequent gegen Terror und Gewaltverherrlichung vorgehen und das Vererben physischer und struktureller Gewalt von Generation zu Generation durchbrechen. Der Schlüssel hierzu ist das Bildungssystem. Lassen Sie uns die Zivilgesellschaft dabei unterstützen, sich einzusetzen für Frieden, für Menschenrechte, für ein Bildungssystem, das gegenseitigen Respekt und Toleranz fördert. Enttäuschend, dass die vorliegende Entschließung dem nicht gerecht wird.

Tom Vandenkendelaere (PPE). – Voorzitter, collega's, commissaris, de tweestatenoplossing blijft een doelstelling van eerste orde waarvoor de Unie proactief moet blijven ijveren, in het belang van Israël en de Palestijnen en van de ganse regio. Daarbij zouden we meer oog moeten hebben voor het regionale aspect en de externe factoren die onderhandelingen over een leefbare en duurzame tweestatenoplossing beïnvloeden, en in het bijzonder de rol van Iran als regionale grootmacht.

We bekritisieren dit land – met inbegrip van sancties – omwille van de repressie tegen demonstranten, de miskenning van mensenrechten, de executies, de gijzeling van Europese burgers, militaire leveringen aan en samenwerking met Rusland, de ambities van een kernwapenstaat, en ga zo maar door. Ook specifiek met betrekking tot het vredesproces in het Midden-Oosten speelt Iran een rol die volledig ingaat tegen alles waarmee wij als Europeanen proberen de haalbaarheid van een tweestatenoplossing te vrijwaren.

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Iran wendt bewust en gericht invloed in de regio aan op een manier die dit vredesproces nog veel moeilijker maakt. We mogen hier in ons optreden tegenover Iran niet aan voorbijgaan, en we zouden ons de vraag kunnen stellen of het aandeel van Teheran in de patstelling rond het vredesproces niet eveneens ter sprake zou moeten worden gebracht in de onderhandelingen over het gezamenlijk alomvattend actieplan, in zoverre dit akkoord zal kunnen worden gereanimeerd.

Margarida Marques (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, Senhora Comissária, na Faixa de Gaza, 80% dos palestinos dependem da ajuda humanitária. Mais de metade vive em pobreza e sem assistência médica. 80% dos jovens estão desempregados. Há 47 000 presos políticos palestinos. Ataques israelitas continuam nos territórios ocupados. Civis continuam a ser mortos. Estes números chocam, evidentemente que chocam. Mas por detrás destes números estão pessoas.

O reforço da influência da extrema direita no poder em Israel tem agudizado o conflito, o que aumenta a exigência da União Europeia. É por isso que esta resolução é importante. Porque insiste em que a solução dos dois Estados é a única solução possível para a paz. Porque apela à convocação de uma conferência internacional para a paz. Porque defende o reforço do financiamento europeu para estimular a recuperação económica, ajudar à reconstrução de infraestruturas e apoiar a sociedade civil. Porque exige o fim dos colonatos ilegais e exige que as ONG palestinianas deixem de ser consideradas terroristas.

Uma solução para o conflito tem de ser encontrada e a União Europeia deve fazer parte dela.

Karen Melchior (Renew). – Mr President, thank you, Commissioner, for your presence. And thank you to our negotiators for the great work that you've done.

As a teenager, the news was filled with Hebron and the fighting between Israeli settlers and Palestinian residents. When visiting Israel and Palestine in 2019, the recent history of Hebron stood out because Hebron of the 1990s has become the blueprint for settler organisations to continue illegal settlements that render a two-State solution impossible.

I am as a supporter of a safe, secure Israeli state, just as I'm the supporter of a safe, secure Palestinian state, and this resolution supports this. However, for nearly 20 years, successive Israeli governments have allowed and even promoted the undermining of a two-State solution.

Netanyahu: previously you internationally confirmed your commitment to a two-State solution. During the Israeli election campaign you said the opposite. So what will be the answer of your new Israeli Government?

I call for the Israeli Government to take steps to stop the occupation. Settlements must not be transformed into annexation. They must not hinder a viable Palestinian state. I insist the European Union must uphold the rule of international law, including a distinction between the lands of Israel and the lands of illegally occupied territories.

Peter van Dalen (PPE). – Voorzitter, de situatie daar is zeer complex en dat vraagt van buitenstaanders toch – denk ik – een zekere terughoudendheid. Tegelijk is wel de vraag: wil Israël een tweestatenoplossing? Als ik zie dat onder Netanyahu de afgelopen jaren een gure wind is gaan waaien, dan lijkt die belangrijke oplossing verder weg dan ooit.

Ik ben ook teleurgesteld in Joodse kolonisten die zo vaak op Palestijnen inslaan. En als er dan al Israëlische politie is, dan kijken die vaak de andere kant op. Palestijnen wonen er soms al generaties lang en moeten dan toch hun land verlaten. Hun panden en olijfbomen worden regelmatig verwoest. Dat is wel grond die bestemd is voor die tweede staat die er moet komen. Die wordt daar wel hardhandig en onrechtmatig ingenomen.

En Voorzitter, ik denk vooral – en met name – aan Palestijnse christenen. Daar wil ik hier expliciet wat over zeggen. Zij zitten tussen hamer en aambeeld. Israël wil Palestijnse families uit de Westelijke Jordaanoever zien vertrekken, maar tegelijkertijd willen ook moslims daar de christenen weg hebben en willen ze de grond van de christenen daar verkopen.

Voorzitter, Israël en de Palestijnen moeten samen tot een toenadering komen. En laat dat de boodschap van Kerst zijn, dat er werkelijk vrede mag komen daar, met de tweestatenoplossing als oplossing.

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Brando Benifei (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, in Israele la destra nazionalista cresce, in Cisgiordania l'Autorità nazionale palestinese vive una seria crisi e a Gaza Hamas tiene sotto ostaggio i civili.

Di fronte a questa assenza di politica e all'escalation di violenza in Israele e Palestina, l'Europa non può limitarsi alla condanna ma deve dare vita adesso a una pace giusta per i popoli coinvolti.

La risoluzione che voteremo domani va proprio in questa direzione: due popoli e due Stati con Gerusalemme unica capitale, seguendo i confini del 1967.

Le occupazioni illegali israeliani in Cisgiordania devono finire, così come il blocco nei confronti di Gaza e, allo stesso tempo, è necessario agire contro Hamas, che ancora invoca la distruzione di Israele e compie atti terroristici di matrice antisemita.

Sono convinto che l'Unione europea, assumendo la leadership di una nuova conferenza internazionale, possa e debba finalmente porsi come soggetto diplomatico decisivo nel rilanciare un vero processo di pace tra Israele e Palestina.

José Ramón Bauzá Díaz (Renew). – Señor presidente, gracias al acuerdo firmado entre Israel, Egipto y Europa hace solo unos meses, hoy podemos tener un invierno en plena normalidad. Hace dos años Israel firmó con Emiratos Árabes, Bahrein, Marruecos y Sudán la normalización de sus relaciones. El mayor cambio de paradigma en la región de los últimos años.

Esta Resolución que debatimos hoy es una oportunidad perdida para dar cuenta de los avances que se suceden en Oriente Medio, liderados por la única democracia que existe en la zona. Algunos afirman que estos acuerdos no pueden solucionar los problemas regionales y tratan de silenciarlos. No les parece suficiente que árabes y judíos vuelvan a hablar, vuelvan a comerciar, vuelvan a cooperar. Europa y este Parlamento deben apoyar una solución compartida al proceso de paz en Oriente Medio. Y también deben reconocer los pasos adelante que la propia región está dando.

El futuro de esta región pasa por la estabilidad. Sin estabilidad, no hay solución al conflicto entre Israel y Palestina. Sin estabilidad, no habrá salida en Yemen. Sin estabilidad, no hay seguridad y solo gana uno: Irán.

Que por nosotros no quede, señorías. Hagamos lo posible para que esta estabilidad se mantenga y se potencie entre todos.

Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE). – Mr President, of course we all want peace for the Middle East, and we want to have a two-state solution – or even one-state solution, as was discussed at some point.

But then again, what is the real situation and what do we do as a Union? While Israel does not respect the UN resolution and internationally-committed borders, while Israel is expanding illegal settlements and barely having any room left for the Palestinians, it looks like we would almost be waiting for the Palestinian area to diminish and disappear.

What do we do when Israelis are preventing Gaza people to travel, to work and even from getting medical help? Well, we intensify our economic and scientific relations with the Israelis and, the latest, we engage ourselves to deepen police cooperation.

How do we deal with Russia when it has one partial attack in Europe? Where do we see the economic sanctions against Israel? Where do we see the strong stopping of any bilateral cooperation with Israel? Being non-partial and balanced does not mean closing up the eyes and being blind.

Ilana Cicurel (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, pour être une médiatrice crédible au Moyen-Orient, notre Union doit prendre acte de la complexité du conflit israélo-palestinien et être garante d'une vision clairvoyante, loin de tout mani-chéisme. Notre détermination doit être guidée par notre volonté d'être utiles à la résolution de ce conflit tragique et fidèles à la défense de nos valeurs démocratiques.

À l'heure où nous sommes collectivement confrontés au danger des ingérences étrangères et à la nécessité de préserver notre indépendance pour porter une voix utile et constructive, ouvrons les yeux. Pour être utiles à la paix au Proche-Orient, nous devons dénoncer les pays qui financent le terrorisme, comme le Qatar et l'Iran. Pour être utiles à la paix au Proche-Orient, nous devons redoubler de vigilance vis-à-vis des pays financeurs de médias porteurs d'une diabolisation d'Israël, comme AJ+, le média du groupe Al Jazeera destiné à la jeunesse, financé par le Qatar – toujours lui –, qui se présente comme un média progressiste, mais soutient l'islam le plus rigoriste. Ce média pousse l'hypocrisie jusqu'à accuser Israël de ne soutenir les droits des personnes LGBT que pour occulter le conflit israélo-palestinien, alors

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qu'Israël est le seul pays de la région où les personnes LGBT peuvent vivre en sécurité. Ne cherchez pas, vous n'y trouverez rien qui dénonce l'une des politiques les plus homophobes de la planète, celle du Qatar, qui prévoit sept ans d'emprisonnement pour les étrangers et la peine de mort pour les natifs.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Billy Kelleher (Renew). – Mr President, *(start of speech off mic)* sustainable, permanent cease-fire, the lifting of the blockade in Gaza and the establishment of a two-State solution based on the 1967 borders.

But let's be very clear; while we talk, Israel is systematically dismantling Palestine. If you look at any map from Jenin in the north to Hebron in the south, there is no longer a contiguous, functioning Palestinian state. We talk about it in the abstract – occupation. This is an illegal invasion of Palestinian lands. It is a breach of international law, it is a breach of UN Charters, it is a breach of fundamental rights and it is a breach of basic decency.

So Europe does have to act. And we will pass resolutions, we will condemn in soft language, but we will do nothing to advance this two-State solution. If no more, if we would only ban the produce coming from the illegally occupied areas, it would send a message to both Israel and Palestine that we are serious about the two-State solution. We want to ensure that Palestine survives and that Israel has security as well. But we cannot sit idly by and let it dismantle Palestine as it is.

Özlem Demirel (The Left). – Herr Präsident! Das Schweigen über das Unrecht, das den Palästinensern seit Jahren und Jahrzehnten geschieht, ist tatsächlich ohrenbetäubend.

Obwohl wir eine Lösung haben, dass eine Zweistaatenlösung vorgesehen ist, und diese Beschlusslage seit Jahren existiert, sehen wir hier keine zwei gleichberechtigten Staaten, stattdessen immer weiter Vertreibung und Leid für die Palästinenser. Immer weiter wird die Siedlungspolitik ausgebaut, immer weiter driftet die israelische Regierung nach rechts. Immer mehr rechte Politikerinnen und Politiker bekommen Zulauf in Israel. Das ist ein Riesenproblem. Solange das so ist und solange wir immer weiter Rechtspolitik in Israel erleben, müssen wir auch in der EU eine klare Sprache sprechen.

Diese klare Sprache bedeutet für mich auch, dass europäische Staaten keine Waffengeschäfte mehr mit Israel durchführen dürfen, solange tatsächlich die Siedlungspolitik nicht ein Ende hat.

Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE). – Senhor, presidente. Demolir o *apartheid*, não as casas e as escolas da Palestina. Demolir o *apartheid* israelita na Palestina ocupada. Este cruel sistema de dominação é um crime contra a humanidade.

É necessário haver dois Estados para pôr fim à negação dos direitos fundamentais dos palestinianos, que enfrentam condições de vida muito difíceis. Para haver dois Estados devem ser reconhecidos os direitos humanos dos palestinianos e revogadas as leis de natureza segregacionista, bem como a hegemonia geográfica de Israel. Qualquer diálogo de paz tem que ser acompanhado do fim da expansão dos colonatos.

A Europa não deve ser cúmplice, deve condicionar políticas de cooperação que permitam acabar com estes crimes. Toda a solidariedade para com a Palestina.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Mr President, the two-state solution has been used as a smokescreen to fake concern for the human rights of Palestinians, while leaving the Israelis to pursue their genocidal treatment of the Palestinian people. The terms of the two-state solution are beyond anything the Israeli settler colonialists would ever entertain, and everyone knows it.

Who is going to make them respect the 1967 lines? No one lifted a finger while they evicted Palestinians from their homes and lands, illegally annexed territory and built countless illegal settlements. Why should Palestinians accept the terms of a deal that they know from bitter experience the other side is incapable of honouring?

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Three decades we have talked about this proposal as it becomes more of a fantasy, while the Palestinians suffered a brutal, grinding reality of apartheid. If this is all we have to offer, then the Palestinians are better off pursuing their right to resist the colonisation of their lands, to fight for self-determination, independence and the right of return for all Palestinian refugees to fight for human rights and freedom.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Mr President, the Palestinian leadership showed great willingness to compromise when principally agreeing to a two-State solution. But for as long as it has been the main approach, settlement expansion and annexation has continued. Palestinians live under a militarised apartheid regime that systematically oppresses, brutalises and discriminates against them, enforcing settler violence, evictions, demolitions, colonisation of their neighbourhoods. Israel embarks on sprees of spectacular military violence against a civilian population in Gaza, feebly justified on the basis of a security threat. And of course, in theory, the EU regrets all this. But it never has consequences. Instead, we excuse it. We reward Israel with deepening bilateral cooperation and the Zionist ultra-right advances.

These are facts. With every year, a two-State solution is less viable. We have to call a spade a spade. There is no peace process. It's a process of annexation under false pretences and we all know it.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Helena Dalli, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members, thank you for the opportunity to exchange on this matter.

I shall come to a direct question which was put to me on Palestinian textbooks. The EU has funded an independent study of Palestinian textbooks against defined international benchmarks based on the UNESCO's standards on peace, tolerance and non-violence in education. The research by the independent and internationally recognised Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research was published in June of last year. The analysis revealed a complex picture. The report was shared with the European Parliament and the services briefed various committees of the European Parliament.

The independent assessment carried out by the GEI provides an objective basis for the EU's engagement with the Palestinian Authority on education reform and changes to the curriculum that are essential, with a view to bringing about the full adherence to UNESCO's standards of peace, tolerance, coexistence and non-violence in all Palestinian educational material.

The EU has stepped-up its engagement with the Palestinian Authority on the basis of the study, with the aim to ensure that further curriculum reform addresses problematic issues in the shortest possible time frame, and that the Palestinian Authority takes responsibility to screen textbooks not analysed in the study.

In parallel, the EU will encourage the relevant authorities in Israel and the Palestinian authorities to engage in dialogue to ensure coherence with UNESCO benchmarks on peace, tolerance and non-violence in education in their curricula, ideally, through joint efforts, the exchange of experts and full transparency.

To conclude this, I can assure you that the EU will remain actively engaged and working towards the relaunch of the two-state solution. We continue to call on the parties to take concrete steps towards relaunching a political horizon and offer our every support towards this end.

The EU will continue to defend the viability of the two-state solution and respect for international law, and to advocate against any unilateral action.

Der Präsident. – Gemäß Artikel 132 Absatz 2 der Geschäftsordnung wurden sechs Entschließungsanträge eingereicht¹.

Die Aussprache ist damit geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung findet am Mittwoch, 14. Dezember 2022, statt.

¹ Siehe Protokoll.

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18. Ataques aéreos turcos no norte da Síria e na região do Curdistão iraquiano (debate)

Der Präsident. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärung der Kommission zu den türkischen Luftangriffen auf Nordsyrien und die Region Kurdistan-Irak (2022/2968(RSP)).

Helena Dalli, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members, the latest escalation of violence in Türkiye, Syria and Iraq is, of course, of grave concern. It is so for several reasons. First, for the loss of civilian life. Second, because the violence we have seen threatens the already volatile security situation of the entire region. And thirdly, it puts the gains made in the fight against Islamic State in jeopardy. This is all the more concerning against the backdrop of Russia's war of aggression on Ukraine.

Türkiye is a key partner of the European Union and a critically important actor in the region and the Syrian crisis in particular. The EU calls for restraint and for urgent de-escalation. Türkiye needs to act in a responsible manner and contribute to regional stability and security. Türkiye has the right to respond to the horrible incident of 13 November in Istanbul. However, Türkiye's security concerns stemming from north-east Syria should be addressed through political and diplomatic means, not by military action, and in full respect of international humanitarian law.

President Erdoğan's recurring language suggests an upcoming incursion in northern Syria. The EU has repeatedly stressed our concern over any such operation with our Turkish interlocutors, and we continue to raise these concerns and to stress the need to avoid further escalation.

So let me make three points. A ground incursion into Syria would further undermine the fight against Daesh, would lead to unacceptable human suffering and would have great implications for international security. The weakening of the Syrian defence forces would open the door to a return of the Assad regime to the north-east of Syria, supported by Russian military forces, thus handing a further geopolitical advantage to the Russian Federation. A lasting peace in Syria can only be achieved through the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2254. The violations of Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity, not only by Türkiye, but also by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, come at a particularly critical moment for Iraq, which has a new government in place after a prolonged government formation and political tensions.

The EU remains committed to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq. We call on all Iraq's neighbours to refrain from unilateral military actions that could undermine Iraq's sovereignty and have a destabilising effect on Iraq and the wider region. We support Iraq's efforts to develop a balanced foreign policy, maintaining good relations with both international and regional partners. Countries in the region, including Türkiye and Iraq, are encouraged to better coordinate anti-terrorist activities and any actions against the PKK. We expect them to act in full respect of international law, including international human rights and humanitarian law.

We also encourage Iraq and Türkiye to continue on the path of dialogue and friendly neighbourly relations, and we stand ready to support such a dialogue, if and when needed.

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Άννα-Μισέλ Ασημακοπούλου, εξ ονόματος της ομάδας PPE. – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, κυρία Επίτροπε, οι βομβαρδισμοί στη Συρία, αλλά και στην κουρδική περιφέρεια του Ιράκ, αποδεικνύουν περίτρανα ότι η επιθετικότητα της Τουρκίας αποτελεί ένα ευρωπαϊκό πρόβλημα. Βέβαια, είμαστε εμείς, οι Έλληνες και οι Ελληνίδες, που έχουμε καθημερινά να αντιμετωπίσουμε την ασταθή και απρόβλεπτη συμπεριφορά ενός γείτονα, που δυστυχώς απέχει παρασάγγας από τις ευρωπαϊκές αξίες, αλλά και αγνοεί συστηματικά τις επιταγές του Διεθνούς Δικαίου. Μόνο τους τελευταίους μήνες, οι δηλώσεις της τουρκικής ηγεσίας αρκούν για να αντιληφθεί κανείς ότι η Τουρκία έχει επιλέξει συνειδητά να δρα ως κράτος-ταραξίας. Ο κ. Ερντογάν έχει εξαπολύσει ουκ ολίγες απειλές εναντίον της πατρίδας μου, της Ελλάδας, χρησιμοποιώντας επανειλημμένα τον στίχο «θα έρθουμε νύχτα», από το ομώνυμο τραγούδι που συνδέθηκε με τις μαύρες μέρες της εισβολής στην Κύπρο. Αυτό είναι ένα ψήγμα μόνο από την εμπρηστική ρητορική που εκφράζει σε κάθε ευκαιρία, κουνώντας το δάχτυλο στην Ελλάδα, ακόμα και για ζητήματα όπως το μεταναστευτικό, όπου είναι η Τουρκία αυτή που δεν τηρεί τα συμφωνηθέντα σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο. Προχθές μάλιστα, κατά τη δοκιμή του βαλλιστικού πυραύλου Typhoon, δήλωσε: «Στην Ελλάδα λένε ότι ο πύραυλος θα χτυπήσει την Αθήνα. Φυσικά και θα χτυπήσει, αν δεν κάτσετε ήρεμοι». Τι άλλο θα ακούσουμε!; Φαίνεται πως όσο πλησιάζουν οι εκλογές, οι λεονταρισμοί του Τούρκου προέδρου θα αυξάνονται. Η ανοχή της Ευρώπης, όμως, είναι αυτή που θα έπρεπε να έχει ήδη εξαντληθεί. Αναρωτιέμαι, κυρίες και κύριοι συνάδελφοι, τι ακριβώς περιμένουμε για να απαντήσουμε αποτελεσματικά πλέον στην τουρκική προκλητικότητα;

Nacho Sánchez Amor, en nombre del Grupo S&D. – Señor presidente, Turquía nos suele acusar a la Unión Europea de practicar dobles estándares, pero hay veces que nuestros dobles estándares parecen beneficiarla.

Vamos a ver, ¿cómo hemos calificado el hecho de que un país, alegando la conveniencia de prevenir un peligro hipotético y futuro, invada a un vecino con fuerzas militares, violando una frontera soberana internacionalmente reconocida, aunque lo llame operación militar especial? Y no hablo de Rusia, que tanto parece excitar el celo de esta Cámara. Hablo de una flagrante violación del Derecho internacional de Turquía.

En tres ocasiones ya ha lanzado «operaciones» en Siria e Irak. ¿Cuándo una operación comienza a ser una incursión? ¿Y cuándo una incursión es una invasión? ¿Y cuándo una invasión es una ocupación? ¿Y no estarán nuestros dobles estándares facilitando que estos ataques aéreos den paso a una peligrosísima invasión terrestre?

La señora comisaria le ha pedido a Turquía «restraint». ¿es ese el mismo doble estándar que estamos utilizando para Rusia? ¿a Rusia en Ucrania le hemos pedido «restraint»?

Jan-Christoph Oetjen, im Namen der Renew-Fraktion. – Herr Präsident, Frau Kommissarin, verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Klar ist natürlich, dass terroristische Anschläge wie der Anschlag in Istanbul zu verurteilen sind. Ich glaube, daran gibt es keinen Zweifel.

Klar ist aus meiner Sicht aber auch, dass die Militärschläge, die in der Folge sozusagen als Vergeltung von der Türkei in Syrien und im Nordirak getätigt wurden, genauso zu verurteilen sind, denn diese Militärschläge treffen insbesondere die kurdische Zivilbevölkerung, und das ist nicht hinnehmbar.

Ich erwarte von der Türkei, dass der Deeskalation der Vorrang gegeben wird. Denn in der Region geht es eben nicht nur um die Türkei, sondern es geht um die Stabilität auch der Nachbarstaaten. Und die territoriale Integrität insbesondere des Iraks darf nicht verhandelbar sein.

Es ist auch ein Rückschlag im Kampf gegen den islamistischen Terrorismus. Denn erinnern wir uns doch: Als der Krieg in Syrien in der Hochphase war, waren es die kurdischen Kämpferinnen und Kämpfer, die gegen den islamistischen Terrorismus in Syrien Front gemacht haben und an unserer Seite gegen islamistische Terroristen gekämpft haben. Das dürfen wir an dieser Stelle nicht verhandeln. Ich rufe die Türkei zur Mäßigung auf. Ein solches Verhalten, wie es an den Tag gelegt wird, ist nicht hinnehmbar.

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François Alfonsi, *au nom du groupe Verts/ALE*. – Monsieur le Président, merci. Où êtes-vous, M. Borrell? Ne voyez-vous rien? Le haut représentant du Service européen pour l'action extérieure n'aurait-il pas compris que M. Erdoğan veut déclencher une guerre au nord de la Syrie? L'Europe n'aurait-elle donc rien à dire pour empêcher l'invasion programmée du nord de la Syrie par la Turquie? Erdoğan viole le droit international. Il menace des millions de citoyens kurdes et d'autres nationalités qui vivent ensemble au Rojava et qui, malgré Daech et la situation générale de la Syrie, construisent une société aux valeurs démocratiques réelles.

Cette invasion aura des conséquences désastreuses pour le Moyen-Orient en général, mais elle aura aussi des conséquences pour le reste du monde. La première d'entre elles sera de lâcher dans la nature une dizaine de milliers de prisonniers islamistes détenus par les forces armées kurdes, qui pourront ainsi reconstituer Daech.

Est-ce que cette situation peut convenir à l'Union européenne? Si ce n'est pas le cas, il faut s'engager très vite et peser sur l'avenir de cette région. Il faut bloquer la possibilité de bombarder impunément le nord de la Syrie en décidant d'instaurer une zone d'exclusion aérienne, comme cela avait été fait en son temps, sous l'égide de l'ONU, pour le Kurdistan iraquien.

En Iraq, les autorités du Kurdistan autonome sont reconnues par la communauté internationale, et leur gouvernement a fait du nord de l'Iraq un îlot de stabilité et un refuge pour tous les persécutés de Daech. Il faut en faire de même pour le Rojava. Les autorités du nord de la Syrie, qui administrent pacifiquement et démocratiquement ce territoire, qui ont combattu et vaincu Daech aux côtés de l'Europe et des États-Unis, doivent être officiellement reconnues et associées aux négociations pour l'avenir de la Syrie. Le Rojava et son administration autonome n'ont jamais été une menace pour la Turquie; c'est bien le contraire, en fait.

Thierry Mariani, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Monsieur le Président, en Syrie, l'Union européenne ne fait que participer au pourrissement de la situation. Après avoir nié la participation islamiste puissante dans la rébellion syrienne, l'Union européenne a versé dans une politique revancharde qui épuise toute la région.

Ainsi, à force de refuser d'organiser le rapatriement des réfugiés syriens présents au Liban, vous êtes en train de détruire l'équilibre de ce pays tout entier. Notre folle politique de sanctions à l'encontre du peuple syrien constitue à la fois un échec politique retentissant et un scandale humanitaire historique. La galaxie mafieuse du Qatargate, qui secoue le Parlement européen, avait évidemment multiplié les initiatives de soutien à la rébellion syrienne. D'ailleurs, depuis dix ans, notre politique envers la Syrie est parfaitement alignée sur les intérêts de Doha dans la zone.

Aujourd'hui, que cela nous plaise ou non, le peuple syrien a donné la victoire à Bachar el-Assad. Le pire ennemi de la Syrie pendant dix ans, Erdoğan, multiplie désormais les signaux pour renouer avec Damas. Vous savez bien que, quand Erdoğan avance un pion au Levant, c'est que l'OTAN le veut peut-être bien. Pour le dire clairement: au lieu de soutenir l'unité territoriale et la politique de la Syrie, notre politique étrangère a tracé le chemin d'un bain de sang inéluctable. Comme toujours dans l'histoire, les États-Unis ont fini par abandonner les Kurdes. Et comme toujours dans l'histoire, les Turcs refusent absolument que les factions kurdes s'organisent à la frontière.

Résumons cette situation aberrante: la Turquie réussit en ce moment à se rapprocher de Damas, alors qu'elle soutient l'occupation illégale de la région d'Idlib par les islamistes et qu'elle a soutenu tous les ennemis du gouvernement syrien. Quant aux Européens, qui ont subi des attentats islamistes directement organisés depuis les fiefs de la révolution syrienne, pourquoi ne pourraient-ils pas rétablir une relation équilibrée avec la Syrie?

Oui, l'affrontement entre les Kurdes et Erdoğan ne peut que nous émouvoir. Il faut cependant être hypocrite pour nier que nous nous indignons, mais que nous ne ferons rien d'autre.

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Özlem Demirel, *im Namen der The Left-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident! Ein Weihnachtslied in Deutschland lautet „Alle Jahre wieder“, und Kinder singen das Lied gerne. Dann denke ich aber an die Kinder in Syrien und in Rojava. Sie singen derzeit Trauerlieder, denn alle Jahre wieder fallen Bomben auf ihre Köpfe nieder. Wieder einmal greift das Erdoğan-Regime unter einem Vorwand die Kurden im Irak und Syrien an. Und alle Jahre wieder gibt es nur leise Reaktionen darauf aus der EU. Frau Dalli, Sie sprechen sogar von dem berechtigten Willen der Türkei, auf den Terroranschlag zu reagieren. Ich frage Sie: Was haben die Kurden in Rojava mit dem Terroranschlag zu tun, außer dass diese Kurden gerade vor einigen Jahren die IS-Terroristen bekämpft haben?

Während die EU mit Blick auf den russischen Angriff auf die Ukraine jegliche Diplomatie vermissen lässt, wird sie mit Blick auf die Aggression des NATO-Partners Türkei megadiplomatisch und leise. Warum, möchte man fragen? Doch die Antwort ist leider offensichtlich: Die EU sorgt sich nicht um die weinenden Kinder, sondern um ihren Flüchtlingsdeal. Vor Menschen, die fliehen, will sie sich schützen. Eine Minute reicht nicht dafür, über die Doppelmoral der EU und auch über das Leid der Kurden und Syrer zu sprechen.

Kolleginnen, das Erdoğan-Regime möchte für den Machterhalt den Angriff nun auch auf Bodentruppen ausweiten. Das muss verhindert werden, und das geht nur mit einer klaren Haltung. Die EU könnte so viel tun, aber sie schweigt. Herr Borrell nimmt noch nicht mal an dieser Sitzung teil. Das, meine Damen und Herren, ist nicht akzeptabel.

Fabio Massimo Castaldo (NI). – Signor Presidente, signora Commissaria, onorevoli colleghi, tutti i segnali indicano che le intenzioni di Erdoğan vanno ben oltre l'obiettivo di vendicare gli attacchi di Istanbul, peraltro senza aver mai prodotto prove in merito alle sue accuse, e che si stia preparando per mettere in pratica la minaccia di un'altra incursione militare in Siria.

Cari colleghi, a che punto abbiamo deciso di tirare la nostra linea rossa? Cipro e la Grecia sono vergognosamente vittime da anni della retorica aggressiva e delle violazioni di Erdoğan. Nonostante l'invasione dell'Ucraina, la Turchia non aderisce alle sanzioni, anzi continua a collaborare allegramente con Putin, bombarda le regioni liberate dall'Isis, aggredisce brutalmente l'Iraq, probabilmente utilizzando armi chimiche contro la popolazione civile.

Inoltre Ankara continua a operare ricatti e vergognose pressioni sulla Svezia e sulla Finlandia, richiedendo estradizioni e altri vantaggi per rimuovere il veto all'ingresso dei nostri due Stati membri nella NATO.

Questa, colleghi, è una discussione prettamente politica che richiederebbe una posizione ferma del Consiglio e un confronto in questa sede anche con l'Alto rappresentante. Con 49 di voi, colleghi e deputati, abbiamo attendiamo ancora una risposta alla lettera che abbiamo inviato due settimane fa all'Alto rappresentante Borrell sulla questione.

Nel frattempo le vorrei chiedere, Commissaria, siamo pronti a contribuire alla gestione della catastrofe umanitaria che si verificherà in Siria, all'afflusso di rifugiati che arriverà da queste zone quando l'Isis si riprenderà il terreno che ha perso, ad accogliere in modo conforme al diritto internazionale?

Isabel Santos (S&D). – Senhor Presidente. Não. O combate ao terrorismo não pode ser utilizado por Recep Tayyip Erdoğan com fins eleitorais para desferir ataques aéreos indiscriminados no norte e noroeste da Síria e na região do Curdistão iraquiano. Sejam os claros. Com os ataques a infraestruturas vitais e a populações civis, Erdoğan apenas procura afugentar o povo curdo e, assim, ficar com o espaço para os seus planos de reengenharia social e política na região.

Não. A comunidade internacional não pode continuar impávida e serena a assistir às intervenções que apenas geram mais instabilidade na Síria e na região e deterioram a situação de segurança, trazendo mais sofrimento às populações já martirizadas. Tal como na Ucrânia, também na Síria toda a ajuda humanitária é vital para garantir a sobrevivência das populações. Por isso, deixo aqui um apelo aos Estados-Membros para que defendam nas Nações Unidas a manutenção do funcionamento do corredor humanitário de Bab al-Hawa.

Katrin Langensiepen (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, dear Commission, I'm searching for Mr Borrell. Where are you when it comes to Syria? I'm looking for you because I have questions when it comes to Syria.

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Syria is a bleeding country and I was there a couple of weeks ago with some colleagues, and we visited different places in north-east Syria. And we went, or I went, to the al-Hol camp, where thousands of Daesh fighters, some of them with European citizenship – by the way, we have to take them back, it's our responsibility – are imprisoned. And now Turkey is bombing north-east Syria. It is bombing or attacking al-Hol. We fought against terrorism, Kurds fought against terrorism, and now that region is in danger. We all are in danger. So stop bombing, Mr Erdoğan, north-east Syria, because Syria now is not safe. And if Syria is not safe, we are not safe.

Marco Campomenosi (ID). – Signor Presidente, signora Commissaria, onorevoli colleghi, io e alcuni dei nostri colleghi siamo ormai esperti di questo versante del mondo. Io faccio parte della delegazione per i rapporti con l'Iraq, sono stato alla missione di osservazione elettorale e conosciamo la complessità di un'area difficile. Tutti abbiamo espresso la nostra solidarietà per gli attentati che hanno anche colpito Istanbul, İstiklal Caddesi, ma nulla giustifica quello che la Turchia sta facendo.

Non lo fa solo da queste settimane, non lo fa solo a seguito di certi attentati e sta creando delle conseguenze sulla complessità delle popolazioni locali e uno spostamento di popolazioni che rende quegli equilibri ancora più difficili, non solo da mantenere ma anche da ripristinare.

Lo hanno già detto altri colleghi, gli estremisti approfittano della situazione, le milizie filoturche di Ahrar al-Sham stanno distruggendo infrastrutture e l'agricoltura e c'è un impatto sulle minoranze, quella cristiana ma non solo quella, abbiamo parlato giustamente anche dei curdi, che si sentono minacciati.

L'Isis, in tutto questo contesto, può riemergere e farlo in maniera grave, con conseguenze, lo abbiamo detto tutti, anche sulla partenza di rifugiati verso l'Europa.

Attenzione anche al progetto di Erdoğan di mandare in quell'area due milioni di rifugiati, che oggi sono in Turchia e che però vengono da altre zone della Siria, che andrebbero a creare uno shock ulteriore su un'area che, invece, merita un'attenzione differente.

L'Europa può scegliere di essere presente in quel comparto, dove il mio Paese in questo momento sta guidando il contingente NATO e il mio governo sta esprimendo solidarietà sia alla regione curda dell'Iraq che al neogoverno di Baghdad, ma dobbiamo renderci conto che quelle popolazioni vengono da decenni di sofferenze e dobbiamo intervenire al più presto se vogliamo dirci portatori di valori positivi.

Antoni Comín i Oliveres (NI). – Monsieur le Président, la Turquie se présente à l'Union comme un médiateur nécessaire entre la Russie et l'Ukraine, mais elle pose de graves menaces pour la sécurité de l'Europe.

Ce mois-ci, nous avons assisté à des bombardements des territoires kurdes en Syrie et en Iraq, qui ont visé entre autres l'hôpital pédiatrique de Kobané. Non seulement ces bombardements et l'invasion terrestre des territoires kurdes de la Syrie que prépare la Turquie ont des conséquences humanitaires gravissimes, mais ils préparent le terrain pour que les djihadistes, contre lesquels les forces kurdes ont été nos meilleures alliées, puissent à nouveau mettre en danger la sécurité de la région et notre propre sécurité.

De plus, certains éléments indiquent que la Turquie aide la Russie à échapper aux sanctions de l'Union. Pis que tout, la Turquie menace régulièrement et ouvertement d'attaquer militairement un État membre de l'Union.

Chers collègues, nous avons un problème avec la Turquie, et ce Parlement doit réagir. Qui protège la Turquie dans l'Union européenne? Pourquoi le haut représentant, Josep Borrell, n'est-il pas là? Pourquoi la politique espagnole de laisser faire Erdoğan devient-elle celle de toute l'Europe?

Domènec Ruiz Devesa (S&D). – Señor presidente, queridos colegas, sobre esta cuestión me sumo, obviamente, a la denuncia y a la condena que se ha realizado de la ofensiva del Gobierno turco sobre Irak a raíz del atentado con bomba en Estambul, que causó seis muertos y decenas de heridos. Pero también es preciso, en el caso de esta nueva —no es la primera vez— violación de la soberanía nacional de Irak por parte de Turquía, investigar el posible uso de armas químicas por parte de las fuerzas armadas turcas, que, como sabemos todos, están prohibidas por el Derecho internacional.

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Señorías, Irak es una incipiente democracia, desde luego, con muchos problemas, con muchas dificultades, salida de un proceso electoral que ha necesitado más de un año para formar gobierno. El camino no es el que ha tomado Turquía.

Bernhard Zimniok (ID). – Herr Präsident! Seit 2016 hat die Türkei drei größere militärische Operationen gegen Syrien geführt. Wer das Vorgehen Erdogans dort aufmerksam verfolgt hat, der weiß: Die neuesten Luftangriffe sind der Testballon für eine Bodenoffensive.

Dass der türkische Präsident noch vor zwei Tagen mit Raketen auf Athen gedroht hat, muss uns deshalb umso mehr besorgen. Wo bleibt die vielbeschworene Solidarität der EU mit einem Mitgliedstaat wie Griechenland? Gibt die Kommission der Erpressung wieder einmal nach? Die Türkei profitiert von der Taten- und Hilflosigkeit einer dilettantisch geführten Union. Die hochgelobten Werte sind nicht das Papier wert, auf dem sie geschrieben sind.

Führende Köpfe der EU sind offenbar zu sehr damit beschäftigt, ihre Bankkonten mit Bestechungsgeldern aus Katar zu füllen. Bleibt da noch Zeit, Politik im Sinne der europäischen Nationen zu führen? Denn das kann nur eins heißen: Erdoğan muss in seine Grenzen verwiesen werden. Seine Armee muss vollständig aus Syrien abgezogen werden, und seine islamistischen Hilfstruppen in Idlib gehören vor ein syrisches Gericht. Im Gegenzug müssen wir unsere Beziehungen zu Syrien wieder normalisieren und die nutzlosen Sanktionen beenden, die das Leid der Zivilisten unnötig verlängern. Dies kann nicht nur die gesamte Region wieder stabilisieren. Auch Millionen Syrer haben wieder die Möglichkeit, in ihre Heimat zurückzukehren.

Ein stabiles Syrien ist die Voraussetzung für Frieden im Nahen Osten. Und auch wir Europäer werden dann in diesem Fall gewinnen.

Der Präsident. – Herr Kollege, ich muss Ihnen schon sehr deutlich sagen: Ich bitte Sie, es zu unterlassen, wegen des Fehlverhaltens einer Abgeordneten des Europäischen Parlaments alle in der Verantwortung stehende Funktionärinnen und Funktionäre der EU-Institutionen in Generalhaft zu nehmen.

Evin Incir (S&D). – Mr President, the memory of the international community seems to be short. The EU is once again silent while crimes of atrocity against Kurds are taking place.

Turkey's bombs have been falling down on the Rojava region of Syria and the Kurdistan region of Iraq. It is the same Kurds that have sacrificed their lives for also our freedom here in the EU in the struggle against terrorism. Turkey's bombs have crumbled years of struggle against the most heinous terrorist organisation on this planet, against ISIS.

But yet, silence is the choice of the international community. It is enough with hypocrisy. The memory of the international community might be short, but let me tell you who has not got the luxury of having a short memory: Mohammed, who was 12 years old, whose body was burned by Turkish white phosphorus in the Kurdistan region of Iraq in 2019, and my own Kurdish grandmother, who got her whole village demolished and herself shot at – thank God, not hit – by Turkish military in the city of Lice in 1993, in the Kurdistan region of Turkey.

Colleagues, the EU must demand a no-fly zone over the Rojava region and act to end the Turkish aggression against the Kurds in the different parts before it's too late.

Andreas Schieder (S&D). – Herr Präsident, Frau Kommissarin! Vor rund eineinhalb Monaten war ich mit einigen Kollegen aus dem Europäischen Parlament genau in dieser Region, wo heute die türkischen Bomben fallen. Und was wir dort erlebt haben, war eine Region, wo ein Mindestmaß an Stabilität, ein Mindestmaß an Zivilisation, ein Mindestmaß an gerechtem und freiem Leben ermöglicht worden ist – nämlich in Rojava, in Nordostsyrien, in dem autonomen Gebiet genauso wie in der Autonomen Region Kurdistan im Irak.

Was wir heute erleben, sind brutale Angriffe der Türkei auf diese Region, auf diese Freiheit der Menschen dort, mitunter mit Chemiewaffen auf die Zivilbevölkerung und noch dazu mit der großen Gefahr, dass die IS-Kämpfer, die dort festgehalten werden, wieder freikommen – bis zu 12 000 IS-Kämpfer.

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Daher braucht es jetzt schnelle Aktion – nämlich ein Einstellen der Angriffe durch die Türkei, eine Flugverbotszone und auch, dass die Vertreter Rojavas bei allen Zukunftskonferenzen über Syrien gleichberechtigt am Tisch sitzen dürfen. Volle Solidarität mit dem kurdischen Volk in diesem harten Kampf.

Costas Mavrides (S&D). – Mr President, on 20 November, Türkiye launched a major air offensive attack in Rojava, Syria, and in the Kurdistan region of Iraq, which continues uninterrupted against targets, including civilians and infrastructure.

This was portrayed by Türkiye as a response to the bombing attack a few days earlier that was attributed to the Kurds. Since then, though, the Turkish narrative has change a few times and, despite inconsistencies and contradictions, the request by the HDP for a full investigation has been rejected by the government coalition in the Turkish Parliament.

The Turkish Government has been using the bombing attack as a pretext to attack the Kurds, despite the strong suspicion, which is more than probable, of Turkish intelligence involvement. The ongoing attack in Syria and Iraq is another blatant violation of international law, just like in the Aegean against Greece and against Cyprus, despite the ongoing military occupation of northern Cyprus.

Enough is enough. This long-standing appeasement policy has failed and the EU has to act strongly to stop the Turkish aggression now.

Νίκος Ανδρουλάκης (S&D). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, η Τουρκία βομβαρδίζει για άλλη μια φορά τους Κούρδους στη βόρεια Συρία, που με το δικό τους αγώνα αναχαϊτίστηκε το Ισλαμικό Κράτος, η τρομοκρατική οργάνωση που άφησε πίσω της εκατοντάδες νεκρούς στην Ευρώπη και χιλιάδες νεκρούς στη Συρία. Φαίνεται, όμως, ότι εμείς ξεχνάμε πάρα πολύ εύκολα, καθώς παραμένουμε παρατηρητές των προκλήσεων και των συνεχών παραβιάσεων του Διεθνούς Δικαίου. Δεν είναι όμως μόνο αυτό. Η Τουρκία είναι η μόνη νατοϊκή χώρα που δεν έχει επιβάλει κυρώσεις στη Ρωσία. Η Τουρκία είναι η χώρα που εκβιάζει τη Σουηδία και τη Φινλανδία, αρνούμενη να επικυρώσει την είσοδό τους στο ΝΑΤΟ, καταπατά τα κυριαρχικά δικαιώματα Ελλάδας και Κύπρου και μάλιστα είχε το θράσος ο κύριος Ερντογάν να απειλήσει τη χώρα μας, λέγοντας ότι αν δεν κάτσουμε φρόνιμα, σύντομα η Αθήνα θα είναι εντός του εύρους του νέου πυραύλου που κατασκευάζει. Είναι αυτή συμπεριφορά χώρας την οποία το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο και η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή θεωρούν συμμαχική; Τι άλλο πρέπει να κάνει για να πάρετε μέτρα; Το ελάχιστο που πρέπει να κάνετε είναι η επιβολή εμπάργκο όπλων άμεσα και κυρώσεων που θα πλήξουν ευθέως το καθεστώς Ερντογάν.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE). – Señor presidente, ¿dónde está el señor Borrell? Debería estar presionando a Turquía para que pare sus ataques. Debería dejar claro que ellos no acreditan la narrativa de Turquía sobre zonas seguras y amenazas de seguridad de la administración autónoma de Rojava y que los ataques turcos son completamente injustificados. Debería estar apoyando a Rojava para implementar una zona de exclusión aérea protegida internacionalmente. Debería estar trabajando activamente para promover la renovación de las negociaciones de paz.

Porque Turquía lleva tres invasiones en el norte de Siria, dos de las cuales resultaron en la ocupación de áreas anteriormente ocupadas por Rojava. Con la invasión y ocupación turca esas áreas dejaron de ser lugares seguros, donde diferentes comunidades convivían en armonía y las mujeres podían participar plenamente en la sociedad, para convertirse ahora en uno de los lugares más violentos del planeta.

Nos hemos olvidado de la lucha del pueblo kurdo contra el ISIS. Nos hemos olvidado de tantas cosas. No se puede justificar lo que está ocurriendo, porque el pueblo kurdo ha luchado contra el ISIS y esta región se convierte de nuevo en una zona amenazada y violenta.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Mr President, we hear a lot these days about the rules-based international order. Well, Turkey's action in northern Syria and Iraq is a very good example of that in practice. It's one rule for NATO members and one for everyone else.

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Turkey has invaded northern Syria, slaughtered the Kurds there, annexed and occupied Syrian land. Turkey has rolled over them in NATO tanks, bombed them with NATO aircraft. Its NATO troops wielding NATO weapons have driven them from their homes. Yet the West calls the Kurds allies even as it arms and supports Turkish savagery against them.

And when Turkey goes in again, what can we expect from the EU and the US? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Why would we when already they stand by and starve and murder Syrian men, women and children with their illegal sanctions? Western Imperium has no friends, only interests. But you're playing a very dangerous game.

Κώστας Παπαδάκης (NI). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, η απαράδεκτη εισβολή της Τουρκίας στη Συρία και το Βόρειο Ιράκ προκαλεί βαριές συνέπειες για τους λαούς των χωρών αυτών, περιπλέκει την εκρηκτική κατάσταση στην ευρύτερη περιοχή και διαμορφώνει όρους για επικίνδυνες αλλαγές συνόρων. Οι ΗΠΑ, η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, το NATO, όπως και η Ρωσία, καλύπτουν και δικαιολογούν την όλη επιχείρηση ως προέκταση των ανταγωνισμών τους στο μεταξύ τους μακελειό στην Ουκρανία. Ενθαρρύνουν την επιθετικότητα της αστικής τάξης της Τουρκίας, επιδιώκοντας να την αποσπάσουν, ο καθένας για τα δικά του συμφέροντα. Στις δε απειλές για εισβολή που εξαπολύει αυτή σε βάρος και της Ελλάδας, στο πλαίσιο του γεωπολιτικού ανταγωνισμού της με την ελληνική αστική τάξη, οι κατά τα άλλα «σύμμαχοι» απαντούν «Βρείτε τα», στάση που «στρώνει το τραπέζι» της συνεκμετάλλευσης στο Αιγαίο και στην Ανατολική Μεσόγειο, με επικίνδυνες διευθετήσεις για τα συμφέροντα των ενεργειακών ομίλων. Τέτοιες είναι οι συμμαχίες των αστικών τάξεων. Πρέπει λοιπόν να δυναμώσει η λαϊκή πάλη και η επαγρύπνηση για καμία αλλαγή συνόρων και των Συνθηκών που τα προβλέπουν.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Helena Dalli, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members, thank you for raising international attention to this important matter by placing this debate on the plenary agenda. The EU remains committed to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria and reiterates its support for a full nationwide ceasefire. Let me insist once more, the only path to stability in Syria is through a credible and inclusive UN-facilitated political solution in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2254.

With regard to the comment on Greece, the EU has repeatedly stressed that hostile rhetoric against Greece raises serious concerns and fully contradicts much needed de-escalation efforts in the eastern Mediterranean. I recall the HR/VP's statement of 5 September in this regard. We have repeatedly made very clear that replacing threatening rhetoric with meaningful and sincere dialogue and communication is key for defusing tensions, promoting mutual understanding and developing good neighbourly relations between Greece and Türkiye, as well as regionally in the eastern Mediterranean. We reiterate again our expectation from Türkiye to seriously work on de-escalation tensions in a sustainable way.

With regard to Cyprus, the EU remains fully committed to the comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem on the basis of a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with political equality in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. It is important to avoid any unilateral action that could trigger tensions on the island and undermine efforts for creating an environment conducive to the resumption of the settlement talks where conditions allow. We continue to stress this with Turkish officials and with the representatives of the Turkish-Cypriot community.

With regard to the repatriation of Daesh children, we are aware, of course, of the issue, but repatriation is a matter which falls under Member State competences. So some have decided to take the citizens, others not, and it is up to them to decide how to respond.

Der Präsident. – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

19. Relatório anual sobre a aplicação do Acordo de Associação da UE com a Geórgia (debate)

Der Präsident. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über den Bericht von Sven Mikser im Namen des Ausschusses für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten über die Umsetzung des Assoziierungsabkommens zwischen der EU und Georgien (2021/2236(INI)) (A9-0274/2022)

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Sven Mikser, *rapporteur*. – Mr President, colleagues, even as a potential candidate country, Georgia today offers a very mixed picture. The signals coming out of the country are also very mixed, but I will try to start on a positive note.

As an associated country, Georgia enjoys an exceptionally privileged partnership with the EU. I believe that full implementation of the Association Agreement and the DCFTA will continue to be the best way to develop Georgia's economy and improve the welfare of its people. Moreover, we know that Georgians' ambitions do not end with the implementation of the agreement and the DCFTA, indeed Georgia's quest to join the Union enjoys overwhelming support among the population of the country. This overwhelming support for Georgia's European future should allow the country's political parties to come together, overcome their differences and dislikes, and work across the aisle towards a truly national goal. So it should be.

In some policy areas indeed impressive reforms have taken place over the years. When it comes, for example, to the approximation of the national legislation with the EU acquis, Georgia continues to be a frontrunner among the aspirants in the EU's eastern neighbourhood. However, when it comes to demonstrating the ability of Georgia's democratic structures and the country's sustainable commitment to certain key European values, the narrow party political considerations and personal antagonisms of individual strongmen still seem to take priority over strategic national objectives.

Such a toxic political culture could prove detrimental not only to Georgia's European aspirations, but to the nation's long-term security and prosperity as a whole. The EU and the European Parliament continue to stand ready to assist and advise Georgian authorities on how to successfully deliver on the legitimate aspirations of the Georgian people. The 12 priorities identified by the Commission as a precondition for achieving EU candidate status should be seen as a helping hand, and Georgian authorities should seek to make the best use of it.

During the past months, the Georgian Parliament and Government have taken serious steps to address some of the Commission's recommendations. However, the recommendations that lie at the core of the political polarisation still appear elusive. The policy areas where much more tangible progress is needed include the next phase of the judicial reform. Very little has happened here. The fight against corruption, ensuring media freedom, eliminating the excessive influence of vested interests, or the so-called oligarchs, as well as protecting minority rights. None of these can be resolved by the quick adoption of a single piece of legislation by a narrow parliamentary majority. Rather, they require a systemic implementation of complex reforms which can only be successful if the political opposition and civil society are genuinely involved in the process.

One particular case we are carefully following is the election of the new public defender. I would like to commend how the process has been conducted so far, but I would also like to stress that in the end, the result is as important as the process. Therefore, an inclusive and transparent selection process has to result in the election of a truly independent and professional ombudsperson who has the full confidence of civil society.

Let me refer to one of the very last statements by the now former public defender, Nino Lomjaria, regarding the court case and indictment of Nika Gvaramia. The statement said that the case lacks justification and does not correspond to the fundamental principles of criminal law. As such, the statement points to a number of key problem areas in Georgia today – the independence of the judiciary, media freedom, as well as the need for an independent public defender.

Another outstanding issue, which is becoming more urgent by the day, is the fate of former President Mikheil Saakashvili. The European Parliament has repeatedly expressed our concern over the issue and has called for Mr Saakashvili's prison sentence to be deferred, so as to allow him to seek medical treatment abroad. In the light of recent alarming reports, and as Mr Saakashvili's health continues to deteriorate, the issue is becoming more urgent by day.

I am fully aware that in Georgia, the legacy of the former President continues to be an extremely divisive issue. So what I would like to say very clearly is that we see his release as a purely humanitarian issue, and our call does not express legal, political or any other assessment regarding his case.

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Last, regarding the ongoing Russian war against Ukraine, I appreciate Georgia's clear position in various international fora, notably the UN. But Georgia has consistently voted with the EU to condemn Russia's unprovoked aggression and crimes against Ukrainian people. At the same time, I am deeply concerned about the rhetoric of some Georgian political leaders who accuse the European Union and our partners of wanting to drag Georgia into the war.

These accusations are blatantly wrong. The EU has consistently supported and will continue to support Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The EU is a peace project, and Georgia will never have to choose between Europe and peace. Indeed, choosing Europe means choosing peace.

To my colleagues at the EP, I want to say that while we absolutely need to make sure that our would-be members progressively align with our common foreign and security policy instruments, and that the sanctions we have imposed on the aggressor are not evaded by third countries, we must always diligently follow the facts rather than our suspicions or insinuations. I believe that Georgia's vital place is in Europe, but it's for the Georgian politicians to deliver.

President. – Mr Mikser, you used your whole speaking time also for then, so you have speaking time also at the end.

Helena Dalli, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members, your resolution comes at an important juncture for EU-Georgia relations. The European perspective granted last June set our relations on an even closer course, building upon the long-standing cooperation anchored in the Association Agreement. The EU-Georgia Association Agreement remains a strong driver for reform, bringing the country closer to the EU's values, principles, standards and legislation.

The European path sets the bar high as regards the standards Georgia needs to meet and brings increased scrutiny and monitoring of reforms. At the same time, it also provides a wider set of tools to accompany Georgia in this process. So I start with the important reforms which have always been at the core of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, and which are also reflected in the 12 priorities: an ambitious and comprehensive judicial reform, ensuring the independence, integrity and transparency of key judicial institutions, as well as systemic and inclusive review of the electoral legislation, remain essential. It is positive that the Georgian authorities have submitted a number of legislative amendments to the OSCE/ODIHR and the Venice Commission, and we encourage the full implementation of their recommendations, including on key reform elements that are currently missing in the draft legislation.

On the fight against corruption, a new anti-corruption bureau is due to be set up, and I want to underline the need to ensure that this bureau is truly independent. The OSCE/ODIHR and the Venice Commission's opinion would also be very relevant here. An independent ombud is also a key element in a democratic society. I welcome the fact that the selection process of a new public defender has been, until now, inclusive and transparent, and we look forward to it concluding in the same manner.

I hope that the political parties can reach a consensus that also involves a significant number of opposition parties in order to support the next public defender's independence. In our political dialogue, we have also been following closely the situation of former President Mikheil Saakashvili, recalling, both bilaterally and publicly, the authorities' responsibility for his health and well-being, as well, of course, as his right to a fair trial.

Turning now to the economic sectoral cooperation with Georgia, the process of aligning national law with EU law, as part of the Association Agreement, is overall on track and progressing in these areas. A thorough analysis of Georgia's state of preparedness regarding the EU *acquis* is due by the end of this year. At the same time, the EU is fully behind Georgia's efforts to become a digital and energy hub across an increasingly important economic corridor between the East and the West.

We also understand Georgia's vulnerable position in the current geopolitical context, and we remain firmly supportive of its sovereignty and territorial integrity. We also remain committed to further strengthening Georgia's resilience. I stress that the EU remains a close friend and partner to Georgia. This is a crucial moment for the whole country to unite and work resolutely for the common strategic goal of EU membership.

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VORSITZ: EVELYN REGNER

Vizepräsidentin

Markéta Gregorová, *rapporteur for the opinion of the Committee on International Trade*. – Madam President, Commissioner, colleagues, Georgia is one of our most important partners, which is close to many of our hearts. We have been pointing out for years that the areas of democracy, rule of law, fundamental freedoms and human rights in Georgia have significant issues without improvement on many elements, which is why the report on Georgia is somewhat critical.

Implementing genuine and thorough reforms and addressing the shortcomings of the current legislation is a must. There is no space for rushed laws and politically motivated processes. If there is a will for a European future, for candidate status, there will be a path. That's why it's essential to undo the injustices done. Georgia needs to take the next steps towards its goal of EU membership.

Now I am addressing the Georgian politicians directly: put aside your differences; work towards the assignment – the unique opportunity that would fulfil so many aspirations of so many of your citizens of Georgia.

Miriam Lexmann (PPE), *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, colleagues, Georgia used to be a front runner in reforms within the Eastern Partnership countries. That's why it is all the more frustrating to observe the negative trends impacting the country's developments. We must acknowledge that the progress in some sectoral reforms has taken place, but we cannot ignore the overall state of democratic processes and rule of law.

Political leaders are deeply dividing not just the political space, but also the society. The ruling party continues to ignore the agreement of 19 April 2021. Despite the will and readiness of this House, the Jean Monnet dialogue continues to stall. One oligarch continues to hold excessive influence over the political landscape. We have seen attacks against journalists. The judiciary is misused for political pressure and the democratic political process continues to deteriorate. To the contrary, we expect that the trumped-up political charges against Nika Gvaramia must be dropped and he must be released. And the former President Saakashvili must be allowed to undergo medical treatment abroad in accordance with Article 283 of the Criminal Procedures Code of Georgia.

Overcoming these serious challenges is the key to Georgia's European future, but also in strengthening the country's democracy, as well as the resilience in light of today's Georgian situation. As friends of the Georgian people and the champions of their European aspirations, we must be honest about these developments and not waiver in our support for Georgia's democracy.

Nacho Sánchez Amor, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señora presidenta, se han cometido errores con Georgia, también de nuestro lado. Yo creo que ponerla en una situación diferente de Moldavia y de Ucrania lo fue. Pero tampoco las autoridades y la oposición del país están ayudando. Todo se conjura para retrasar el inicio de una agenda política normalizada. Todo se conjura para mantener una polarización que está poniendo en peligro el proyecto europeo del país y, quizá, incluso su propio futuro soberano.

Por tanto, el sistema tiene que liberar presión. En ese sentido, no solo por su situación personal sino porque yo creo que es conveniente para el país, sería bueno que se suspendiera la pena de prisión al expresidente Saakashvili por motivos de salud y para recibir atención médica. Esto no va a solucionar por sí mismo el asunto, pero creo que ayudará a atraer a los actores políticos, o una agenda más normalizada, y a acabar con esa polarización que todos identificamos como el principal problema político del país.

Viola von Cramon-Taubadel, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, Commissioner, colleagues, it is hard for me to admit but Georgia, once a poster child of the Eastern Partnership, is now a captured state.

Democratic backsliding continues to accelerate. The justice system is ruled by clans, while prominent cases are politically motivated, like the unjustified imprisonment of Nika Gvaramia.

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The government has borrowed a page or two from Putin's disinformation handbook. It is spreading lies against the EU, the US, and even against NATO. It is nothing but a shameless lie that the West wants to drag Georgia into the war. Media freedom is deteriorating while pro-Russian radicals are allowed to unleash violence on the media and minority.

The root of this democratic decay is none other than the biggest oligarch of the country, Bidzina Ivanishvili. Ten years ago, he promised an amazing democracy but delivered a captured state. Because of all this, Georgia did not get the candidate status. The EU integration is in Georgia's constitution. And those who fail will have to answer to future generations. And, of course, we need to free Misha for humanitarian reasons.

Bernhard Zimniok, *im Namen der ID-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin! Georgien an die EU heranzuführen, ist ein weiterer Versuch, die Außengrenzen bis nach Asien zu erweitern. Dabei sind die Probleme in Europa nicht ansatzweise gelöst. Das neue Erweiterungsprojekt wird die Kräfte erst recht überstrapazieren. Es gibt nicht einmal eine Landverbindung nach Georgien. Dafür würde eine Aufnahme die EU-Grenzen bis hin zu Russland, der Türkei und Aserbaidschan verschieben.

Nicht nur ist das Konfliktpotenzial mit solchen Nachbarn gewaltig. Es wird auch Tür und Tor für neue Migrationsströme geöffnet. Denn was Erdoğan und Lukaschenka heute schon können, das werden auch andere versuchen: die EU mit immer neuen Migranten erpressen. Jeder weitere Mitgliedstaat wird den Schutz der Schengen-Grenzen zusätzlich erschweren – schlimme Nachrichten für den größten Teil der europäischen Bürger.

Wer außer uns hier steht denn noch ein für die Bürger, die uns gewählt haben? Die EU-Kommission jedenfalls nicht. Soll nun Georgien als nächstes Land Milliarden aus Brüssel kassieren? Der Erweiterungsprozess muss gestoppt werden, oder die EU wird es als solche zerreißen.

Adam Bielan, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – Madam President, dear Commissioner, in view of the Kremlin's illegal war waged against Ukraine, the European Parliament's involvement in and support to Georgia has become even more crucial to the stability of the region. Georgia is one of the founding members of the Eastern Partnership and remains a key partner of the European Union. However, I would like to highlight a few short- and long-term objectives of our work together, which still remain to be achieved.

First, the inhumane detention of former President Mikheil Saakashvili must come to an end, as a sign of political appeasement. Mr Saakashvili's release has been requested several times, and his worsening medical condition leads me to renew this call. His condition must be treated abroad as soon as possible. From this place, I would like to welcome Mr Saakashvili's family, who are present today in the gallery.

Second, Russian propaganda and disinformation campaigns are swiftly spreading in Georgia and are objects of political utilisation. These two issues are not acceptable for a candidate country, especially in the current context, and should be addressed immediately. If they are not resolved, Georgia should not be granted candidate status.

Rasa Juknevičienė (PPE). – Madam President, dear colleagues, Georgia belongs in Europe. It was torn away from Europe by force by Soviet Russia. Today, 20% of its territory is still under Russian occupation. The remaining bloodstained dividing lines in Europe imposed by Stalin and Hitler must be erased. Georgia's membership of the EU is the best way to achieve it.

I am convinced that Georgia will be a member of the European Union. The Georgian people deserve it. I am also sure that EU enlargement makes the EU stronger, including its security. However, I am not sure if Bidzina Ivanishvili, who is holding Georgia hostage, is aiming for the same as the Georgian people.

The Georgian authorities know very well what they have to do. All is written in the recommendation of the Commission and they have to do it without manipulations or pretence. Keeping the seriously-ill former President Mikhail Saakashvili in prison is not a European value. Torturing people is Putin's policy.

I call on the Georgian authorities, including the President, to do everything so that the issue of Mikhail Saakashvili's life does not fall on their conscience.

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Juozas Olekas (S&D). – Pirmininke, gerbiama komisijos nare. Iš tikrųjų buvo pasakyta: Gruzija yra svarbi mūsų partnerė ir Gruzijos žmonės ne kartą yra pareiškę, kad jie renkasi europinį kelią. Tačiau kaip Komisijos narė sakė, kartelė Gruzijai pakelta aukštai ir laukiame, kad Gruzija įgyvendintų pateiktas 12 rekomendacijų. Galime konstatuoti, kad Gruzija daro tam tikrą pažangą, ypač kovojant su korupcija, skaitmeninėje saugumo srityje. Tačiau reikia pabrėžti, kad teisės viršenybė, demokratijos įgyvendinimas, laisvos spaudos teisės toli gražu dar nėra tokios, kokių mes norėtume. Noriu pabrėžti taip pat, kad humanitariniais pagrindais mes turėtume būtinai reikalauti, kad buvusiam prezidentui Saakašvilui būtų suteikta galimybė gauti nepriklausomą medicinos pagalbą. Gruzija turėtų veikti visuomenės konsolidacijos kryptimi ir bendromis jėgomis susitelkti į reformų įgyvendinimą. Į Komisiją kreipčiausi prašydamas dar labiau sustiprinti administracinę pagalbą toms reformoms įgyvendinti.

Joachim Stanisław Brudziński (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Szanowni Państwo! Ja również, tak jak mój kolega, pan poseł Adam Bielan, chciałbym wyrazić słowa poparcia, wsparcia dla obecnych tutaj bliskich pana prezydenta Micheila Saakaszwilego.

Polska i Gruzja to kraje, które łączy wielowiekowa, bardzo bliska współpraca – dlatego Gruzja jest priorytetowym partnerem Polski w regionie Kaukazu Południowego. Niezłomnie popieramy suwerenność i integralność terytorialną Gruzji w jej uznanych przez społeczność międzynarodową granicach, co podkreślamy również podczas naszego przewodnictwa w OBWE.

Potwierdzamy również nasze niezachwiane wsparcie dla euroatlantyckich aspiracji Gruzji. Polska podtrzymuje swoje zobowiązania do polityki otwartych drzwi w odniesieniu do przyszłego, pełnego członkostwa Gruzji w Unii Europejskiej i NATO. Nie ma alternatywy, zwłaszcza że naród gruziński zdecydowanie popiera ten kierunek.

Ale trzeba powiedzieć wyraźnie: Gruzja nigdy nie wejdzie do Unii Europejskiej, jeżeli w sposób tak niehumanitarny i bestialski będzie traktowała polityków. I tutaj dzisiaj powinny popłynąć słowa szczególnego poparcia i wsparcia dla ciężko chorego pana prezydenta Saakaszwilego, któremu dzisiaj władze Gruzji odmawiają humanitarnych, ludzkich praw do tego, aby być leczonym. W ciele pana prezydenta znaleziono metale ciężkie. No jako żywo bardziej przypomina to standardy Putina niż demokratycznego państwa prawa.

David McAllister (PPE). – Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, Georgia is part of Europe. Georgia belongs to Europe. But as we have heard tonight, to be granted EU candidate status, Georgia needs to successfully address the 12 key priorities indicated by the Commission. The Georgian bid for membership will continue to be assessed based on its own merits and its success in implementing all the necessary reforms. Unfortunately, the tense political situation hampers the country's development.

I want to make five remarks. First, political stakeholders need to refrain from any divisive and aggressive rhetoric, and unite their forces in order to increase trust among all political and institutional actors. Second, the excessive influence of vested interests in economic, political and public life needs to be eliminated. Third, Georgian authorities need to ensure media freedom. This entails editorial independence, transparent media ownership of pluralistic, impartial and non-discriminatory coverage of political views. Fourth, political leaders in Georgia must stop aggressive verbal attacks against Members of our European Parliament and representatives of other partner countries.

And finally – and this is also personal for me – as Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, I call on the Georgian authorities: please, please release former President Saakashvili and allow him to undergo proper medical treatment.

Cristian Terheş (ECR). – Madam President, Europeans are now feeling the costs of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine because it is closer to them. But we should never forget that Georgia was the first country against which Russia waged a war of aggression in August 2008. That happened after the recognition of Kosovo and after Germany and France refused to accept Georgia and Ukraine in NATO during the NATO summit in Bucharest.

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If Europe would have taken a stronger position against Russia after its war against Georgia, we could have avoided the war of aggression against Ukraine. After being devastated by Russia's war, and even after 20% of its territory has been illegally occupied by Russian forces since 2008, Georgia has not retreated from its pro-Western course. Georgia was a front-runner among the Eastern Partnership countries, and Georgia is part of the Associated Trio.

The popular support for these European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations are now explicitly written in its Constitution. We should never forget that governments come and go, but nations and people stay.

The Georgian nation and people need our support and a strong sign from the EU now. Georgia's place is in the EU, and they need our unequivocal support to achieve this goal.

Lukas Mandl (PPE). – Madam President, Commissioner, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, I had the privilege to visit Georgia with the Subcommittee on Security and Defence of this very parliament earlier this year, in April. Mr Olekas, our colleague, who is also present in this debate, was always a part of our parliamentary endeavour there. We were standing at the border to the occupied territories, Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

And when we read the title of this very discussion today, 'Annual implementing report on the EU association agreement with Georgia', we have to state that this is not any annual report. It's a report in a very specific year, in a year of the so-called shift of paradigms, as all the experts say and as all of us in political life experience and Georgia is more or less at the frontline of the free world, of the Western world.

Georgia has a clear tendency towards the European Union, European values. A lot has to be done in terms of reforms when it comes to the rule of law, when it comes to fighting corruption, when it comes to also proper political competition, not political fight on a sometimes basis of hatred in the country, when it comes to media freedom.

But one could feel and can feel in Georgia that there is a clear European attitude in the population, and as the other parts of the Eastern Partnership, meaning here Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, Georgia can become an EU Member State in the future undergoing these reforms. And we have to run for that even more than in the past due to this shift of paradigms.

Liudas Mažylis (PPE). – Gerbiamas Pirmininke, pakartosiu, ką jau esu čia kalbėjęs. Europos Sąjunga ima patirti nuovargį nuo plėtos politikos. Ir eilinis pavyzdys – kandidatės statuso nesuteikimas Sakartvelui. O juk pagal apklausų duomenis, net 75 proc. Sakartvelo gyventojų pasisako už europinę integraciją. Tokie skaičiai net nematyti daugelyje Europos Sąjungos senbuvų. Nuo 2016 m. Sakartvelas dėjo nemažai pastangų vykdyti ekonomines, žmogaus teisių ir antikorupcijos asociacijos sutartyje numatytas reformas ir buvo vienas pirmaujančių Rytų partnerystėje. Agresyviame Rusijos karui Ukrainoje prasidėjus, kovo 3 d. Sakartvelas pateikė paraišką dėl narystės Europos Sąjungoje. Tačiau viskas, ką gavo, tai šių metų birželį pripažinta europinė perspektyva. To per maža pozityviai žiniai. O pozityvių ženklų siuntimas iš Europos vidinei Sakartvelo demokratinei raidai yra nepaprastai svarbu. Užkraudami jai, o ir kitoms valstybėms vis naujų vykdytinų darbų, permąstykite, ar tikrai taip išplėsime draugų ratą, ar nepabloginam požiūrio į save, ar nedidinam euroskepticizmo? Politiniai įsipareigojimai vieni kitiems visada turi būti dvišaliai. Pagrįstai reikalaudami progreso iš kitų, turime progresuoti ir patys, siųsti Sakartvelui aiškesnę, pozityvią žinią.

Žinoma, aš prisijungiu prie čia pasisakiusių dėl prezidento Saakašvilio.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Seán Kelly (PPE). – A *Uachtarán*, it's always interesting to listen to the perspectives of MEPs who go and visit a country and to hear what they have to say. And in that regard, it was interesting to listen to colleagues speaking about Georgia.

Obviously, because of the war in Ukraine, things have changed dramatically, and more and more countries in an eastern neighbourhood see not just their economic viability, but their actual viability per se, as being guaranteed only by joining the European Union and that is something which we should be proud of, but something we should facilitate.

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And I think in relation to countries like Georgia, they should be given a time-limit by which they reach the standards required. Having countries like Georgia and Moldova and others on a list ad infinitum, stretching them out, is not fair to them. So, there should be a time limit by which they're told: you reach these targets by then, otherwise, you wait for another ten years. But you need some type of certainty, and I think that's what Georgia needs now, because they would be very valuable Members of the European Union.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Helena Dalli, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, the debate today testifies to our continued engagement and desire to see Georgia succeed in its reforms and on the European path.

But we need also Georgia to work hard and deliver on these reforms, particularly on the 12 priorities, in an inclusive process involving the opposition and civil society and consulting European partners. It is the only way for the country to advance on its chosen European path for the benefit of the future of all Georgian citizens who expect their aspirations to be met.

With regard to what the EU has done on the Saakashvili case, we have consistently stressed both in private meetings and publicly that the Georgian authorities have a legal responsibility to ensure the health of all detainees, to provide adequate medical treatment and to respect their fundamental rights, in line with Georgia's international commitments.

Hence, the Georgian authorities are responsible to act if the health condition of Mr Saakashvili is in critical condition. The EU has repeatedly urged the Georgian authorities to implement recommendations by independent medical experts and to implement the interim measures issued by the ECHR.

Throughout recent months, and most recently on Wednesday last week, we commented publicly to the media that the responsibility for the health of Mr Saakashvili rests with the state. This is not as a matter of political choice, but as a matter of fundamental human rights.

With regard to a timeline for Georgia to join the EU, as you know becoming a member of the European Union is not something that happens overnight. It is subject to a thorough process involving substantial work across all membership criteria. So the pace of accession depends on the progress in reform, first and foremost in the fundamental areas, starting with the rule of law.

Right now, Georgia is encouraged to address the 12 points outlined by the European Commission in order to receive candidate status. The Council has invited the Commission to report on the fulfilment of these steps and priorities as part of its regular enlargement package in 2023.

Die Präsidentin. – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung findet am Mittwoch, 14. Dezember 2022, statt.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)

Urmas Paet (Renew), *kirjalikult*. – See raport on sattunud Gruusia jaoks ajalooliselt pöördelisele ajale. Nimelt, tänavu 3. märtsil esitas Gruusia ametliku taotluse Euroopa Liidu liikmeks saamiseks ning Euroopa Ülemkogu otsustas tänavu juunis tunnustada Gruusia Euroopa Liiduga ühinemise väljavaadet. Gruusial tuleb enne kandidaatriigi staatuse saamist lahendada loetelu esmatähtsaid ülesandeid. Vajalike meetmete võtmine enne Euroopa Komisjoni järgmist hindamist peaks olema kõigi Gruusia poliitiliste jõudude üldesmärk. See on Gruusia jaoks ajalooline võimalus, mida tuleb ära kasutada. Vaja on poliitilist tegutsemistahet, et toetada Gruusia rahva selget toetust oma riigi integreerumisele Euroopa Liiduga. Samuti tuleks üle saada poliitilisest polariseerumisest, mis riigile ainult kahju toob. Gruusial on selleks võimalus teha ka tihedat koostööd Ukraina ning Moldovaga, kuivõrd kõik need kolm riiki püüdleval ELiga liitumise poole. Tunnustan Gruusia ühiskonna tugevat toetust Ukrainale ning kutsun Gruusia ametivõime üles hoidma ELiga ühist välispoliitilist liini Ukraina toetamisel ning kinni pidama ELi sanktsioonidest ja tagama, et Gruusia kaudu ei toimuks kõrvalhoidmist Venemaa Ukraina-vastase agressioonisõja tõttu kehtestatud rahvusvahelistest sanktsioonidest.

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20. Relações ASEAN na perspetiva da Cimeira UE-ASEAN de dezembro de 2022 (debate)

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärung der Kommission zu den Beziehungen zum ASEAN im Vorfeld des Gipfeltreffens zwischen der EU und dem ASEAN im Dezember 2022 (2022/2999(RSP)).

Helena Dalli, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, honourable Members, today's debate is a good opportunity to consider the European Union's relations with ASEAN in the lead-up to the EU-ASEAN commemorative summit on 14 December in Brussels. The summit will bring together, for the first time, Heads of State and Government on both sides and will be an historic occasion to celebrate 45 years of dialogue, relations and our strategic partnership with ASEAN. In fact, to reach this milestone of becoming strategic partners two years ago on 1 December 2020.

To recall, we have a strong and long-standing relationship with ASEAN. The EU and ASEAN are the two most advanced regional integration organisations in the world. The EU is ASEAN's third-largest trade partner and second-largest investor. The EU is a top development partner for ASEAN in support of regional integration as well as with ASEAN Member States bilaterally. The EU also continues to seek enhanced EU participation in all ASEAN-led security fora such as the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus. The summit will offer a political forum for the EU and ASEAN to demonstrate a shared political determination to address the impact of multiple regional and global crises, including the Russian aggression in Ukraine, Myanmar, the climate crisis, as well as our joint attachment to international law, multilateralism and internationally agreed norms and standards.

The summit will also be an opportunity to explore synergies between the EU's strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and the ASEAN outlook on the Indo-Pacific. Our Indo-Pacific strategy specifically highlights the centrality of ASEAN. At the summit, leaders are expected to endorse a joint leaders' statement as a main deliverable of the summit. The joint leaders' statement will showcase our broad cooperation on trade, connectivity, security and climate change, as well as seek leaders' guidance for further cooperation.

In addition to the joint statement, leaders are expected to endorse the new EU ASEAN plan of action 2023-2027, which outlines priorities for EU ASEAN cooperation. Further deliverables are being prepared, such as support on connectivity under the Global Gateway, including a Team Europe Initiative on Sustainable Connectivity, Global Gateway projects put forward by Member States, the EU-ASEAN Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement, as well as further investment projects such as the ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility. We also expect to use the occasion of the summit for the signature of two bilateral partnerships and cooperation agreements with Malaysia and Thailand.

Ahead of the summit, several side events will take place. On 12 December DG INTPA and DG EAC are organising an event on EU-ASEAN people-to-people cooperation in higher education. On 13 December DG INTPA is organising an EU-ASEAN Youth Forum which invites youth to discuss about priority issues for EU-ASEAN relations with EU and ASEAN representatives. In the afternoon of 13 December, the EU-ASEAN Business Council organised a business summit and the President of the European Council, several key EU Commissioners and ASEAN leaders attended the event, along with numerous European business leaders.

This broad agenda of context shows the depth of our partnership, a partnership that is more important than ever, because the future of humankind will be decided in the Indo-Pacific.

Daniel Caspary, im Namen der PPE-Fraktion. – Sehr geehrte Frau Präsidentin, geschätzte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Wir blicken aus meiner Sicht auf ein erfolgreiches Jahr für die Beziehungen zwischen der Europäischen Union und den ASEAN-Staaten zurück. Gemeinsam haben wir in diesem Jahr das weltweit erste Luftverkehrsabkommen zwischen zwei großen Staatenblöcken, nämlich der ASEAN-Region und der Europäischen Union, unterzeichnet, das den Menschen aus beiden Regionen eine bessere Anbindung ermöglichen wird.

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Der neue EU-ASEAN-Energiedialog und die Bemühung der Europäischen Union, den Übergang der ASEAN-Staaten zu sauberer Energie zu unterstützen, sind weitere positive Signale aus diesem Jahr. Gleichzeitig halten wir an dem gemeinsamen Ziel fest, unsere parlamentarischen Beziehungen konsequent weiter auszubauen. Mit Nachdruck müssen wir uns auch weiterhin für die Einrichtung einer gemeinsamen Parlamentarischen Versammlung zwischen der Europäischen Union und den Parlamenten der ASEAN-Staaten einsetzen.

Geschätzte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Mehr als 60 % der Weltbevölkerung nennen die ASEAN-Staaten ihr Zuhause. Gleichzeitig werden 40 % des Außenhandels der Europäischen Union über die Seewege dieser zehn Staaten abgewickelt. Damit sind Frieden, Sicherheit und Stabilität in Südostasien und der gesamten Region für unsere Partner in den ASEAN-Ländern elementar – aber genauso auch für uns.

Konkret bedeutet das: Unser Ziel, von einer strategischen Abhängigkeit von China wegzukommen, erreichen wir nicht nur durch mögliches Einbremsen von Wirtschaftsbeziehungen zwischen der Europäischen Union und China – das sollten wir nämlich nicht tun –, sondern wir sollten die Abhängigkeit vor allem relativ dadurch senken, dass wir wirtschaftliche Beziehungen mit anderen Staaten intensivieren. Und da bieten sich die wirtschaftlichen Potenziale in den südasiatischen und südostasiatischen Staaten wirklich an.

Seit mittlerweile zehn Jahren versuchen wir als Europäische Union, Handelsabkommen mit verschiedenen ASEAN-Partnern abzuschließen, manchmal mit Erfolg – wie mit Singapur und Vietnam –, manchmal treten wir aber auch auf der Stelle – wie bei Indonesien, Thailand, Malaysia und den Philippinen, um einige Beispiele zu nennen –, und dies bei Staaten, die, wie im Fall Indonesiens mit 270 Millionen Einwohnern, gewaltige Chancen für uns bieten.

Jenseits von Abkommen mit einzelnen Staaten müssen wir auch die Verhandlungen für ein Block-zu-Block-Handelsabkommen zwischen der Europäischen Union und dem ASEAN vorantreiben. Das neue Partnerschaftsabkommen zwischen Australien, Neuseeland und dem ASEAN zeigt eindrucksvoll, was möglich ist, wenn der politische Wille vorhanden ist. Viel zu lange waren wir hier zu träge.

Die Kommission ist nun aufgefordert, zügig Fortschritte zu erzielen – in allen Bereichen, bei Handel, aber auch bei Klima, Sicherheit, Energie und auch den Menschenrechtsfragen. Das Potenzial ist da. Nun gilt es, dieses auch gemeinsam zu heben.

Marianne Vind, for S&D-Gruppen. – Fru Formand! Når EU-ASEAN-topmødet begynder i morgen, så markerer vi hele 45 års diplomatisk samarbejde mellem vores regioner. Vores samarbejde spreder sig over en lang række områder, om fred og demokratiske principper, om respekten for menneskerettigheder og om et samarbejde om handelsaftaler og dens vigtige kapitler. Handelsaftaler mellem os har gennem årene sikret en økonomisk velstand i begge regioner, men ligeledes har den forbedret arbejdstagerrettighederne, sikret en ratificering af ILO-konventioner i ASEAN og indført flere vigtige miljøkrav, senest i handelsaftalen med Vietnam. Men blandt ASEAN-landene er der også stater, hvor man stadig går på kompromis med de demokratiske spilleregler, menneskerettigheder og vilkårene for arbejderne. Der er stadig lang vej igen, før vi er, hvor vi skal være. Derfor vil jeg som næstformand for Europa-Parlamentets delegation til ASEAN understrege vigtigheden af, at EU fortsætter med at fastholde og presse på for de demokratiske rettigheder.

Heidi Hautala, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group. – Madam President, dear colleagues, Commissioner, we have had a strategic partnership with ASEAN for two years already, and we in the EU and ASEAN indeed share important objectives in the new geopolitical landscape. We can mutually benefit from alignment in important policy areas, not least in sustainable development and sustainable trade.

The worsening situation in Myanmar since the military coup of 1 February 2021 must feature as an important topic in the summit tomorrow. Even ASEAN must clearly and unequivocally take a stance early on regarding an exercise that the State Administrative Council, i.e. the military junta, has planned for August 2023. They call it an election, but it is not an election and it cannot be called as such.

In the recent ASEAN summit in Phnom Penh, we saw an opening for other stakeholders and the international community to work together to solve the crisis of Myanmar. This is very welcome. Indonesia, as the next holder of the ASEAN chairmanship, is in a key position.

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The EU needs to extend capacity building development to the democratic forces in Myanmar, and I am talking about the National Unity Government, the National Unity Coordination Council and the ethnic organisations. Capacity to govern and uphold an administration requires knowledge, skills and resources, and we need to do this to make real the vision of a genuine federalist and inclusive democracy that Myanmar will one day be. This needs putting the building blocks in place today.

Mathilde Androuët, *au nom du groupe ID.* – Madame la Présidente, ce sommet commémoratif UE-ANASE repose sur, je cite, «des valeurs et des principes communs, un multilatéralisme efficace et le libre-échange». L'Union européenne eût pu se contenter du dernier terme, car en réalité, son action n'est motivée que pour et par le marché – un marché qui, hélas, pris dans la sauvagerie du libre-échange, détruit nos industries et nos agricultures au profit d'une logique de bas coûts et de gains immédiats. La seule valeur commune celle du porte-conteneur, sur la voie contraire à vos vœux de défense de l'environnement.

Évidemment, vous assurez la promotion de vos échanges, purement commerciaux, en revendiquant un travail coopératif sur les droits de l'homme. À la vérité, ceux-ci sont bafoués dans de nombreux pays avec lesquels nous commerçons et qui font fi de vos timides et souvent hypocrites rodomontades. Le business d'abord.

Il n'en demeure pas moins qu'il est impératif que nous ayons des rapports diplomatiques équilibrés avec les pays de l'ANASE, afin de casser le face-à-face entre le bloc chinois et le bloc américain. Mais cette puissance d'équilibre que serait l'Union européenne, existe-t-elle seulement? Outre que vous n'avez pas mandat à l'exercer, nos souverainetés nationales, qui en sont la base, ont été abaissées et remplacées par une impuissance européenne, qu'illustre notamment notre inféodation à Washington, rabaisant aussi les rapports diplomatiques que nous pourrions développer avec d'autres pays du monde, dont ceux de l'Asie du Sud-Est.

Adam Bielan, *on behalf of the ECR Group.* – Madam President, dear Commissioner, tomorrow the EU will celebrate its 45-year-long relationship with ASEAN with the first ever EU-ASEAN Leaders Summit.

As a member of the ASEAN Delegation, I am particularly pleased to see that the new Plan of Action for 2023-2027 includes stepping up cooperation between the parliaments of some Member States and our House. Since the upgrading of their relationship to a strategic partnership in 2020 and the strengthening of the EU's Indo-Pacific strategy in the region, bilateral trade between the European Union and ASEAN countries has been consistently growing. As the second largest source of foreign direct investment for ASEAN, the EU plays a key role in the region's development.

In this context, I would like to call for a stronger and more critical stance from ASEAN leaders with regard to the Russian aggression in Ukraine. Additionally, the EU must ensure its core values, such as respect of international law and human rights, are upheld globally throughout its partnership.

Helmut Scholz, *im Namen der Fraktion The Left.* – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin! Ich möchte meine Rede vor dem ASEAN-Gipfel mit einer klaren Botschaft beginnen: Lassen Sie die Bevölkerung von Myanmar nicht im Stich! Der brutale Militärputsch vom 1. Februar 2021 ist in unseren Medien nicht präsent. Der Krieg gegen das eigene Volk wird weiter mit großer Härte geführt. Was tut die Staatengemeinschaft ASEAN dagegen? Welche Rolle spielt das auf dem Gipfel der EU? Welche Hilfe leisten wir den Flüchtlingslagern in Thailand?

Südostasien klingt für viele schön. Viel reden wir über wirtschaftliche Kooperation, und der Wunsch ist groß, neue Wirtschaftspartner für die EU zu finden. Doch die Organisation von ASEAN-Abgeordneten für Menschenrechte APHR betont – auch mir gegenüber – immer wieder, wie sehr Demokratie und Menschenrechte in fast allen Staaten der Region unter Druck stehen. Das Militär in Thailand, das Duo der Diktatorenkinder Marcos und Duterte in den Philippinen, die stärker werdende „grüne Welle“ des konservativen Islam in Malaysia und Indonesien, der Diktator in Kambodscha und die autoritäre Regierungsrealität in Laos sind Teil der Wirklichkeit, die bei diesem Gipfel mit der EU an einem Tisch sitzt.

David McAllister (PPE). – Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues, tomorrow, as so many speakers have mentioned, our heads of state and government are commemorating 45 years of the partnership between ASEAN and the European Union, a partnership that was upgraded to a strategic level just two years ago. If the relationship between the two most advanced and integrated regional organisations in the world really is to be strategic, issues of concern to the one ought to be considered an issue of concern to the other.

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Having said that, tomorrow's summit offers ample opportunity to strategise the elements of our future security and defence cooperation at a time when international law and maritime security are increasingly being subverted. Like the EU, ASEAN does not attempt to undermine multilateralism. We stand united in our conviction that trade and security should follow rules laid out in international agreements. With the EU being ASEAN's third largest trading partner and its second largest investor, a region-to-region free trade agreement remains the common long-term objective.

In the meantime, let us make full use of existing free trade agreements with Vietnam and Singapore. I encourage further progress in the negotiations concerning the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement with Indonesia, and we should also remain open to a resumption of bilateral negotiations with Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines when, of course, right conditions are in place.

Margarida Marques (S&D). – Senhora Presidente, Senhora Comissária, a Cimeira UE-ASEAN tem de ser um momento para aprofundar a cooperação região a região e para expandir as relações comerciais com as nações ASEAN, diversificando as cadeias de abastecimento, o que é positivo para ambos os blocos.

A ASEAN é um parceiro estratégico também para o reforço da autonomia estratégica da União Europeia num quadro multilateral. Esta cimeira é o momento de passar das palavras aos atos, mas terá de ser também uma oportunidade a não desperdiçar para promover valores comuns e universais junto dos governos da região. Incentivamos à criação de um quadro jurídico e político de respeito pelos direitos sociais, laborais e ambientais e de fomento ao apoio às organizações da sociedade civil na região, contrariando a redução do espaço cívico em vários países ASEAN. Incentivamos ao fim das leis que limitam direitos como a liberdade de associação e reunião.

Acima de tudo, esta cimeira tem de resultar no fortalecimento das relações entre a União Europeia e a região ASEAN e os países que a integram.

Reinhard Bütikofer (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, dear colleagues, the commemorative summit that Brussels is preparing for, with the ASEAN Community, offers an opportunity for reflection of how serious we really are with our strategic partnership. That sounds nice, but how strategic is it really?

We learned today from the media that the two sides have not been able to agree on common language about Taiwan or issues around Taiwan.

So I think we should not fool ourselves. That strategic partnership is still much more of a promise and an aspiration than it is a reality. And I think we should clearly identify priority projects to make it a real strategic partnership. I think one of them would be, as Mr McAllister said, a region-to-region FTA. One of them would be cooperating on trusted connectivity projects and one would be systematic cooperation in international organisations.

Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE). – Señora presidenta, la celebración de la cumbre Unión Europea-ASEAN en Bruselas, mañana, pone de manifiesto el alto nivel de sus relaciones, que cumplen ya cuarenta y cinco años.

La ASEAN está considerada desde 2020 socio estratégico de la Unión Europea, como ya se ha dicho. Son muy importantes los vínculos históricos, políticos y económicos que unen a estas dos zonas de integración. En este mundo multipolar, tan complejo y conflictivo, es muy positivo para la Unión Europea tener un socio como la ASEAN en un área tan dinámica como la indopacífica. Juntos debemos también contribuir al fin de la guerra de agresión rusa a Ucrania, una gravísima violación de los principios básicos de la convivencia internacional.

Quiero referirme ahora a un país tan importante como Filipinas, fundador de la ASEAN y con relaciones históricas tan profundas con España, mi país. Filipinas es un firme aliado de Occidente que ha votado con nosotros, con los países de la Unión Europea, en las Naciones Unidas condenando la agresión rusa. Ahora, con el presidente Marcos en Filipinas, se abre en este país una nueva etapa política en la que confío en que avanzarán el Estado de Derecho y el respeto de los derechos humanos.

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Tengo la esperanza, la firme esperanza, de que el asesinato en 2020 del joven español Diego Bello, gallego como yo, no quede impune y que pronto se ejecuten las órdenes de arresto decretadas en marzo de este año por la autoridad judicial contra los tres policías sospechosos de asesinato. Este crimen, que ha conmovido a la opinión pública española, debe ser castigado. El proceso penal no debe seguir bloqueado. Las fuerzas del orden filipinas tienen que actuar. Los padres de Diego Bello merecen justicia.

Seán Kelly (PPE). – A *Uachtarán*, the EU and ASEAN are each other's third largest trading partners after China and the US. But so far, the EU has only free trade agreements with two ASEAN members, Singapore and Vietnam.

As a member of the delegation for relations with the countries of ASEAN, which I like very much, I was happy to attend the fifth EU-Vietnam interparliamentary meeting last week to discuss the state of play of the trade and investment relations.

Fostering open and fair trade with the ASEAN region, based on mutual economic and shared values, should be a strategic priority for the EU. We must ensure that European businesses, including SMEs and consumers, can benefit from the dynamic market of approximately 660 million consumers that the ASEAN region represents.

I welcome, in particular the EU's global gateway strategy to support the development of infrastructure and investment in smart, clean and secure links in digital energy and transport sectors globally.

Finally, diversification and having resilient supply chains must be at the top of the EU's agenda, and ASEAN will play a big role in that and hopefully there is a very successful EU-ASEAN summit.

Hildegard Bentele (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, sehr geehrte Frau Kommissarin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Partnerschaft zwischen der EU und dem ASEAN hat großes Potenzial. Bei einer kürzlichen Delegationsreise in das größte ASEAN-Land, nach Indonesien, konnte ich mich von dem Interesse an einer engeren wirtschaftlichen Zusammenarbeit auch persönlich überzeugen, und ich sage hier klar: an einer wirtschaftlichen Zusammenarbeit, und nicht in erster Linie an Entwicklungshilfeprojekten.

Die EU ist in Ländern mit unteren und mittleren Einkommen ein Akteur unter vielen, unter China, unter arabischen Investoren, Australien und den USA. Wir müssen hier als Europa gemeinsam, schlagkräftig und strategisch auftreten. Deshalb appelliere ich nochmals an alle Beteiligten im Rat und in der Kommission: Wandeln Sie die Idee von *global gateway* als einer europäischen Antwort unter anderem auf die chinesische Seidenstraße in große strategische Projekte um. Das wird nicht gelingen; wenn wir viele kleine Projekte einfach in Team Europe umlabeln, wird daraus noch kein strategischer Ansatz.

Denken Sie neu. Holen Sie sich die Erfahrung der europäischen Wirtschaft an Bord. Setzen Sie endlich das *Business Advisory Board for Global Gateway* ein. Wir brauchen keine neuen, schwerfälligen bürokratischen Strukturen. Wir brauchen eine Analyse mit unseren Partnern, was sie im Bereich nachhaltige Wirtschaft brauchen. Wir brauchen Finanzierungs- und Absicherungsmöglichkeiten durch unsere Banken und europäische Unternehmen, die diese Projekte auch umsetzen. An die Arbeit, meine lieben Kolleginnen und Kollegen!

Helena Dalli, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, honourable Members, the debate today testifies to our continued interest and engagement in EU-ASEAN relations, and the upcoming summit is a historic event. It is the result of years of work, a new commitment to further strengthening relations with this important multilateral partner. I would encourage you to continue to support these efforts through outreach and cooperation with your counterparts and ASEAN parliamentarians and the ASEAN Interparliamentary Assembly.

With regard to the Global Gateway, we will announce substantial advancements in Global Gateway projects with ASEAN tomorrow on the fringes of the summit, all from the current financial perspective and all involving public funds from EU and Member State development banks.

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On the national unity government, we are reaching out to the national unity government at an increasingly higher level. They are vital stakeholders in Myanmar's future, and we welcome the decision of ASEAN's own summit in November to officially engage with them as well. The EU is a significant humanitarian donor in Myanmar, but it is true the United Nations humanitarian appeal is very under-funded. We also continue to help the 1 million Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

With regard to the summit and region to region relations, we agreed on substantial language on the Indo-Pacific and South China Sea, and we would be happy to cooperate more strongly with ASEAN within the UN, notably with Malaysia and Indonesia, which are currently members of the Human Rights Council.

Die Präsidentin. – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung findet während einer späteren Tagung statt.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)

Tomasz Piotr Poręba (ECR), na piśmie. – Ostatni rok przyniósł Europie i całemu światu nowe i bardzo poważne wyzwania. Rosyjska niesprobowana agresja na Ukrainę wywołała falę negatywnych skutków politycznych, gospodarczych oraz na polu bezpieczeństwa zarówno tego rozumianego tradycyjnie, jak i energetycznego. W tym kontekście tym bardziej ważne jest wzmacnianie współpracy i sojuszy pomiędzy Europą oraz państwami ASEAN. UE jest dla ASEAN trzecim partnerem, jeśli chodzi o handel, oraz drugim największym bezpośrednim inwestorem. Dzięki bardzo kompleksowym dwustronnym umowom z UE sytuacja będzie ulegać dalszej poprawie. Przez szlaki morskie regionu przebiegają kluczowe korytarze transportu wodnego i dlatego tak ważne jest zaangażowanie w zagwarantowanie wolności żeglugi. Powinniśmy również wzmocnić kontakty międzyludzkie, w tym programy współdziałania pomiędzy uczelniami oraz wymiany naukowców, studentów oraz młodzieży. Rola tego regionu dla Europy już teraz jest ogromna i z każdym rokiem będzie rosła. Nie zmarnujmy tej szansy.

21. Declarações de voto

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgen die Erklärungen zur Abstimmung.

21.1. Rumo à igualdade de direitos para as pessoas com deficiência (A9-0284/2022 - Anne-Sophie Pelletier)

Miriam Lexmann (PPE). – Vážená pani predsedajúca, táto správa nám priniesla komplexný pohľad na problémy, ktorým osoby so zdravotným postihnutím v Európskej únii čelia. Nielenže ide o bariéry prostredia, ale aj o prekážky na pracovnom trhu, vzdelávaní či zdravotnej starostlivosti. A napriek tomu, že sme viazaní dohovorom OSN o právach osôb so zdravotným postihnutím, zmeny sú len veľmi pomalé. Vitam, že správa obsahovala výzvu na čo najskoršie prijatie európskeho preukazu pre osoby so zdravotným postihnutím. Tento preukaz uľahčí mobilitu v rámci Európskej únie a umožní tak týmto osobám prístup k cestovaniu, športovým či voľnočasovým aktivitám. Zároveň je jeho kľúčovým aspektom uznanie štatútu osoby so zdravotným postihnutím naprieč všetkými členskými štátmi. Mnohé zdravotné postihnutia totiž nie sú na prvý pohľad viditeľné a automatické a uznanie štatútu mnohým uľahčí situáciu. Preto apelujem na to, aby bol preukaz prijatý čo najskôr a v čo najširšom rozsahu.

Eugen Tomac (PPE). – Doamna președintă, în Europa există aproximativ 87 de milioane de persoane care au o formă de dizabilitate. Dintre acestea, prea mulți copii cu dizabilități sunt lăsați în urmă. Stigmatizarea, lipsa de acces la educația incluzivă, lipsa de servicii de îngrijire corespunzătoare împing copiii cu dizabilități la marginea societății, fără să le dea o șansă la a-și realiza potențialul în viață. În comparație cu copiii fără dizabilități, cei cu dizabilități se confruntă cu o probabilitate cu 49 % mai mare să nu fi mers niciodată la școală. Probabilitate cu 41 % mai mare să se simtă discriminați și o probabilitate de 32 % mai mare să fie supuși unor pedepse corporale severe. Avem nevoie de o agendă europeană mai ambițioasă, care să asigure șanse egale copiilor cu dizabilități, să elimine barierele fizice, de comunicare și de atitudine care-i țin în afara societății, asigurând înregistrarea nașterii, servicii de sănătate, alimentație, educație echitabilă și acces la asistență.

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21.2. Uma visão a longo prazo para as zonas rurais da UE (A9-0269/2022 - Isabel Carvalhais)

Eugen Tomac (PPE). – Doamna președintă, așa cum se menționează și în raport, peste 30 % din populația Uniunii Europene locuiește în zone rurale. Eu provin dintr-o țară unde aproape 50 % din populație locuiește în mediul rural. În mod injust însă, gradul de dezvoltare a acestora este departe de a fi satisfăcător. Populația din mediul rural este motorul sectorului agricol și ar trebui să aibă acces egal la servicii și oportunități egale. Prin urmare, am votat acest raport tocmai pentru că subliniază această nevoie și descrie modalitățile concrete de dezvoltare. Este nevoie să spunem lucrurilor pe nume, chiar dacă acestea nu descriu mereu o situație ideală. Este evident că sunt necesare investiții și gestionarea lor corectă și eficientă. Însă trebuie să spunem că și procedurile de accesare a fondurilor europene sunt de multe ori complicate pentru cei care își doresc să dezvolte comunitățile rurale. Este vital să valorificăm potențialul uriaș al zonelor rurale. Este doar spre beneficiul nostru, al tuturor.

Míriam Lexmann (PPE). – Vážená pani predsedajúca, správu o dlhodobých výzvach pre vidiecke oblasti v Európskej únii som uvítala, keďže v týchto oblastiach žije až 30 % európskej populácie a je potrebné, aby sme sa životnými podmienkami a spokojnosťou týchto osôb zaoberali. Vidiecke oblasti totiž čelia zhoršenému prístupu k základnej infraštruktúre, vzdelávaniu či pracovným miestam a naviac ich populácia starne a musia čeliť aj odlivu ľudí do miest. Práve na tieto aspekty dlhodobo upozorňujem a vyzývam na vytvorenie dostatočného prepojenia vidieckych a vzdialenejších regiónov vrátane vysokorýchlostného internetu a digitálnych nástrojov tak, aby sa obyvatelia týchto oblastí nemuseli za prácou sťahovať, mali možnosť pracovať na diaľku a aby sme tak zabránili vyludňovaniu. Rovnako považujem za potrebnú podporu poľnohospodárov, ktorá je nielen dôležitá pre vidiecke oblasti, ale aj našu potravinovú bezpečnosť.

21.3. Plano de ação para impulsionar o transporte ferroviário de passageiros transfronteiriço e de longo curso (A9-0242/2022 - Annalisa Tardino)

Eugen Tomac (PPE). – Doamna președintă, eu vin dintr-o țară în care transportul feroviar este subdezvoltat deși are un potențial foarte mare. Prin urmare, am vrut în mod special să-mi exprim astăzi, aici, sprijinul total pentru implementarea Planului de acțiune pentru stimularea transportului feroviar de călători pe distanțe lungi la nivelul transfrontalier. Consider acest transport unul extrem de important și, mai ales, comod. Eu însumi întotdeauna prefer transportul feroviar decât cel auto. Și la Strasbourg vin cel mai des cu trenul și îi încurajez pe toți să facă același lucru. Sigur, pentru asta avem nevoie de o infrastructură feroviară bine dezvoltată, de conexiuni, de condiții de călătorie care să încurajeze folosirea trenului în locul altor mijloace de transport. De aceea am votat acest raport cu încrederea că toate acestea se vor întâmpla cât mai curând.

Die Präsidentin. – Die Erklärungen zur Abstimmung wurden damit abgegeben.

22. Ordem do dia da próxima sessão

Die Präsidentin. – Die nächste Sitzung findet morgen, Mittwoch, den 14. Dezember 2022, um 9.00 Uhr statt.

Die Tagesordnung wurde veröffentlicht und ist auf der Website des Europäischen Parlaments verfügbar.

23. Aprovação da ata da presente sessão

Die Präsidentin. – Das Protokoll dieser Sitzung wird dem Parlament morgen nach der Abstimmung zur Genehmigung vorgelegt.

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(Die Sitzung wird um 22.15 Uhr geschlossen.)