



Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats in the European Parliament

PRESS CONFERENCE with Gianni Pittella
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Gianni Pittella

The latest tragedies in the Mediterranean, EU migration and asylum policies

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Our Group underlines the need for a joint EU action on migrants. We reiterate the urgency of setting-up and enlarging search and rescue operations coordinated at EU-level. These should be supported by adequate tools and financial resources provided by all member states, with the purpose of saving the lives of migrants in distress in the Mediterranean Sea. We have to create and increase the use of safe and legal avenues to the EU for people in need of protection, such as humanitarian visas or resettlement. Furthermore, we need to create an emergency relocation mechanism. Serious consideration should also be given to revising 'Dublin III' and the creation of new rules for the fair distribution of asylum seekers and refugees between the member states, in order to ensure a more coordinated European governance of immigration and asylum. Finally, we need to develop joint actions, in close cooperation with the relevant agencies, against criminal networks of migrant-traffickers.

Decision adopted on European Agenda on Security

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Tanja Fajon

Socialists and Social Democrats want to respond in a responsible and effective manner to the calls for greater levels security in light of recent terrorist attacks in Europe and beyond. While there can be no freedom without security, we reject a security policy without respect for democratic principles and the rule of law. Restrictions can only be justified for as long as they are necessary, proportionate, legitimate and capable of delivering security. The EU's efforts to combat terrorism should identify and focus on the profound social-economic and cultural roots. Tackling radicalisation and fighting terrorism is a global challenge, one which will require the EU to closely cooperate with Muslim majority countries. In this security cooperation, the EU should take full account of the nature of the political systems of individual countries and, in this context, safeguard respect for the principles of human rights and the rule of law.



Birgit Sippel

On 28 of April the Commission will present the European Parliament with the European Agenda on Security for the period 2015-2019. The Commission is expected to focus on the fight against terrorism, organized crime and cyber security. For the S&D Group it is essential that European security policy respects the values on which the EU is based, such as the rule of law and the respect for fundamental rights. The Commission should therefore present a comprehensive evaluation of all existing measures in the field of security. Instead of only focusing on more measures of surveillance, we need to improve targeted information exchange and cooperation between member states in the field of security, whilst fully respecting fundamental rights.



Neena Gill

Money market funds

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We need full support for a hard-fought and important piece of financial legislation outlining changes to Market Money Funds (MMFs). MMFs can destabilise markets during economic down turns and put a burden on EU taxpayers. Yet, we know how important MMFs are for short term investment for the public sector and private sector, in particular the automotive industry. Our amends simply makes MMFs more transparent, liquid and stable. We have listened to the concerns of colleagues in the group, received input from European businesses and battled with our colleagues on the right to create LVNAVs - a successor to the risky CNAVS. We have triumphed in adding a sunset clause to the legislation which means the LVNAV will lapse after 5 years. We believe we now have a solution that will benefit businesses, protect governments and taxpayers, boost economies and create jobs across the EU.



Glenis Willmott

Alcohol Strategy

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Monday 27 April 2015

Alcohol is still the third biggest cause of preventable death and disease in Europe, with the social costs attributed to alcohol-related harm estimated at €155.8 million a year. Europe remains the heaviest drinking region in the world. Alcohol-related harm is serious public health issue, with alcohol linked to over 60 chronic diseases, including cancer, liver disease and heart disease. The Commission should help member states to coordinate their work to reduce alcohol-related harm and immediately begin work on a new EU alcohol strategy, as the previous one ended in 2012. This should include mandatory EU-wide labelling on the dangers of drink-driving and drinking while pregnant. We are also calling on the Commission to publish the report on extending the provisions of the Food Labelling Regulation to cover alcohol, which was due by December 2014. Our Group has always argued for clear, honest labelling to give people the information they need to make informed decisions. There is no reason for alcohol to be treated any differently from other food and drink and, at a minimum, calories should be labelled. Many people don't realise how many calories are in alcohol, for example a glass of wine has the same number of calories as a slice of cake. We need to adopt a strong resolution in order to send a clear message to the Commission that MEPs want to see action on alcohol.



**Knut
Fleckenstein**

2014 Progress report on Albania

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Albania is a candidate country for EU accession since June 2014. The Albanian enlargement process reinforces the country's path to prosperity and democracy as well as its contribution to regional stability and cooperation. We invite the High Representative and the European Commission to continue their engagement and work in favour of Albania's European future, by encouraging the country to continue with its ambitious reforms and to ensure their effective implementation. We call on EU member states to honour their political commitments to Albania as a candidate country, offering a real prospect of a future within the EU. We believe that the opening of accession negotiations with Albania will constitute the major incentive for the country to speed up reform. It's clear that Albania, like any other candidate country, should be judged on its own merits.



**Ana
Gomes**

Situation in Nigeria

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Thursday 30 April 2015

With a population of nearly 180 million people, Nigeria is not only Africa's largest economy but also its most populous nation. Nigeria faces multiple challenges, ranging from the economic impact of declining oil prices to the increasingly entrenched conflict and terrorist threat from Boko Haram in the northeast, including its potential regional spill-over. Terrorism is a global threat but the global community's efforts to do more against Boko Haram in Nigeria depended to some degree on the full measure of credibility, accountability, and transparency of the recent Presidential election. The electoral process as well as the peaceful change in power was welcomed by international observers and it is now a national, regional and global responsibility, to put all existing means at use to bring an end to Boko Haram and especially starve it from its financial resources.



**Ulrike
Rodust**

Landing obligation: EU fisheries reform to reach safe harbour

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The reform of the EU's Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) has now reached implementation stage: with the so-called omnibus regulation, which will remove all obstacles to the discard ban, and the multi-annual plan for the Baltic Sea. These two central elements for a more sustainable CFP, will be put to a vote during next week's plenary session. At the beginning of 2015, the hard won success for a discard ban was on shaky grounds. However, after long and cumbersome negotiations, it looks as though the landing obligation of by-catches is now on firmer ground. The multi-annual plan for stocks of cod, herring and sprat in the Baltic Sea will serve as blue-print for the long-term sustainable management of our fish stocks. This first multi-annual plan will be decisive in answering the question of whether or not the EU will live up to its promise that catches will be limited to an amount that allows stocks to regenerate.



**Olga
Sehnalova**

Deployment of the eCall in-vehicle system

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The Parliament's vote on the deployment of the eCall in-vehicle system, will approve a text already agreed with the Council. The regulation sets type-approval requirements for fitting eCall emergency device into vehicles. From 31 March 2018, all new models of cars and light commercial vehicles will be equipped with an eCall device that will automatically dial the 112 emergency number, if a serious accident occurs. It's estimated that the quicker response from the emergency services to accidents on roads across Europe could save about 2,500 lives in the EU every year. The severity of injuries will also be considerably reduced. eCall will be a public service, free of charge for the benefit of all European citizens.



**Linda
McAvan**

EU member states' commitments on Official Development Assistance (ODA)

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In 2015, the European Year for Development, the policies of the EU on development and the global development framework are at a crucial juncture. The first of a series of vital international conferences will take place in Addis Ababa on 13-16 July, on how this development framework will be financed. This oral question asks the Council to reconfirm the collective commitment of EU member states to provide 0.7% of GNI to Official Development Assistance (ODA) along an agreed timetable, and the Commission to contribute to securing this re-commitment. ODA remains a vital tool at the heart of the EU's development cooperation, and can be a catalyst for other sources of finance, which we know are much needed, such as private sector investment and increased domestic tax collection. For the EU to be credible in the upcoming international talks, the commitment it made on ODA, first back in 2005, must be lived up to.



**Paolo
De Castro**

Expo Milano 2015: Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life

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The Milan Expo represents an unique opportunity to discuss the global issues regarding food security on an international level. This is particularly pertinent at a time when matters such as food waste and sustainability of agricultural production processes have become increasingly urgent concerns. With this in mind, the resolution calls on the Commission and all EU member states to use this opportunity to get involved, together with the European Parliament, in the fight against under-nutrition while providing universal access to food. This result can only be achieved through the implementation of agricultural, environmental and social policies that encourage the use of the land 'resources' with a view to sustainability, which is a vital component in meeting the world's food security challenges.

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