



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

PRESS CONFERENCE with MARTIN SCHULZ
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Saïd El
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Charging of heavy goods vehicles - "Eurovignette" Directive

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Tuesday, 7 - June 2011

The stakes are high as it is proposed, for the first time, to introduce the "polluter pays" principle to the road transport sector. This dossier is very complex and politically sensitive. We have reached a balanced compromise which I see as a solid basis for improving the Council's position. The Member States will be able to decide to make the road sector bear the costs linked to noise and air pollution, which is something they cannot do at present. The report also makes it possible to vary the infrastructure charge according to the level of congestion during peak hours. There is also a strong commitment to reinvest the revenues in the transport system in order to make it more sustainable and at least to use 15% of all revenue collected to finance TEN-T projects. Finally, there shall be improved transparency with Member States reporting to the Commission on the total revenue received and the action taken towards the improvement of the sustainability of their transport systems.



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EU-Russia Summit

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Wednesday, 8 - June 2011

EU and Russia progress towards a stronger partnership. The Summit will focus on the common challenges facing both the EU and Russia, such as the economic and financial crisis (follow up of the G8 and preparation of the G20), WTO accession, progress of the Partnership for Modernisation, energy and energy-security related issues, the long-term objective of visa free travel between the EU and Russia and international and regional issues. The resolution deals with the preparations for the EU-Russia Summit to be held in Nizhny Novgorod (9 -10 June 2011).



Richard
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External dimension of social policy, promoting labour and social standards and European corporate social responsibility

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Monday, 6 - June 2011

The external dimension of social policy is a key priority for our Group. The failure, today, both inside and outside the EU to comply with basic international social standards constitutes a form of social and environmental dumping detrimental to European enterprises and workers! This report calls for the strengthening of core labour standards which are embedded in ILO conventions including freedom of association and collective bargaining, elimination of forced and compulsory labour, elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and the abolition of child labour. The report demands a change in global governance and in the EU in order to better protect worker's rights and working conditions.



Jo Leinen

Proposal for a European Parliament recommendation to the Council on the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

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Monday, 6 - June 2011

Substantial transformation of the international order currently underway challenges the EU and requires from it more concerted actions. In keeping with past practice, AFET draws up Parliament recommendations to the Council for the session of the United Nations General Assembly to meet later in autumn this year. Among the EP priorities this year: enhanced role for the EU in the UN system taking into account the institutional changes brought by the Lisbon Treaty, need for guidelines ensuring proper consultations between the ambassadors of the Member States in order to avoid discordance of EU voices as in the case of Libya, adequate budget for UN Women, further strengthening of the role of the ICC, support for the UN Mediation Unit and a key role for the EEAS in this context, improvement of the relationship between the UN Peace Building Commission and the EU Peace Building Partnership and finally stronger EU leadership in the area of global climate governance.



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Transport applications of the Global Navigation Satellite Systems

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Tuesday, 7 - June 2011

Satellite navigation systems should ensure interoperability between different systems and should also allow inter-modal use in passenger & freight transport services. EGNOS system coverage should be extended to southern, eastern and south-eastern Europe; next, its coverage should extend to both the MEDA countries and the Middle East and Africa.

Future EU financial framework



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Wednesday, 8 - June 2011

Parliament will debate and vote on its proposals for the size and shape of the EU budget in the years after 2013. The main parliamentary groups believe that more funds will be needed for Europe and insists on the creation of a new category of regional aid.

Europe's economic future is at stake. Important new policies including the EU 2020 strategy for jobs and growth have been adopted, but they also need to be financed. In this regard, we are still calling for the implementation of a Financial Transaction tax.

EU-Canada trade relations



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Monday, 6 - June 2011

We welcome the negotiation of a comprehensive economic trade agreement with Canada, as this should reinforce the already strong bilateral trade and investment relationship between the EU and Canada. We believe that this agreement should be ambitious but balanced, fostering free but fair and equitable trade. In spite of the general support for an ambitious trade agreement with Canada, we as S&D insisted on the fact that the agreement should not harm the EU's ability to protect public services or affect the EU's right to legislate in the fuel quality directive. Moreover, the agreement should include a sustainable development chapter incorporating legally binding social and environmental standards.

GDP and beyond - Measuring progress in a changing world



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Moving beyond Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is necessary in order to move towards an inclusive and sustainable society by ensuring that adequate and comprehensive data and indicators are available in the decision-making process. The report includes a number of S&D priorities: it recognises the limitations of GDP and stresses the need to develop additional indicators for measuring medium and long-term economic and social progress. It calls for the development of clear and measurable indicators that take account of climate change, biodiversity, resource efficiency and social inclusion which should facilitate the necessary move towards an inclusive, knowledge-based, low carbon society.

Financing instrument for development cooperation



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The Financing Instrument for Development Cooperation emphasizes the need to focus on poverty alleviation and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to increase the flexibility of the Instrument for Development Cooperation (DCI) and to respect and strengthen the European Parliament's right to scrutiny. The S&D Group has stressed the need to keep the same definition of Official Development Assistance (ODA) as set by the OECD, to maintain both geographic and thematic programmes under the DCI, to ensure that all development projects financed by the EU are climate proof and to support and strengthen the role that civil society plays in development.

International air agreements under the Treaty of Lisbon



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In accordance with the Lisbon Treaty the European Parliament should follow negotiations closely rather than being faced with a choice of accepting or rejecting the final text. Relevant criteria for air agreements with third countries should include equal access to markets and investment opportunities, as well as fair competition in terms of State subsidies, environmental and social standards.

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