



Plenary Update

March 2016 Session

**PRESS
CONFERENCE**
with Gianni
Pittella
Tuesday at 10.10
LOW N-1/201

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Our Priorities

- *Wed, 9* **Council and Commission statements - Preparation of the European Council meeting of 17 and 18 March 2016 and outcome of the EU-Turkey summit** gianni.pittella@europarl.europa.eu
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PITTELLA
Gianni

We must act now to save lives, to save Schengen, to save Europe!

European governments have failed abysmally to tackle the refugee crisis in Europe. While member states bicker between themselves, lives are lost and the EU continues to disintegrate. We, the Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament and across Europe, call on the heads of state and governments meeting today to finally take common action:

1. Humanitarian aid for Europe

Humanitarian aid is needed immediately in Greece, and elsewhere in Europe, to provide basic shelter, healthcare and food for refugees.

2. Financing for countries facing the brunt of the crisis

Financing for Greece must come on top of money to help countries bordering Syria.

3. Relocation of refugees and consequences for EU governments who refuse to take their share

A decision has been taken on the relocation of refugees; this must be implemented immediately. No more foot-dragging - governments who don't meet their legal obligations must face consequences.

4. Measures to protect Schengen

The collapse of Schengen would be a disaster for the EU. Temporary border measures must only be temporary, with a clear plan of how and when to reverse them.

5. Revision of the Dublin regulation

The Dublin regulation - under which refugees must apply for asylum in the first EU country in which they arrive - is dead. The Commission must propose a new and practical solution based on sharing responsibility between the member states.

We do not have more time - we must act now to save lives, to save Schengen, to save Europe.

The inhumane situation in which refugees, human beings, are living in Greece is no longer acceptable. European leaders and public opinion should realise that also within Europe, humanitarian assistance is now needed.

As our S&D Group already urged, we now call on the EU Commission and especially on the EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos Stylianides, to activate an emergency assistance instrument from Europe to Europe.

Turkey:

The goal of the Summit is to discuss the full and speedy implementation of the EU-Turkey action plan, which still remains a priority, in order to stem migration flows and tackle networks of traffickers and smugglers.

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- *Tue, 8* **The situation of women refugees and asylum seekers in the EU** mary.honeyball@europarl.europa.eu
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It is imperative that the European Commission, governments and all relevant agencies work to ensure that all aspects of asylum policy are fully gender-sensitive. Measures such as gender-specific training for staff and comprehensive training on sexual violence should be norm, not the exception. As a minimum, women should have access to separate sleeping and sanitation facilities, access to gender-sensitive health services, and access to childcare. Increasing numbers of women and girls are reaching Europe but pressure on asylum systems should never be an excuse to not meet the basic needs of the most vulnerable."



HONEYBALL
Mary

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- *Tue, 8* **Tobacco agreement (PMI agreement)** ines.ayalasender@europarl.europa.eu
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The agreement with Phillip Morris was innovative and a useful tool in the fight against smuggling of cigarettes when it was first introduced. However, this agreement has run its course and we are opposed to its extension. Changes in the market and the regulatory environment mean that the agreement is no longer the best tool to fight bootlegging and smuggling of tobacco products.



AYALA
SENDER Inés

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- *Thu, 10* **Banking Union - Annual report 2015** roberto.gualtieri@europarl.europa.eu
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In the first annual Banking Union report we first underline that the Commission should align the capital requirements legislation on banks with Banking Union framework. Moreover we ask to conduct an in-depth assessment of the effect of increasing capital requirements on credit supply, especially for SMEs. We welcome the Commission's package on risk sharing and risk reduction, including the proposal on European Deposit Insurance Scheme, which is considered the remaining pillar in the creation of the Banking Union. The report also stresses the ability to write off or sell-on non-performing loans is vital, as it frees up capital to fund new loans. Finally, we argue that any possible change in the medium term of current regulatory framework on sovereign exposures should be carefully and thoroughly assessed, and should be part of a coordinated effort at a global level, without reducing available funding for member states, without creating unintended market distortions and without affecting financial stability.



GUALTIERI
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- *Tue, 8* **Situation in Syria** victor.bostinaru@europarl.europa.eu
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The ceasefire in Syria is continuing to hold despite some scattered violations. The ceasefire is important and should be respected by all parties so that international talks due to resume on the 9th of March go ahead and humanitarian aid convoys can continue to reach a population in need. The participation of the moderate Syrian opposition in the international talks is essential and should be guaranteed. Therefore, we condemn any actions against the moderate Syrian opposition and the town of Aleppo that could undermine the ceasefire and international talks.



BOŞTINARU
Victor

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- *Mon, 7* **Annual report 2014 on the Protection of the EU's financial interests - Fight against fraud** georgi.pirinski@europarl.europa.eu
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The report emphasizes that the overall financial impact of fraudulent and non-fraudulent irregularities in 2014 is 36 % higher than in 2013. Non-fraudulent irregularities continue to represent the greatest threat to the EU's financial interests. A strong request for strengthened measures and actions against both types of irregularities at EU and national level is highlighted in the draft Resolution. It also reflects the S&D's approach towards a 'new culture' of control.



PIRINSKI
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- *Wed, 9* **2015 Report on Montenegro** nikos.androulakis@europarl.europa.eu
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The S&D Group commends the progress made by Montenegro in its EU accession negotiations, with 22 negotiation chapters being opened and 2 provisionally closed. The Montenegrin government should continue with the implementation of important reforms and accelerate its efforts relating to the rule of law, the improvement of public administration and the efficiency of judicial system. The S&Ds also call for further progress in fighting tax avoidance and high rates of unemployment. We will continue to support Montenegro's European integration and we call for the continuation of the steady progress in the accession negotiations.



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